

U N I V E R S I T Y R E P O R T

Mission AND Momentum

SJU SAINT JOSEPH'S
UNIVERSITY



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2022
2023

Mission AND Momentum



TABLE OF CONTENTS

YEAR IN REVIEW 2

ACADEMICS WITH IMPACT 12

EMPOWERING OUR STUDENTS 20

LIVING THE MISSION 26

STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE 30

LEADING THE WAY 32





HISTORIC INAUGURATION

Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD, a 35-year veteran of Jesuit higher education, was unanimously elected by the University's Board of Trustees and the presidential search committee as Saint Joseph's 29th and first female president.

“We are always committed to our Jesuit mission. If we are open and creative, the ways we can animate our mission are endless. Let's be inspired by the spirit of our founders, who quite literally were the first to combine science and faith in an era that was not ready to even imagine such possibilities.”

CHERYL A. MCCONNELL, PHD
President

Faculty, students, staff, alumni, friends, religious and civic leaders, and members of the greater higher education community gathered on Hawk Hill in September to celebrate the Inauguration of Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD, as the 29th — and first female — president in the University's 172-year history.

“It is such a unique and humbling honor to be here today in the presence of so many people, all bonded together by our love and admiration for Saint Joseph's University,” said Dr. McConnell upon her investiture by Board Chair James M. Norris, MBA '85. “My heart is full as I look out and see all those who share in and support this journey — who believe in our shared mission to develop students to achieve personal excellence, professional success and to be engaged citizens.”



Board Chair James M. Norris, MBA '85 with newly inaugurated president Dr. McConnell.

Members of the University community as well as local religious and community leaders greeted Dr. McConnell, including Rev. Philip G. Bochanski, vicar general and moderator of the curia of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia; Thomas P. Foley, president of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania; Michael F. Tunney, S.J., provincial assistant of higher education of the USA East Province of the Society of Jesus; and Stephen Surovick, S.J., senior director of mission and ministry at Saint Joseph's Preparatory School and superior of the Jesuit community at Arrupe Hall.

Norris placed the presidential chain over Dr. McConnell's shoulders following her investiture, symbolizing the official change in leadership.

"You will be responsible for ensuring that a Saint Joseph's education cares for the whole person, seeks God in all things, encourages moral discernment and promotes justice, as St. Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, conceived," said Norris.

Following the Inauguration, Saint Joseph's community members gathered for a celebratory reception. Inauguration events started earlier in the week with SJU's annual Mass of the Holy Spirit, the ceremonial start of the school year and the inaugural Mass for President McConnell. Members of the Saint Joseph's community, as well as Fr. Tunney, offered Dr. McConnell their blessings.

"Our community, O God, calls out a bounty of graces upon Dr. Cheryl McConnell," said Fr. Tunney. "May we, too, become persons of wisdom, bold vision and steadfast endurance."

“Dr. McConnell's dedication to teaching, to scholarship, to spiritual formation and to student development made her an excellent choice. Her degrees and publications are so impressive, but I personally think Cheryl's most important qualification is the dynamic of her personal story. Cheryl is a first-generation college graduate who has immersed herself in the twin Jesuit traditions of spirituality and of service.”

THOMAS P. FOLEY
President of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania



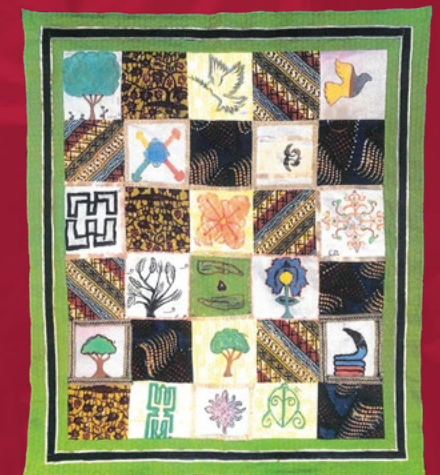
Top: Dr. McConnell and Saint Joseph's students following the Mass of the Holy Spirit
Middle: Celebrating the Mass of the Holy Spirit
Bottom: Alumni talk with President McConnell during the celebratory reception



Dr. McConnell with Saint Joseph's past presidents. Left to right: C. Kevin Gillespie, S.J. '72; John W. Smithson '68, '82 (MBA) (interim); Mark C. Reed, EdD; Timothy R. Lannon, S.J.; and Nicholas S. Rashford, S.J. (foreground)



Back, left to right: Phil DeLuca, Gompers principal; Corey Lyons; Rashaan Stokes; Dr. McConnell; Aaline Anderson; and Rennie Parker, community coordinator
Front, left to right: Swyhir Crew and Cali Dennis



The Community Quilt A gift from the students of Samuel Gompers School

Members of neighboring Samuel Gompers School's 7th and 8th grade classes created a special community-themed quilt in honor of Dr. McConnell's Inauguration. Textiles are used in cultures around the world for celebrations; several symbols are Kente Adinkra symbols, which are used in Kente cloth, a hand-woven textile from Ghana traditionally worn by royalty for important celebrations. The fabric panels in the quilt were imported from Ghana.



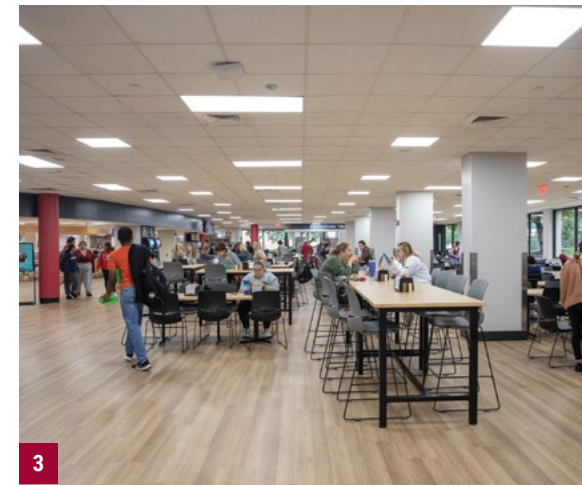
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ADVANCING SAINT JOSEPH'S 10-YEAR MASTER PLAN

Several major projects were underway this summer as Saint Joseph's continued executing a decade-long campus master plan.

Saint Joseph's made significant progress on several major campus-master plan projects at the close of the 2022-2023 academic year. Announced in 2019, the University's campus master plan is aimed at enhancing the student experience — from upgrading facilities in support of academic excellence to creating community greenspaces to gather, relax and unwind.

The recent upgrades are just the start of what students can expect from Saint Joseph's campus long term — a modern, connected campus that is both a suburban oasis and a link to the city of Philadelphia.

"We've made great strides since launching the campus master plan four years ago. The pedestrian underpass is nearing completion and we'll soon be breaking ground on the first-year residence hall," says Kevin Mueller '22 (MBA), director of construction and planning at Saint Joseph's. "It's easy to step on campus and see firsthand how transformative this work will be for the Saint Joseph's community."

“It's easy to step on campus and see firsthand how transformative this work will be for the Saint Joseph's community.”

KEVIN MUELLER '22 (MBA)
Director of Construction and Planning

1. The University announced the pledge of a major financial gift from distinguished alumnus John R. Post '60. A new pedestrian underpass, connecting the Lower Merion and West Philadelphia sides of the Hawk Hill campus, will be named Post Crossing upon its completion. The 21-foot-wide, ADA-accessible pathway is expected to be completed during the 2024 spring semester.

2. Renovations to the O'Pake Recreation Center, set to be completed for the start of the 2024 fall semester, will provide students with a reimagined fitness and recreation space and state-of-the-art equipment. Renovation of the 72,000-square-foot facility will include a 1,830-square-foot cardio mezzanine overlooking a large multipurpose court, two

brand-new multiuse rooms, HVAC upgrades and more.

3. Campion Dining Hall and Food Court, rebranded as The Kettle, underwent a complete remodel, including an expanded seating area with modern amenities and aesthetics. Students returned to a variety of dining options for the 2023 fall semester, including more than four new brands and rotating concepts.

4. Renovations to the Maguire Athletic Center and Hagan Arena are underway, enhancing student-athlete performance and well-being while inspiring a new era of athletic excellence.

5. First-year students will soon reside in a brand new residence hall at the heart of the campus. The location takes advantage of a serene green space in front of the University's Maguire Wolfington Welcome Center, creating a communal quad for residents and other community members to enjoy. This project is anticipated to open in fall 2025.

6. In August, Saint Joseph's students returned to two newly renovated Hawk Hill Science Center laboratories to accommodate foundational scientific learning and additional first-year students.

In the near future, Saint Joseph's will begin additional projects to enrich the student experience, including an enhanced Science Center, and a dedicated facility for the renowned Kinney Center for Autism Education and Support.

Expanding Academic Portfolio Empowers Future Leaders

New programs align with market demands and Jesuit mission

In pursuit of its enduring commitment to Jesuit ideals and lifelong learning, Saint Joseph's is expanding its academic offerings to equip students for a rapidly changing world.

New Programs

With nearly one in three public schools reporting multiple vacancies last year according to the National Center for Education Statistics, the new **education MS degrees in curriculum and instruction, and school counseling** reinforce the commitment to shaping educators of tomorrow while also addressing the dire teacher shortage. The **Master of Social Work (MSW)** equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to address critical social challenges and promote well-being in communities.

The undergraduate **communication and science disorder major (BA)** trains students to excel in speech-language pathology and related fields, enabling them to positively impact individuals with communication disorders.

In response to the demand for advanced leadership in the corporate world, the **Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)** cultivates transformative business leaders with the expertise to drive innovation in their organizations.

Newly added healthcare programs include the **Doctor of Education in healthcare education (EdD)**, which addresses the critical need for qualified educators in healthcare; the **drug development and industrial pharmacy MS**, catering to the ever-evolving pharmaceutical industry; and an **undergraduate major in health administration**.

The **quantitative economics major** offers students valuable skill sets to perform quantitative modeling that solves real-world economic problems.

Addressing the increasing need for data-driven decision-makers, the **business intelligence and analytics/health informatics dual graduate degree (MHI/MS)** equips students to harness the power of data in the healthcare and business sectors.

The **graphic design major** equips students with sought-after design skills to excel in creative visual communication.

A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Less than a year after the University of the Sciences merged with and into Saint Joseph's, Saint Joseph's entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences (PA College), adding to its already robust portfolio of healthcare programs. The merger will expand Saint Joseph's geographic reach beyond Philadelphia and broaden its academic portfolio with more than 20 nursing and allied health programs, ranging from certificates through the graduate level.

"Programs like those offered at PA College are not only sought after by students, but they also have an exponential value in the communities where those students then go on to live, work and lead," says Saint Joseph's President Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD.

Starting fall of 2024 on the Hawk Hill campus, undergraduate students will have the opportunity to major in Saint Joseph's first-ever Bachelor of Science in nursing in the new School of Nursing and Allied Health. Students will benefit from a nursing program that has been a regional leader for over a century with licensure exam passage rates among the best in the nation and state. The program will also feature experienced faculty leading well-established coursework, simulation-based learning and hands-on clinical experiences in Philadelphia — including guaranteed clinical placements. Fifty clinical placements have been secured with PennMedicine, with other sites to be announced soon.

Additional programs will include master's degrees in nursing; associate degrees in cardiac sonography, radiography and surgical technology; a

In January 2023, Saint Joseph's entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

certificate in medical laboratory science; and many more.

PA College's rich history includes a long-standing connection to its founder, Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health (LG Health), where more than 800 employees are current PA College students and thousands more boast alumni status. LG Health and Saint Joseph's are committed to future students and patients through a joint healthcare-education pipeline, which will continue to provide a pathway to rewarding, financially secure careers for Lancaster-area residents. They will maintain strong affiliation agreements allowing for tuition benefits and clinical placements.

When the merger is finalized in January 2024, nearly 2,000 PA College students will become part of the Saint Joseph's community. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education Executive Committee for Commission Action approved the merger in September 2023.





ART BELONGS TO EVERYONE

This spring, the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum opened in the former Barnes Foundation building with the mission of being a community beacon for accessible arts education. Its work with area school districts, as well as its first-year exhibition calendar, are proof it is living up to that mission.

The highly anticipated opening of the Frances M. Maguire Art Museum at Saint Joseph's University took place on May 6, 2023, attracting those near and far — government representatives, art and architecture enthusiasts, neighbors, families, and the proud members of Saint Joseph's campus community.

Experts and media outlets sang the praises of the museum's renovation, led by Philadelphia design firm DIGSAU, with *Architectural Record* noting that the building's "architecture, refurbished and reinvented, quietly provides a sensitive setting for the works on view. The container does not overwhelm the contents, but it makes a strong point about the advantage of having an architecture of distinction that can be appreciated as a framework, and even on its own."

Since its opening, the museum has announced a full calendar of community events and rotating exhibitions that bring focus to youth photographers, Latin American abstract art and even musical performances. Currently, the museum features an installation that pairs SJU students' poetry with works by Black Philadelphia artists, as well as a historical show on the work of Paul Cret, the museum's original architect.

“Programming that investigates, discusses and asks us to draw connections to our own lives teaches us how [the story of the human connection] is relevant and important.”

VERONICA FARR, MEd
Curator of Education and Community Engagement

Aside from its exhibition space, the Maguire Museum has acted as an extension of the classroom for a variety of student groups. Saint Joseph's students have found connections to their coursework at the museum, while K-12 school groups and camps have found STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) enrichments through the museum's Affirming Arts Education program, which provides social-emotional and experiential learning opportunities for school-aged children.

“Art tells the story of the human condition,” notes Veronica Farr, MEd, curator of education and community engagement at the Maguire Museum. “Programming that investigates, discusses and asks us to draw connections to our own lives teaches us how this story is relevant and important. As a University institution, the Maguire Museum allows us to do just that.”

Inclusive College Experiences for Students with Disabilities

PACE, a program that supports students with intellectual disabilities, was approved as a Comprehensive Transition Program by the Department of Education in its inaugural year.

Saint Joseph's Pathways to Authentic College Experiences (PACE), a four-year certificate program that provides an authentic and inclusive experience for students with intellectual disabilities, has continued to expand since launching last year as a first-of-its-kind program at a Jesuit institution.

In its inaugural year, PACE was approved as a Comprehensive Transition Program by the Department of Education, allowing enrolled students to apply for federal student aid. Additionally, the program was recognized as a D.R.E.A.M. Partnership school, placing SJU among a network of Pennsylvania colleges that provide postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities.

“I am so proud that SJU is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and that the University can be a model to Jesuit schools across the country,” says Kaitlyn Martin '16 (MEd), PACE program director.

Cheryl Pauley, PhD, associate professor and chair of the Department of Special Education, explains that before Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, students with disabilities could be excluded from public education.

“Even though students with disabilities have received access to a K-12 education since 1975, sometimes they are still segregated from their peers without disabilities,” says Pauley. “Seeing the students thrive and grow at Saint Joseph's like every other student grows when they go off to college makes the effort worthwhile.”

This school year, multiple students in the PACE program are participating in work-based learning opportunities, including working in the Drexel Library, the University mailroom and its adjoining print shop. Newly hired peer coaches are also providing enrichment in academics, social engagement and employment skills.

Welcoming Cabrini University Students

Saint Joseph's enrolled 120 transfer students from the university following the announcement of its pending closure.

This summer, Saint Joseph's began providing Cabrini University students with a seamless path to admission after the university announced it would be closing its doors in spring 2024.

“Statistics about student persistence when universities close are alarming,” says Saint Joseph's president Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD. “We know that nearly half of impacted students won't continue their studies. We don't want to see that happen. For St. Joe's, this effort is mission-critical and what we are called to do as a Jesuit institution of higher education.”

Students attending the Roman Catholic university were quickly accommodated with guaranteed admission to Saint Joseph's, tuition match, credit transfers and access to an ever-growing portfolio of degree programs.

“I couldn't be happier to be part of this amazing community,” says McKenzie Racobaldo '26, a business administration major who transferred from Cabrini. “I was initially drawn to St. Joe's outstanding reputation, especially as a business major. I am eager for the academic challenges that await me here.”

LIFE

Members of Saint Joseph's physical therapy program supported athletes with disabilities at the world's largest adaptive surf event.

ROLLS

ON

For one day in August, the ocean was an accessible oasis for people living with various disabilities. With the support of hundreds of volunteers, including students, faculty and alumni from Saint Joseph's physical therapy program, surfers of all abilities had an extraordinary opportunity to catch some waves in Wildwood, New Jersey.

Lora Packel, PT, MSPT, PhD, associate dean of the School of Health Professions and former chair of the Department of Physical Therapy, led a group of 13 students participating in the annual Life Rolls On event, which brought together more than 750 volunteers and athletes to give individuals with disabilities the support to safely surf the open water. For the students who participated, the experience was a powerful reminder of the impact physical therapy has on so many lives.

"When everything seems to go wrong, I want people to know it's OK," says Ally Short '24 (DPT). "You're still able to do

things that you didn't think you'd be able to do anymore."

Short was among the volunteers who helped athletes of all ages get from the parking lot into beach wheelchairs and then transferred onto adaptive surfboards adorned with children's artwork and all the necessary supports for a safe ride. Teams of therapists and volunteers then went into the ocean to help the athletes make their way into the water, where experienced surfers helped them steer their way back to shore, only to begin the cycle again.

For the athletes, it was the one exhilarating 30-minute window in the year when the ocean was adapted to their needs. For the volunteers, like Michael LaBrie '24 (DPT), it was a glimpse into a rewarding new career path. After leaving his occupation in the automotive industry, LaBrie came to Saint Joseph's in search of a more meaningful way to give back to his community. In Wildwood, he saw just how transformative his new physical therapy degree could be.

"One gentleman looked like he was upset," LaBrie says, "but after he got off [the surfboard] I realized he was crying in true joy."

Life Rolls On was started by Jesse Billauer, a surfer who became quadriplegic after being injured just weeks prior to turning pro. He wanted others to be able "to feel the freedom he experienced on the water," Packel says. Watching the adaptive athletes muster the bravery to get on a surfboard was inspiring for the students who participated, she says.

"It gives them insight into the impact that physical therapy can have on people's lives," Packel says. "It gives them insight into the impact of an illness or an injury on someone's mobility, but also the optimism and potential people can have even when they experience a serious injury like Jesse Billauer did."



Members of Saint Joseph's physical therapy program guide an adaptive athlete into the ocean alongside other Life Rolls On volunteers.

“It gives [students] insight into the impact of an illness or an injury on someone’s mobility, but also the optimism and potential people can have.”

LORA PACKEL, PT, MSPT, PHD
Associate Dean of the
School of Health Professions

UNDERGRADS TACKLE RESEARCH TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO

From uncovering the root cause of medical bias to exploring potential breast cancer treatments, this year's Summer Scholars set the research bar high.

Saint Joseph's Summer Scholars have been working through the summer months on cutting-edge research since 1994. Focusing on a wide breadth of topics, these undergraduate students spend their off-season working with faculty mentors on topics that spark their interests — analyzing literature, studying fruit fly behaviors or creating data systems. This year's Summer Scholars set the bar high, focusing on projects that aim to change industry standards.

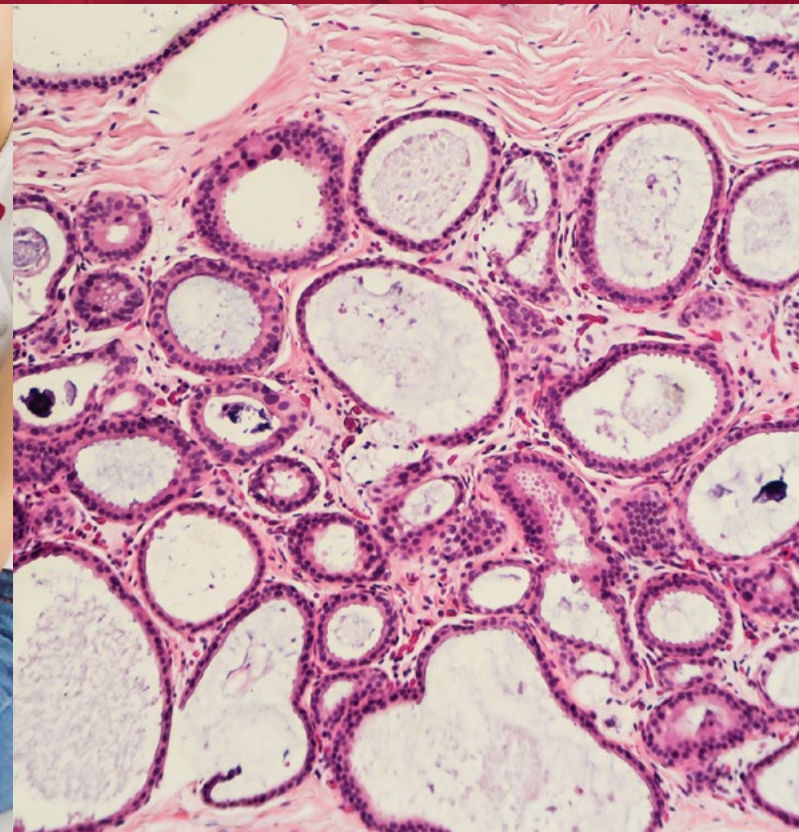


Getting to the Root of Medical Bias for Patients with Autism

Samuel Vizzeswarapu '23, a biology major minoring in autism behavioral studies, spent his summer researching medical bias toward individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the field of healthcare.

Eighty percent of autistic adults reported difficulty visiting a general practitioner in part due to the waiting room environment, not feeling understood and difficulty communicating with a doctor. A large part of Vizzeswarapu's research is to uncover why individuals with ASD experience these situations in a healthcare setting and how it affects their care.

Together with his faculty mentor, Samantha Riggleman, PhD, BCBA, assistant professor of special education, Vizzeswarapu developed and deployed a survey to local health facilities, which will be used to propose a curriculum to help educate healthcare providers on ASD.



Putting Breast Cancer Under the Microscope

Caitlyn Ulmer '24 spent her summer in the lab of Isabelle Mercier, PhD, chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, exploring the potential of repurposing drugs created for another use that could serve as unlikely weapons in the fight against breast cancer. With funding from the Janssen STEM Equity Research Summer Scholars program, which supports underrepresented students in STEM fields, she's studying how and why some antipsychotic medicines inhibit or prevent the proliferation of cancer cells in the most aggressive forms of the disease.

Ulmer, who is a pharmacology and toxicology major, is working to better understand how the antipsychotic drug pimozide inhibits the STAT3 protein that encourages the spread of triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC) cells; these cells lack the three receptors typically targeted by available cancer treatments, which leads to lower survival rates than other forms of the disease.



ECMO: A Bridge to Transplant or a Bridge to Nowhere

Joseph Kelly '24, a biology major minoring in health care ethics and theology, is working to demystify the risks associated with patients consenting to ECMO, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation.

ECMO allows a patient's blood to be pumped outside of the body to a heart-lung machine that removes carbon dioxide, sends oxygen-filled blood back to the tissues and allows the heart and/or lungs to heal. While this procedure can save lives, only 43% of adult ECMO patients survived to discharge between January 2009 and July 2014.

Kelly and Peter Clark, S.J., PhD '75, professor of medical ethics, director of the Institute of Clinical Bioethics and McShain Ethics Chair, are creating a video resource that would quickly and thoroughly educate families on the risks and benefits of ECMO to support them in their decision to either consent to or decline the procedure.

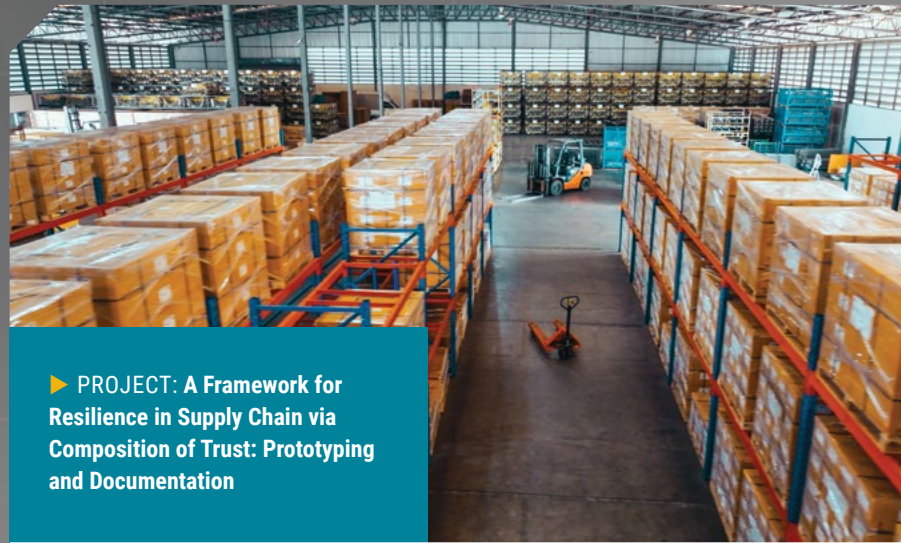
AN INSIDE LOOK AT GRANT-FUNDED PROJECTS

▶ **PROJECT: Pennsylvania First Responders Opioid Training**



▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** Pennsylvania Department of Health
 ▶ **PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Stephen Forzato | director of the Center for Addiction and Recovery Education

Through a partnership with the PA Department of Health and the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, Saint Joseph's Center for Addiction and Recovery Education (CARE) is providing educational opportunities and training programs on how to approach and connect with those in need of treatment for substance use disorder. The training team includes first responders and attorneys, some of whom are in recovery themselves. Over the last three years, CARE has implemented 350 training sessions, trained 5,317 first responders and criminal justice professionals, and distributed 2,467 naloxone units.



▶ **PROJECT: A Framework for Resilience in Supply Chain via Composition of Trust: Prototyping and Documentation**

▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** National Institute of Standards and Technology
 ▶ **PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Marcello Balduccini, PhD | associate professor of decision and system sciences

During the rise of the pandemic, supply chains became sensitive to sudden and extreme changes in demand. This study investigates the use of artificial intelligence for making supply chains more resilient by enabling a more accurate evaluation and restoration of their operations.

▶ **PROJECT: Developing Positive Allosteric Modulators of Formyl Peptide Receptor 2 for the Treatment of Heart Disease**

▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** W.W. Smith Charitable Trust
 ▶ **PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Zhijun Li, PhD | professor of chemistry

Li's research explores whether targeting a membrane protein involved in heart function (formyl peptide receptor 2, or FPR2) could safely and effectively treat heart disease. With the challenge of creating a drug that targets the protein's natural binding site, Li has proposed the development of a molecule that binds to a different site on the protein. The molecule, Li explains, can be further developed into a drug for the treatment of heart disease.

This year, Saint Joseph's faculty members received grant funding to support transformative research in the areas of business, education, healthcare and more.



▶ **PROJECT: Newborn Bedtime Routines: Longitudinal Outcomes and Efficacy**

▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** Johnson & Johnson
 ▶ **PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Jodi Mindell, PhD | professor of psychology

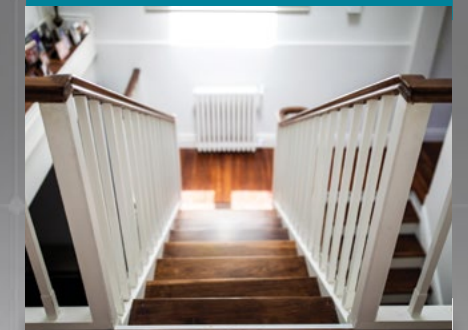
A consistent bedtime routine is associated with better sleep and well-being in infants and toddlers, but little is known about sleep routines for newborns. Mindell's study will assess the acceptability and feasibility of implementing a bedtime routine for newborns, as well as its impact on sleep and developmental outcomes in newborns, parent sleep and mood, and parent-infant bonding.

▶ **PROJECT: CAPER, a New Regulator of DNA Damage and Repair in Triple Negative Breast Cancer**

▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** National Institutes of Health's National Cancer Institute (NIH)
 ▶ **PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS:** Isabelle Mercier, PhD | associate professor and chair of pharmaceutical sciences; Jean-Francois Jasmin, PhD | associate professor and associate provost for research and graduate administration and policy

Mercier and Jasmin's research focuses on the discovery and validation of new biomarkers and therapeutic targets for cancer treatment. This grant will allow them, along with their undergraduate and graduate students, to shed light on the role of a protein called CAPER in the development and progression of triple negative breast cancer, an aggressive form of breast cancer with limited treatment options.

▶ **PROJECT: An Integrated Exercise and Bladder Training Intervention to Reduce Falls in Older Women with Urinary Incontinence**



▶ **GRANTING AGENCY:** National Institutes of Health (UPenn)
 ▶ **CO-PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR:** Wendy Walsh, PhD, OTR/L | chair and associate professor of occupational therapy

Walsh's research is part of a joint venture with University of Pennsylvania on an NIH-funded, three-year randomized control trial study that looks at methods for reducing the number of falls that occur in women aged 70 and older through education, exercise and other interventions. With a focus on occupational therapy techniques, Walsh addresses home environment modification, personal safety and bladder control management as ways to manage incontinence, which is an important factor in elder falls. Preliminary data indicates that the experimental protocol correlates with reduced falls in the participants.

RECOGNIZING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Saint Joseph's students received prestigious fellowships and awards in fields ranging from teaching to STEM and language study.



Alexa Mihaita '24 (left) working in the lab alongside April Pivonka '22 (right).

Alexa Mihaita's research focus at Saint Joseph's may be microscopic, but its impact is anything but small. The senior chemical biology major is studying how gene regulation allows Enteropathogenic E. coli (EPEC) and E. albertii bacteria to cause diseases such as infantile diarrhea — a leading cause of childhood mortality in developing countries according to the National Library of Medicine.

Mihaita's work — conducted alongside Associate Professor of Biology Shantanu Bhatt, PhD — not only marries her passion for biology and public health, but it also earned her the highly competitive Barry M. Goldwater STEM Research Scholarship. It's an award that will allow her to further her academic pursuits in graduate school and beyond.

"On the one hand, the award helped fund the final year of my undergraduate studies at Saint Joseph's, which has given me the tools, training and expertise I need to step into graduate school," says Mihaita, "but it's also given me the confidence that this is something I can do — that I'm on the right path."

Mihaita is one of eight Saint Joseph's students whose academic excellence has been recognized by prestigious fellowships or awards this year. While her current focus has been combatting EPEC infections by identifying new targets for therapeutic strategies, she wants to broaden her scope in graduate school.

"I'm primarily interested in emerging pathogens whose disease mechanisms are cryptic or under-studied," she says, "especially those that may have impacts in developing countries or in areas where accessibility to required therapies may be scarce."

Her ultimate goal is to become a biomedical research scientist and serve as a faculty member of an academic institution.

"Before college, I didn't realize there were avenues besides medical school that would enable me to contribute to public health while also allowing me to explore my curiosity as a scientific researcher," she says. "Without St. Joe's and Dr. Bhatt encouraging me to apply for things like the Goldwater, I wouldn't have discovered my passion."

University Named Top U.S. Fulbright Producer

Saint Joseph's is also the only Philadelphia university to have been recognized in the master's institutions category.

For the third time in University history, Saint Joseph's has been named a Top Producing Institution of U.S. Fulbright Students by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This recognition is given to the U.S. colleges and universities that had the highest number of applicants selected for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program.

"The education we offer is designed to foster an appreciation for the larger world and kindle a desire to make a positive impact," says Saint Joseph's President Cheryl A. McConnell, PhD. "The Fulbright Program is one critical avenue to launch our graduates into that world."

Since its inception in 1946, more than 400,000 people have participated in the Fulbright Program. One of those awardees is alumna Elkanah Linder USP '15, USP '21 (PharmD), who returned to campus this fall to talk about her experience in Sweden.

"Fulbright introduced me to life in a new country, a new culture and a new language. At the same time, it has led to opportunities to continue working with research and educational initiatives relating to the environmental impact of pharmaceuticals in both Swedish and international settings," says Linder.

“The education we offer is designed to foster an appreciation for the larger world and kindle a desire to make a positive impact. The Fulbright Program is one critical avenue to launch our graduates into that world.”

CHERYL A. MCCONNELL, PHD
President

2022-2023 Fellowship Award Winners

Barry M. Goldwater STEM Research Scholarship
Alexa Mihaita '24 • Chemical Biology

Critical Language Scholarship
Caren Teague '23 • English

DAAD-RISE Professional Summer STEM Fellowship
Kayla Flanders '23 • Chemical Biology

Left: Claire Dragwa '23 in front of Le Mont-Saint-Michel in France

Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA)
Raeghan Smith '21, '22 (MS) • International Relations (BS) and Public Policy (MS) (Bosnia-Herzegovina Semifinalist)

Future Nobel Laureate Scholarship
Maddie DeMarco '22, '23 (MS) • Political Science (BS) and Public Policy (MS)

Meddeas Language Assistant Program
Ashley Damaia '23 • Elementary Education (Pre K-4)

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
Kara Moulton '23 • Chemistry

Teaching Assistant Program in France
Claire Dragwa '23 • Secondary Education and French



MAKING HISTORY AT THE VATICAN

The pope appointed a Saint Joseph's student as one of only two laypeople from the United States to serve as a delegate to the Universal Assembly.



Pope Francis named Julia Osęka '25, a physics and theology major and student leader of SCHEAP (Synodality in Catholic Higher Education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia), a voting delegate from North America to the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

The Assembly took place during October 2023 and was the first of two such gatherings in the three-year global synod on "Communion, Participation and Mission," which Pope Francis convened two years prior. This marks the first time in the history of the Roman Catholic Church that non-bishops had voting status in a synod.

How were you selected as a voting delegate and what was your reaction when you found out the news?

Osęka: I was surprised and overwhelmed with gratitude and excitement. I participated in the initial stage of the synod [in 2022] and got involved with SCHEAP, where I was asked to be a student leader. I was later asked to represent the Archdiocese of Philadelphia as a delegate to the continental stage of the synod. I gave a review of the synthesis from North America and participated in a debrief session. When Pope Francis announced that women and young people would be invited to be delegates, Philadelphia Archbishop Nelson Pérez put in a recommendation for me. From there, I ended up being selected as a delegate.

Why is having young people's voices heard in the Church so important?

Osęka: Young people are part of the Church. I think every person who is a part of a greater organization or group should be heard by people who make decisions. In this case, not only are we being heard by people who make decisions, but young people are also making decisions and voting. I think this truly represents the active diversity of

the Catholic Church. [Young people] are the now of the Church, we are not merely someplace in the future.

What was unique about this synod and what role did you play in it?

Osęka: This synod was a gathering of bishops from all around the world and lay people; it was actually the first time that lay people and non-bishop members — religious people and priests who are not bishops — participated and also had a vote in the synod.



As a delegate, I carried with me the voices and experiences of the people from North America, especially the youth. I did so by participating in prayerful reflections and dialogue with other delegates and experts, as well as drafting reports and proposals.

What did you learn about the Catholic Church from this experience?

Osęka: One of the main things I learned is that diversity is a treasure. Our experiences of Catholicism are so different and yet we find a tremendous sense of unity, which has to be developed and cherished.



Graduating the Newest Class of Health Science Professionals

Class of 2023 alumni from the School of Health Professions are the first Saint Joseph's graduates to add the new school to their resumes.

The first class from Saint Joseph's new School of Health Professions (SHP) graduated this spring following the 2022 acquisition of University of the Sciences. Over 500 graduates from occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies and more joined the ranks of nearly 100,000 Saint Joseph's alumni across the globe in professional careers, graduate programs and full-time volunteer opportunities.

Ryan Romano '23 (PharmD), a graduate from Saint Joseph's Philadelphia College of Pharmacy (PCP) who is now a pharmacist at Rosemont Pharmacy, reflects on his experience in the program.

"Pharmacy is constantly changing' was the first thing my dad, a PCP alum, taught me when I started working with him. From innovative and engaging classes to impactful rotational experiences, PCP has given my dad and me the skills we need to be able to adapt in an ever-changing industry," says Romano.

With the addition of five new doctoral degrees to the University's academic portfolio, this was the first year Saint

Joseph's held a standalone doctoral ceremony as part of its Commencement exercises, adding over 200 SHP doctoral graduates to its celebrations.

The University also continued the tradition of hosting pinning and white coat ceremonies for students in its occupational therapy, pharmacy and physician assistant programs. These ceremonies signify a major milestone in a student's academic journey, representing either a transition into the professional portion of their training or a celebration that their clinical training is complete.

Select Employers and Residencies

- Cooper University Hospital
- Good Shepherd Penn Partners
- HCA Florida Largo Hospital
- Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania
- Inspira Health
- Ivy Rehab
- Janssen
- Long Island Jewish Medical Center
- Merck
- MossRehab
- Novacare
- Pfizer
- Rite Aid Pharmacy
- Tender Touch Rehab
- Walgreens Pharmacy

"From innovative and engaging classes to impactful rotational experiences, PCP has given my dad and me the skills we need to be able to adapt in an ever-changing industry."

RYAN ROMANO '23 (PHARMD)

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS BY THE NUMBERS:

523

SHP Graduates in the Class of 2023

203

Doctoral Hoodings

8

New Degree Types Awarded

12

Majors

89%

North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) Pass Rate (National Average: 80%)

83%

Pharmacy Graduates Matched with Postgraduate Year One (PGY1) Residency Programs (Exceeds National Match Rate)





Field Hockey Captures A-10 Championship and First NCAA Tournament Win

For the fourth time in five years, the field hockey program captured the Atlantic 10 championship, downing No. 21 UMass 3-0 in the title game. Making their fifth appearance in the NCAA Tournament, the nationally ranked Hawks collected another program milestone when they beat No. 10 Wake Forest 3-1 for the first tournament win in St. Joe's history.

Baseball Earns Atlantic 10 Regular Season Title

The 2023 season was a special one for Saint Joseph's baseball as the Hawks captured the regular season Atlantic 10 title after leading 17-7 in conference play. Additionally, Head Coach Fritz Hamburg was voted the A-10 Baseball Coach of the Year, while nine Hawks were tabbed for A-10 All-Conference teams.

Hawks Win Inaugural Atlantic 10 Men's Lacrosse Regular Season Crown

Competing in the inaugural season for men's lacrosse in the Atlantic 10, Saint Joseph's posted an undefeated conference record, conquering 5-0 to secure the A-10 regular season crown. A memorable 2023 season was highlighted by 14 Hawks earning A-10 All-Conference team honors, Head Coach Taylor Wray being selected A-10 Coach of the Year, and graduate student Zach Cole '22 earning three All-American honors.

Women's Basketball Earned Postseason WNIT Bid

The women's basketball team earned the 12th postseason Women's National Invitation Tournament bid in program history this past March. The Hawks opened the 2022-23 campaign with nine consecutive wins, tying for the second-best start to a season. Backed by a talented lineup of veterans and newcomers, Saint Joseph's finished the year with 20 wins — their most since 2013-14.

Men's and Women's Basketball Student-Athletes Bring Home the Hardware

It was a stellar year for student-athletes on both the men's and women's basketball teams. On the men's side, Erik Reynolds II '25 earned National Association of Basketball Coaches All-District Four Second Team, Atlantic 10 All-Conference Second Team and All-Big 5 First Team honors, while Cameron Brown '23 garnered Big 5 Co-Most Improved Player accolades and joined Lynn Greer III '25 on the All-Big 5 Second Team.

Newcomer Laura Ziegler '26 was recognized as Atlantic 10, ECAC and Big 5 Women's Basketball Rookie of the Year along with All-Big 5 and All A-10 honors. Talya Brugler '25 earned A-10 and Big 5 All-First Team honors, the I-AAA Athletic Directors Association Scholar-Athlete Team and 2023 PhillySIDA Academic All-Area Teams, while Mackenzie Smith '24 was selected to the A-10 All-Conference Third Team and All-Big 5 Second Team.



College Athletics' Hardest-Worked Mascot Gets a New Look

St. Joe's treasured tradition has evolved, proving the Hawk Will Never Die.

One of the most recognizable mascots in college sports, the Saint Joseph's Hawk, got a new look. After more than two decades of extensive use, hundreds of thousands of flaps, and countless appearances at University and community events and alumni weddings, it was time for a refresh.

"The Hawk is the hardest working mascot in Division I athletics," says Jill Bodensteiner, JD, MBA, vice president. "It is part of our treasured tradition of the Hawk to update the look periodically and our fans agreed that the time was right."

Saint Joseph's collaborated with former mascots and best-in-the-business designer Street Characters to blend traditional aspects of previous Hawk costumes with newer attributes that allow for durability and functionality.

“It is part of our treasured tradition of the Hawk to update the look periodically and our fans agreed that the time was right.”

JILL BODENSTEINER, JD, MBA
Vice President and Director of Athletics

The Hawk costume, originated by Jim Brennan '58, made its debut on Dec. 3, 1955. Since then, a total of 61 Saint Joseph's students have put on the suit for both the men's and women's basketball programs. Hawks serve as enduring proof of the University's rallying cry, touted by *Sports Illustrated* as the most defiant chant in all of college sports: The Hawk Will Never Die.

30 YEARS OF THE APPALACHIAN EXPERIENCE

What began as a service trip three decades ago has blossomed into one of the University's largest service and immersion initiatives.

Over the past 30 years, thousands of Saint Joseph's students have piled into vans headed to towns across the Appalachian region where they engage in an alternative spring break service and immersion program known as the Appalachian Experience, or APEX.

APEX began at the University circa 1993 (then known as Project Appalachia) when a dozen students traveled to Phelps, Kentucky, to volunteer at a Habitat for Humanity site. Since its inception, the program has grown into one of the University's largest service initiatives, having connected more than 4,000 students with residents across the region to build houses, work in community centers and engage in other service activities. At its heart is an emphasis on Ignatian values that go beyond traditional service and encourage thoughtful reflection, living with and for others, and building meaningful relationships.

"What has sustained APEX are the relationships formed with individuals and communities in Appalachia and among the SJU student and alumni participants," says Tricia Riordan, APEX campus minister. "The result has been 30 years of communities in Appalachia asking for SJU students to return year after year, and of SJU students eager to return."

Leading up to the immersion trips, student leaders engage in spiritual formation that includes learning about the history and role of industry in the Appalachian region and the resulting social and environmental issues: unemployment, poor education and infrastructure, air pollution, and reduced water quality, to name only a few.

"Through direct experiences within the site communities, students are given the opportunity to acknowledge, listen and learn," says Riordan. "Students can bring these learnings with them into the future as they make ethical decisions."

Tom Sheibley, director of Campus Ministry, has been involved with APEX since 2005 and has seen the positive effect that it has had on students.

"People, especially people of college age, want to do something meaningful and want to connect with others," Sheibley says. "Through APEX, participants have the opportunity to see life through the eyes of those from another region whose background and experience may be very different from their own, and this can have a profound impact on their understanding of the world."

Brynna Robinson '18 participated in APEX all four years of her undergraduate studies at SJU and continues to serve as an adult facilitator.

"The people are what keep me going back, and by people I mean the St. Joe's community as well as all the communities that I've met in Appalachia," says Robinson, who has seen firsthand what she was taught at a Jesuit university about the importance of working with and for others. "I want to continue to see that aspect of learning not just be this week-long trip, but what we can do afterward."

Though APEX has flourished over the last several decades, there have also been setbacks — including disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. This pause in the program prompted organizers to consider new ways to bolster its community.

"Engaging with the many APEX alumni was a natural way to both expand and support the program," says Riordan. "Alumni could help re-energize student participation and support the program in the midst of rising costs due to inflation."

APEX staff and student leaders have continued to engage the program's alumni; this spring, they formed the APEX Alumni Affinity Group to bring together those interested in supporting the program through its next 30 years.

Riordan also wants to expand APEX to involve new students and initiatives.

"With the addition of Saint Joseph's new healthcare programs, I see the opportunity to add sites that engage in service and learning within rural community health and wellness agencies," says Riordan.

Today, APEX continues to be a transformational experience for many who participate — both SJU students and those in the Appalachian region. Roger Bush has lived in Alleghany Highlands, Virginia, for nearly four decades.

"I am so thankful to be able to know the people from Saint Joseph's," Bush

said in the APEX documentary directed and produced by alumni Jeffrey Wallin '10 and Matt Fullmer '17 (MBA) in 2019. "The contribution they've made to the community is just unspeakably beautiful and what they mean to me is deeply, deeply appreciated."



2023 SITES

- 1 Alleghany Highlands, Virginia
- 2 Apple Ridge Farm, Virginia
- 3 Bluefield, West Virginia
- 4 Deer Lodge, Tennessee
- 5 Greenbrier County, West Virginia
- 6 Kimball, West Virginia
- 7 Hazard, Kentucky
- 8 Robbins, Tennessee
- 9 St. Paul, Virginia
- 10 Wheeling, West Virginia
- 11 West Jeffererson, North Carolina
- 12 Wilkesboro, North Carolina



Watch the
APEX Documentary

QUICK FACTS

1993
FIRST TRIP

4,000+
STUDENT PARTICIPANTS
OVER 30 YEARS

40+
SITES ESTABLISHED



ANGELS ON A LEASH

Saint Joseph's education majors partnered with Angels on a Leash to help elementary school students gain confidence reading aloud by working with therapy dogs.

Reading aloud in class can be stressful for young students, especially for those who are learning to be better readers. To help ease their anxieties, students in Saint Joseph's chapter of Alpha Upsilon Alpha (AUA), the International Literacy Association's honor society, hosted a community event at the Bucks County Free Library where they invited elementary-aged children to read books to therapy dogs.

The event was inspired by a Saint Joseph's student's field experience and was hosted in partnership with Angels on a Leash, a nonprofit that provides volunteer therapy-dog handler teams.

"At the private school where I worked, the students had learning-based disabilities such as dyslexia, dyscalculia or dysgraphia. Some of my students were a grade level or more behind in their reading fluency and I could see how this would impact their confidence, especially to read in class," says Erica Braunlinger '22, '23 (MED), president of the AUA Alpha Zeta

chapter. "The school had a support dog and I would have my students read to him; it was evident that they were more confident with reading, and their accuracy and expression increased tremendously."

Braunlinger and the other members of the Alpha Zeta chapter were grateful for the opportunity to give even more children a space to find their confidence when reading aloud.

"We were all so proud of what we were able to accomplish. Children and their families were able to take home free books that our chapter provided to be able to practice fluency at home. The children who read to the dogs were so at ease and excited to read to a furry canine friend," says Braunlinger.

The books that remained after the event were donated to BookSmiles, an agency that helps supply books to Title I schools.

"The school had a support dog and I would have my students read to him; it was evident that they were more confident with reading, and their accuracy and expression increased tremendously."

ERICA BRAUNLINGER '22, '23 (MED)
President of Alpha Zeta



Celebrating a Decade of Young Women in STEM

Saint Joseph's award-winning Physics Wonder Girls Camp marked its 10th year, ensuring young women find their place in STEM.

Saint Joseph's Physics Wonder Girls Camp celebrated its 10-year milestone with the largest and most diverse group of girls yet. The camp, founded by Physics Professor Roberto Ramos, PhD, pairs middle school girls with undergraduate STEM students to engage in hands-on physics experiments; tours of research labs and industrial plants; and physics-based games, poster sessions and career talks.

Since 2013, the camp has paired a total of 240 middle school girls with 60 SJU students. This year, the program also received its fourth grant from Constellation, the nation's largest producer of carbon-free energy, to expand opportunities for young women while also focusing on renewable energy and creating a more sustainable world.

Ramos, Physics Wonder Girls program director, launched the camp after recognizing his daughter Kristiana's interest in the sciences at an early age. He was determined to create a program for young girls like Kristiana who expressed a passion for the sciences. This idea turned into a larger vision to inspire girls to pursue careers in STEM fields.

Originally funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation, the program started in Indiana in 2013 and came to Philadelphia in 2016

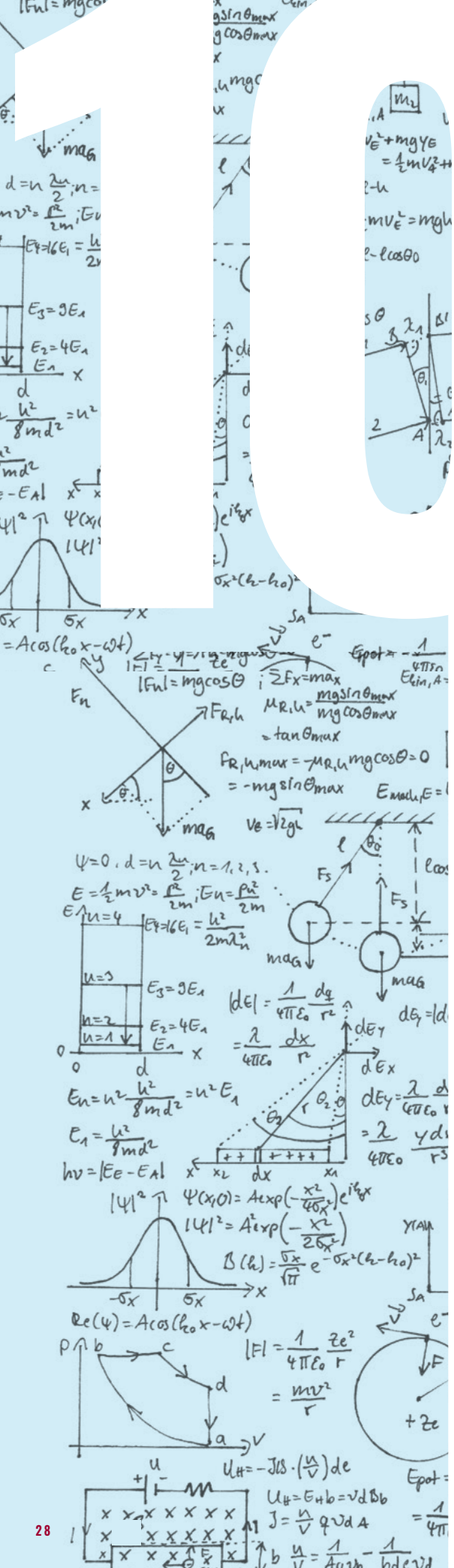
"Camps such as the Physics Wonder Girls promise to raise and sustain appreciation for physics as a discipline and career among women in order to help correct this imbalance in society."

ROBERTO RAMOS, PHD
Physics Wonder Girls Program Director

when Ramos joined University of the Sciences.

Over the past 10 years, the campers have had opportunities to hear from more than a dozen industry-experienced speakers, including Saint Joseph's alumni who are physicists, scientists and engineers across the private sector, national laboratories and academia.

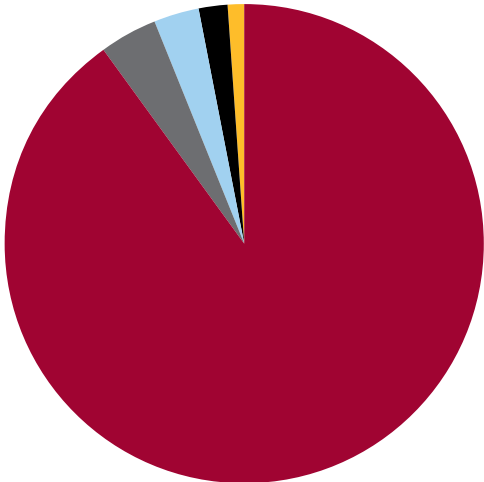
"Within physics, only five women have received the Nobel Prize," Ramos says. "Camps such as the Physics Wonder Girls promise to raise and sustain appreciation for physics as a discipline and career among women in order to help correct this imbalance in society."



UNIVERSITY FINANCIALS

FY23

FY23 REVENUE SOURCES

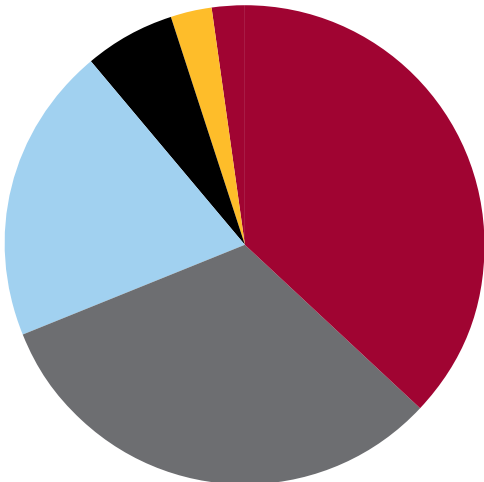


- Student Income | 87%
- Endowment and Other Releases | 7%
- Grants | 3%
- Other Income* | 2%
- Gifts | 1%

Student income from tuition, fees and room and board accounted for 87% of total revenue.

*Other income includes revenue from athletics and centers and institutes.

FY23 REVENUE USES



- Employee Compensation | 36%
- Student Financial Aid | 30%
- Purchased Goods and Services | 23%
- Funded Depreciation Used for Capital | 7%
- Interest | 4%

Financial aid accounts for 30% of operating expenses, as access and affordability remain a top priority.

BALANCE SHEET

As of May 31 (in millions)

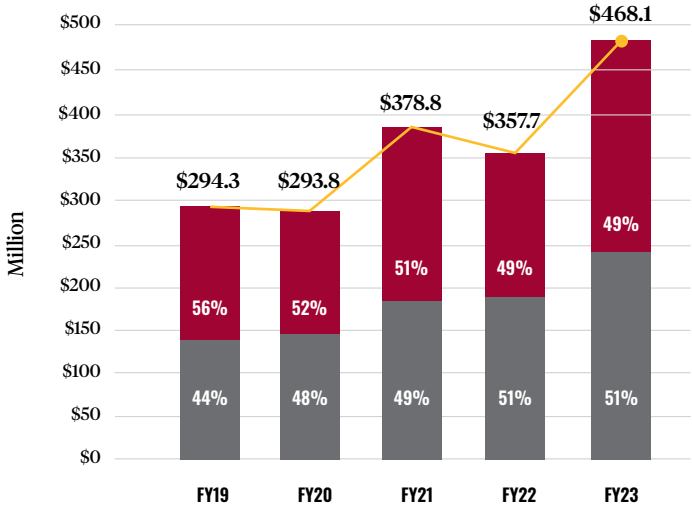
	FY2023	FY2022
Assets		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$94	\$88
Deposits Held by Trustee	195	-
Accounts Receivable, Net	34	21
Long-Term Investments	490	372
Property, Plant & Equipment, Net	672	389
Other Assets*	10	10
Total Assets	\$1,495	\$880
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$31	\$24
Deferred Revenue	20	12
Long-Term Debt	559	200
Other Liabilities**	5	3
Total Liabilities	\$615	\$239
Net Assets	\$880	\$641

The acquisition of University of the Sciences resulted in a year-over-year increase in net assets of \$239 million, which strengthened the balance sheet.

* Other assets include prepaid expenses, right-of-use assets and beneficial interest in trust.

** Other liabilities include leases, student deposits and refundable government grants and loans.

FISCAL YEAR END ENDOWMENT VALUES



Endowment as of May 31 (in millions)

- Without Donor Restriction
- With Donor Restriction

The current value of the endowment is \$463 million as of Oct. 20, 2023.

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