A nine-foot bronze Wildcat crouches on the east patio of the SURC, welcoming visitors at the busiest entrance to campus. Photo courtesy of student Emily Zalk. Story on Page 28. Cover photo by Rich Villacres.

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Go to cwu.edu/magazine for an enhanced digital edition of CWU CONNECTIONS containing many web extras.
We Love Letters!

Connections magazine welcomes letters from readers. We accept up to 250 words and may edit for length and clarity. Please include the years you attended CWU and a phone number (to confirm authorship). Send letters to:
Connections magazine
CWU Public Affairs
400 East University Way
Ellensburg WA 98926-7505
or e-mail us at barnott@cwu.edu.

CWU Joins #GivingTuesday

CWU has joined #GivingTuesday, a global day dedicated to giving back because the holiday season is about community and not just consumerism.

Scheduled for the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, #GivingTuesday celebrates generosity by inspiring people to improve their communities, give back in smarter ways and help create a better world.

Mark your calendar for December 1, and watch for more details about how you can make a difference with CWU on #GivingTuesday.
Dear Alumni,

Central Washington University will celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2016, and we will use the year to reflect on our past and remember all of the people who have passed across our campuses. Just as importantly, it will give us an opportunity to share our visions of the future.

**CWU always has been a special place** with an important role in the history and the vitality of the Northwest. Central has and continues to welcome qualified students from all walks of life. This commitment to embracing students as they are has earned us the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award and acknowledgment as one of the nation’s top 50 LGBTQ-friendly schools.

We’ve **removed barriers of money, time, and place**. This year, for the first time in our history, tuition is lower than last year, and will fall again next year! This is tremendous news for our students and helps make us one of the West’s top 100 Best Bang-for-the-Buck universities, according to *Washington Monthly*.

We’ve never lost sight of the importance of individualized instruction, or the personal relationships and small classes that priority demands. **Educating students is our first priority**. Our best faculty are in the classroom—faculty like Dominic Klyve, recently recognized as one of the nation’s top collegiate math teachers.

We pride ourselves in giving students the opportunity to do what they’re learning. Few universities have a greater commitment to undergraduate research and real-world experience. How many undergraduate collegiate musicians get to play at world class jazz festivals? In September, CWU’s top big band performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival, after winning the festival’s Top Jazz Band title last spring.

The question moving forward is **how to stand strong while the world spins around us?** How do we hold to the values that have carried us for more than a century while adapting to rapid change and a new challenge every day?

**The best answer is that we do it together.**

We must lend a hand to students by supporting scholarships and co-curricular activities, such as our best-in-the-nation student radio station. Together, Wildcat Nation has the energy and spirit to inspire students and faculty. Wildcat Nation has strong community connections and the skill to advocate for CWU in the boardroom, the classroom, and legislative hearing rooms.

Each alumnus can play a significant role in ensuring that the Wildcat experience is as exciting in the coming 125 years as it has been in the past. It will take your time and your talent, your ideas and your connections. It will take all of the Wildcat Nation to protect and build on the remarkable heritage of Central Washington University.

James L. Gaudino  
President, Central Washington University
Hats Off to the Class of 2015

“We will always be identified with EWU. You
Under blue skies and surrounded by proud family, friends, and colleagues, more than 3,000 graduates earned CWU degrees in June. The class of 2015 is made up of award-winning musicians and artists, outstanding communicators, skilled scientists, energetic educators and future business leaders.

The Ellensburg cohorts marched toward commencement to the centuries-old unbroken music of bagpipes.

The 2015 commencement was Larry Gookin’s last hurrah—his 32nd time leading the Wind Ensemble in the processional and recessional. In 34 years as director of bands at CWU, Gookin missed just two commencements. He retired in June.

A new Tweetwall gave friends and family an active, social role in the celebration. Twitter users who appended the hashtag #CWUGrad to their tweets found them published in real time across the big screen during graduation. The messages consisted of congratulatory shout-outs from little sisters and big brothers, fiancés, wives and husbands, and moms and dads.

@AshleyFaye11: S/o to Dr. Harrod for getting me through this crazy ride. Thank you for all the guidance and advice over the years! #cwugrad

Kittitas homeboy and CWU alumnus Doug Wood gave the keynote at the Ellensburg ceremonies. The Tommy Bahama chief of operations reminisced about his days as a Wildcat and praised the class of 2015 as “the best of us.”

The celebration at the ShoWare Center in Kent had an emotional tone as some students who never saw themselves earning degrees proudly accepted their diplomas. CWU alumna Jean Adams, senior vice president of investments and senior financial advisor for Wells Fargo...
CWU Welcomes New Leaders

CWU welcomed new leaders in the College of Arts and Humanities, College of Education and Professional Studies, and the Office of International Studies and Programs in the past year. The fresh energy and valuable experience they bring will build upon the success of their colleges and the university on the whole.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Stacey Robertson brings tremendous academic experience to the College of Arts and Humanities, as well as the budgeting expertise required for the college to thrive in a new financial world. Robertson came to CWU from Bradley University in Illinois, where she held an endowed professorship in history and served as director of women’s studies. She was the Oglesby Professor of American Heritage, an endowed professorship that encourages the study of the American economy and political democracy, and served as dean of Bradley’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for two years.

Robertson has received numerous teaching awards and research fellowships. A renowned historian, particularly of the 19th-century antislavery movement, she is a highly sought national and international lecturer. She has written four books, including her 2014 work Betsy Mix Cowles: Champion of Equality, and serves as co-director of the national nonprofit organization Historians Against Slavery. Robertson earned her bachelor’s degree from Whittier (Calif.) College and her master’s and doctorate in history from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

“The energy, innovative spirit, and heart-warming community at CWU have made me feel at home after a few short months.”
— Stacey Robertson, dean, College of Arts and Humanities

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
Paul Ballard brings extensive experience in program accreditation, assessment, and administration to the dean’s office in the College of Education and Professional Studies. His research has included new program development, online and competency-based program assessment, and streamlining the assessment process for program accreditation. Ballard came from Metropolitan State University of Denver, where he served as associate dean in the College of Professional Studies and was associate vice president for Enrollment Services. He also held the positions of assistant dean, department chair, program director, and faculty member at Saginaw Valley State University. Ballard completed his master’s and doctorate at Temple University in Philadelphia. In addition, he attended the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education at Harvard University.

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND PROGRAMS
Ann Radwan is the executive director of International Studies and Programs. She came from St. Cloud State University, where she served as associate vice president for International Affairs. Under her leadership the program earned a 2013 NAFSA Paul Simon Award for significant progress toward comprehensive internationalization using innovative and creative approaches. Radwan was executive director of the Fulbright Commission in Cairo, Egypt for more than 20 years and was the Near East/South Asia branch chief for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs/United States Information Agency. Radwan holds a bachelor’s degree in international relations from American University and a doctorate in South Asian studies, economics, and economic history from the University of Pennsylvania.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Erin Black, director of philanthropy at the Memorial Foundation, is the newest member of the Board of Trustees. Gov. Jay Inslee appointed the CWU alumna to the six-year post in June.

Black says the appointment matches her passion for creating opportunity, and her expertise in organizational management.

Black is the former executive director of the YWCA of Yakima. She has served on the Downtown Yakima Rotary Board of Directors; she led “100 Jobs for 100 Kids,” which helps high school students increase their work skills; and served on the board of Safe Yakima Valley, designed to reduce crime and substance abuse; and the executive committee of the Yakima Homeless Network.

Black holds a master’s degree in executive nonprofit leadership from Seattle University. She graduated cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology with a specialization in museology from CWU.

Savoian Retires from College of Business

Throughout his 17 years, Roy Savoian posted next to his desk a John Wooden quote: “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

The former dean of the College of Business, professor, and founding director of CWU Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship says Wooden’s words have been his credo.

“I tried to do the right things in the right way, with candor, honesty, and integrity,” he says.

After 14 years as business dean, Savoian stepped away from the post in 2012.

“It was the right time for me to go back to a faculty position, do some teaching and work directly with students on a consistent basis, which I really enjoyed doing,” he explains. “Being a dean takes a lot of emotional and psychological capital, as you’re at the intersection of students, faculty, programs and the university administration.”

In June, Savoian retired from the university. His legacy includes the successful culmination of a decades-long effort to transform the former School of Business and Economics into the internationally recognized College of Business. Savoian also led the work to earn accreditation by AACSB International, the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

“One thing that will continue to enhance our image and visibility is the successes of our graduates,” Savoian notes. “When you look at what our alumni are doing, it reflects back on us. Five years from now, I would expect to see an even stronger College of Business because of stronger alumni loyalty.”

Overall, Savoian has spent more than 40 years on college campuses nationwide, a journey he says he couldn’t have made alone.

“This has been our journey,” Savoian emphasizes, referring to his wife of 51 years, Alana. “She has always been there—always—uncomplaining. It’s been a great ride.”

In retirement, along with spending time with his family, Savoian has adopted a new credo to “empty your cup.” The Buddhist saying pertains to divesting from past things to be refilled for the present and future.

“There are trails to be hiked, books to be read and—hopefully—some fish to be caught,” the avid Yakima River fly-fisherman predicts. “And my wife is working on a list that is helping me make the transition,” he adds, with a laugh.
Radio Revival

The ‘Burg named best college station

The students and staff who power the campus radio station, KCWU-FM 88.1 The ‘Burg, are having the best year ever.

In October they won the College Broadcasters, Inc. 2014 National Student Production Award for Best Podcast. It was The ‘Burg’s first national honor since the station began in 1958. “And it gave the students instant confidence,” said Travis Box, the station’s general manager. As a result, Box got a tattoo—his first and only—to show his pride and make good on a gutsy promise to students.

In March, The ‘Burg was named Best College Radio Station in the country at the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Awards in New York City. That’s right: No. 1 station in the nation. KCWU amassed nine other trophies before the night was over.

Then in June professional program director Nikki Marra went back to NYC to accept an international radio award for her 2014 audio documentary The College Radio Road Trip.

The rebirth of the radio station and its new creativity-based ideology began with Box’s arrival in 2013. The 20-year broadcast veteran knows how valuable college radio is in training new blood since so many small stations have closed or merged over the past couple decades.

But the majority of ‘Burg buffs aren’t even communication or broadcast majors. And they’re honing all kinds of universal skills such as accountability, leadership, time management, public speaking, and the creative process—which are important for the DJs who double as athletes, theater performers, music majors, and business and English students.

“We’re preparing them to be at the top of the stack of resumes,” Box said.

In the new environment, students are thriving. And word has gotten out across campus. The ‘Burg has more than 60 student volunteers—from on-air show hosts, news presenters, and audio production announcers to promoters, music screeners, and trainers. And there’s a standing list of at least 30 people at any given time waiting to be trained.

“They just want to be part of the fun, the culture, the community, the family environment,” Marra said. “The ‘Burg is a spectacularly special place on campus.”

LISTEN LIVE, WHEREVER YOU ARE

You don’t have to be near Ellensburg to tune into KCWU-FM 88.1 The ‘Burg. Listen to the live stream on The ‘Burg’s homepage, www.881theburg.com, or download the station’s app on your iPhone, Android, or Microsoft device.

In addition to its varied genres — from indie, electropop, and retro pop, to reggae, metal, and anthem rock — The ‘Burg broadcasts football and basketball games as part of the new Wildcat Sports Radio Network.
Wildcats Shine in National Spotlight

Congratulations to faculty, students, and staff who brought home awards and recognition at the state, national, and international level. Below is a brief summary of some of the more notable honors over the past year.

- Dean of Libraries, Patricia Cutright was elected to the Executive Board of the American Indian Library Association.
- Keith Monosky, director of the EMS paramedicine program, was appointed to the National EMS Advisory Council (NEMSAC).
- Art Professors Glen Bach and David Bieloh won Gold Awards in the 2015 Summit Creative Awards International Competition.
- Professor Lisa Ely, geological sciences, was named the Thompson International Distinguished Lecturer of the Geological Society of America (GSA).
- Nick Zentner, geological sciences, received the James H. Shea Award of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers. The award recognizes exceptional contributions of Earth science materials of interest to the general public and teachers. Check out his Roadside Geology series.
- Jazz Band I won the college band division at the Next Generation Jazz Festival and in September performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival, one of the most prestigious and longest running jazz festivals in the world.

- In April Mark Lane, professor of music education and associate director of bands, was picked as the 2014-2015 outstanding music educator of the year by the Washington Music Educators Association.
- Todd Shiver, chair of the Department of Music, was named president of Washington University Music Administrators Association.
- Sophomore Taylor Zickefoose won the collegiate division of the Kobe-Seattle Sister City Vocal Jazz Competition, which she previously won as a high school student (she is the first person to win the contest twice).
- Scott Robinson, chair of the Department of Theatre Arts, received a second Gold Medallion of Excellence from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

Record Capital Budget will Transform Campus

The end of Washington’s record-long 2015 legislative session was worth the wait. The state approved more than $100 million in construction funding for CWU, more than any other state university for the second biennium.

Since 2007, more than a quarter billion dollars in construction funding has renovated Dean and Hogue Halls, which also got a new addition. Additionally, CWU has replaced old steam and electrical lines, and built the Northwest’s premier collegiate music facility. In 2013 the legislature approved funding for a new facility for physics and geology. Called Science II, the new building will open in fall 2016.

This year $88 million will transform the Depression-era Samuelson Hall into a state of the art facility for the Departments of Computer Science, Information Technology and Administrative Management, and Mathematics. Samuelson also will house the campus data center and facilities to create online learning content.

Nearly $50 million more will renovate Bouillon Hall and Lind Hall, the latter to become the new home of CWU’s nationally recognized ROTC programs. The funding also pays for the design of a new facility for the Department of Nutrition, Exercise, and Health Sciences and continued work on updating campus utilities. The record capital budget even includes funds to renovate “Old Heat,” the World War II-era boiler plant across from Kamola Hall. Mothballed in 1971, the massive structure will be Central’s new Welcome Center for new students, alumni, and other.
Changing the World

Seahawk Discovers a Different Definition of Success

Just weeks after his incredible catch in the Superbowl, Seahawks star wide-receiver Jermaine Kearse boarded a plane for Nicaragua. He was going to a small, impoverished fishing village to help build a technical school. This was Kearse’s first time away from U.S. soil and he had no idea what to expect.

Kearse, along with former NFL Oakland Raider Eric Barton, was traveling with students enrolled in CWU’s International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI). They spent a good part of their days shoveling cement to finish building a technical school in Jiquilillo.

“It was really hard labor—harder than my workouts with the Seahawks,” Kearse admitted. “I never made cement by hand.”

“Every scoop of my shovel may be advancing a chance for them,” Barton commented. “I’m doing this work because, if one kid prospers, we all win. Who knows what the kids who come to this school will become.”

Barton was impressed with the program. “Any student who comes on this trip will leave a better person—and probably a better student. It not only shows them how to be grateful for what they have back home, it shows them what they can do to better themselves,” he said.

Barton was so taken with the program, he is going back to help start a surfing school so the locals can take advantage of the island’s burgeoning tourist economy.

“They were great,” said Ken Cohen, director of ISDI. “And they did this work fully in partnership with the people and the children of the village. I think they found, as we always do, that when you break bread with people, when you dig a shovel into the earth next to them and build a wall together, amazing things happen. They learn from you, and more so, you learn from them.”

Teresa Craig, a GIVE volunteer, walks hand in hand with three little girls in Jiquilillo, Nicaragua.

“As an instructor, I take part in every activity that the students do, from mixing cement in Zanzibar, to building bamboo rafts in Thailand,” said ISDI director Ken Cohen (pictured center).
Two weeks on a beach in the Caribbean sounds like an easy way to earn five college credits. But instead of margaritas and beach volleyball, CWU junior Corrine Pruett spent a hot, sweaty, and demanding 14 days building a school in the community of Jiquilillo in Nicaragua. The heat and humidity that time of year ensures your shirt is plastered to your back with sweat from the moment you get dressed till you go to bed at night.

Jiquilillo is a small fishing village that, while serving a growing tourism trade, lacks roads, schools, and reliable sewer and water systems.

“We were helping finish a technical school where they can learn marine mechanics, welding and carpentry, and the hospitality trade—skills that they wanted to learn and that they can use to make their lives better,” said Pruett.

While there, Pruett mixed mortar and cement, and helped complete the structure. “We worked right alongside locals. At one point, I was working with a man and his son to build a well,” she recalls. In addition to the hard, physical labor, she spent afternoons tutoring children and adults in English. “Everyone was just hungry for knowledge,” she said.

College Credit for Doing Good

Pruett had enrolled in CWU’s international sustainable development class, a physically, mentally, and emotionally arduous immersion course. In it, students apply critical thinking skills, field observations, and reflective processing to explore how development efforts impact the resident community and themselves. This was Pruett’s second trip and she vows it won’t be her last.

“It’s a unique opportunity. I’ve never seen anything like it—where the students are engaging in their academic interests and at the same time doing good and getting credit for it—all the while in some of the most beautiful and challenging landscapes imaginable,” said Kenneth Cohen, director of CWU’s International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

Cohen, who specializes in sustainable tourism and community building, sought to develop a for-credit opportunity. Previously, he had taken students on a trip through the Ecuadorian Amazon. The experience was wonderful,
he noted, but difficult to sustain. So Cohen reached out to organizations that could provide structure and international marketing capabilities. Partnering with Seattle-based Growth International Volunteer Excursions (GIVE) allowed him to create the unique hybrid experiential/academic program that has evolved into CWU’s international sustainable development class.

“All projects revolve around sustainability,” said Cohen. “We have a reputation for keeping our word and being socially and culturally appropriate. In exchange, we have been embraced, and the members of the community are invested in our success. The people are so warm, gracious, and hospitable despite having so little.”

What makes the ISDI-GIVE program so successful is the directors working closely with the community to determine which project will benefit the people living there. GIVE and ISDI facilitate and organize the projects, from recycling thousands of plastic drinking bottles into building materials for a schoolhouse in Nicaragua to developing a water delivery system in Tanzania.

“We meet with the community to determine what their priorities are—and how we can build what they need in a sustainable manner,” related Cohen. “For example, the community on Zanzibar Island needed a water tank. The average income in the village we work in on Zanzibar is approximately $1 a day. About 15 percent of that was going to buying freshwater.”

There was a fresh water aquifer, but they needed to build a pump system and create a large tank to hold the water. Ironically, the most abundant building materials were used plastic water bottles. The volunteers worked with community members to fill the water bottles with sand, then mortar them into place with cement, creating a vital, yet affordable, addition to their community.

“Upcycling the bottles into bricks is not only an affordable way to build, it keeps those plastic bottles out of the ocean where they harm marine life and create health risks,” Cohen remarked.

While the trip came with plenty of hard work, the group was able to squeeze in some fun during its demanding stay in Nicaragua, said CWU student Corrine Pruett. One of the highlights? Sand boarding down an active volcano.

When they weren’t mixing cement and mortar for a new school in Nicaragua, Seahawks wide receiver Jermaine Kearse and former University of Washington wide receiver D’Andre Goodwin read to the local children.
Spending three weeks building a school in Africa was Pruett’s first foray with CWU’s international sustainable development class—which she describes as transformational.

“Through the course we do a lot of pre-trip preparation, and learn about the area we are going into,” she recounted. “So you’re not going in blind. But I had never traveled before, so I had extreme cultural shock. I feel that I was very sheltered and I found the poverty there shocking.”

“The trip affected me personally, professionally, and academically. My world was completely turned upside down.”

Deeply affected by her trip, Pruett changed her major and career path. She is now majoring in tourism and management, with a minor in sustainable tourism. She hopes to go on another GIVE adventure, this time as a researcher observing the volunteers and measuring their perceptions and how they change during and after the trip.

The course is structured to support the students in every way possible, as they are confronted and immersed in cultures and living situations unlike they’ve ever experienced.

“We take students out of their comfort zones the minute they step off the plane,” Cohen said. “The whole situation is very intense. By challenging their views they get a broader understanding of who they are. By discovering their capacity to have a genuinely positive impact, they come out empowered—and far more capable.”

As enrollment in the course has surged (it has tripled since 2011), Cohen has added more unique opportunities that include aligning with non-governmental organizations that will allow students to participate in research studies. The ISDI will teach an undergraduate research course that provides one-of-a-kind experiences all over the globe.

In Tanzania, students can engage in research at a local hospital. In Hanoi, Vietnam, students will conduct research as part of a health project for street children. In Ecuador, they will work with NGOs providing health services to impoverished communities.

Cohen also has developed a partnership in Lotan, Israel, where students will engage in an intensive seven-week green apprenticeship developing sustainable energy solutions for agriculture and working with the Bedouin community.

Another ISDI project is an applied research program in the Serengeti, conducting research on the gross domestic product generated by safaris, the effect of climate change, safari impacts on flagship species, and how management interventions can minimize impacts and leverage economic opportunity. Students will be working directly with the chief research scientist at Serengeti National Park.

“We’re just getting started,” Cohen said. “This course offers the best of international experience, online learning, and global study. We’re not tourists here. We’re immersing ourselves in peoples’ cultures and working collaboratively to find innovative solutions to real-world problems.

“And our students have the passion, ability, and energy to succeed.”
Fighting an Ancient
Vampire-like Fangs and an Appetite for Blood

Hookworms have been afflicting humankind for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptian physicians’ papyrus texts describe signature symptoms of the disease, especially the abdominal distress, fatigue, and lack of mental acuity.

They are roundworms that find their way into the intestines of their host—in this case, an unlucky human. Once there, they hook their cutting plates into the soft, nutrient-rich lining of the intestine, where they feed on blood. Depending on the species, they can live up to five years, all the while mating and reproducing. The industrious females can produce upwards of 10,000 to 30,000 eggs per day. Yeah, it’s gross.

What’s more alarming is the human toll. A severe infection of hookworms can cause acute anemia, when there aren’t enough red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout the body. The brain is most affected, and people with anemia develop fatigue and difficulty concentrating.

Although it has been successfully treated in the past with drugs, the parasite is developing resistance and the race has been on for new treatments.

Seeking New Solutions to Old Problems

“It’s a quality of life issue,” said biology professor Dondji, a specialist in infectious diseases, parasitology, and immunology. A native of Cameroon, Dondji has seen the human devastation that occurs with unchecked diseases, especially among the young and vulnerable. His research focuses on infections that afflict the developing world such as leishmaniasis and malaria.
“Very little research has been done previously to look for alternatives to treatments for hookworm infection,” he continued. “To date, there is only one group of drugs for the disease, the benzimidazoles—and they are becoming ineffective.”

This is where Belofsky comes in. As a chemist, his research has focused on what plants can do to combat deadly diseases. He has already performed significant research in the use of plant-based extracts to treat drug-resistant bacteria, such as the dangerous Staphylococcus aureus, the bacteria linked to pneumonia, endocarditis, and toxic-shock syndrome. He recently published research on the effectiveness of other plant components against resistant fungal strains and agricultural crop-pests. He’s also performed preliminary work on treatments for Parkinson’s via dopamine receptor-binding.

Belofsky’s and Dondji’s research seeks to identify and characterize plant compounds that demonstrate activity against the hookworm Ancylostoma ceylanicum, one of the species causing the human disease. Belofsky has found two relatively common plant species, the Western prairie clover (Dalea ornata), and the Indian plum (Oemleria cerasiformis), that yield the necessary compounds to slow—or even end—worm activity.

A Student Project Produces Crucial Results

Kaitlin Koppinger, who graduated in 2014, and other undergrads at the time brought Belofsky and Dondji together on this hookworm quest. When Koppinger wanted to get involved in research the summer after her sophomore year, Dondji offered her the opportunity.

“I’ve been interested in biology since I was eight years old,” Koppinger said. “It was my first time working on a research project, so I thought I’d be washing dishes or taking care of animals. I didn’t know I’d have my own project!”

For Koppinger, the summer of 2012 became an intense seminar in scientific research. Her mission: Find out which plant extracts have an effect on hookworms. She learned how to develop research protocols and how to develop an assay, a test that determines the components of a substance. Dondji showed the young scientist how to record and quantify results, and, ironically, how to keep hookworms alive—“It’s hard to keep them from dying outside of a host,” Koppinger laughed.

“Dr. Dondji trained me personally. He was there every step of the way and provided me with great experience,” she enthused. “It was such a great learning experience, and I acquired so many different skills.”

Best of all, the plant compounds that she refined and tested provided important preliminary results for the successful NIH grant proposal.

For Koppinger, the summer was also a crash course in how drugs are developed. In addition to learning the basics of laboratory science, she gained a broader perspective on drug delivery systems, analysis of target populations, and what method of drug distribution
Koppinger is back in the laboratory this fall as a graduate student in biological sciences. Her summer project has become the basis of her master’s thesis. She will not only look at the effectiveness of plant compounds against hookworm activity in a petri dish, but also their effectiveness in a living organism.

**Encouraging Findings**

Both Dondji and Belofsky are optimistic that the isolated plant compounds will yield positive results. With Koppinger’s help, they already have identified some of the active compounds—“which, down the road, could develop into intellectual property patenting and drug development,” said Dondji.

Early indications from these sources have been highly encouraging. However, Belofsky cautions, a compound effective against hookworm must also correlate with low toxicity toward healthy cells for a treatment to be useful. The team will also examine effective and economic forms of drug delivery, taking into account the living conditions and limited storage capabilities of the target populations.

“We’re looking at how people could actually grow the plants in their own country, or even in their village,” said Koppinger. “We may be able to develop a kind of tea from the plants, which would make the drugs easy to obtain and use.

“Our main goal,” she said, “is to find the next hookworm drug and really help people.”
Data and intense advising boost student success

by Barb Arnott
For decades CWU has carried students from freshman to senior year in a leaky bucket. For every 100 who enrolled as freshmen, only 76 returned as sophomores; fewer than 60 made it to graduation.

Five years ago CWU brought academic and student life together under one division in order to infuse the activities of students with the academic core. Two years ago, the university grouped advising and student life into a single department, the sole focus of which is student success. The department brought down advisor caseloads from 500 students to the national norm of 300, and now has armed advisors with the elixir of success: data.

Researchers in the Department of Institutional Effectiveness assigned themselves a unique project: Figure out which students are most likely to drop out and when. Unlike other retention studies, this research didn’t assume the problem was academics. It simply looked at eight years of freshmen and transfer student behavior, identifying peak dropout periods and factors associated with students who stopped out during those periods.

Jim DePaepe, former director of the study and of Institutional Effectiveness, said the study included 41 variables clustered around eight factors:

- Admissions test scores
- Baccalaureate graduation
- Demographics
- Enrollment by quarter
- Financial aid
- High school quality
- Home census data
- Remediation courses
Data Warehouse Streamlines Research

An impressive data warehouse is the muscle behind the brains in CWU’s Department of Institutional Effectiveness.

“It’s unprecedented how efficient we’re able to access data,” says Elizabeth Lee, associate director of analytics and research for Institutional Effectiveness.

CWU is the only institution in the state with WebFOCUS RStat, which unifies disparate data banks that can’t communicate with each other. It also automates several steps—such as data merging and cleaning—that used to take weeks or months to complete. Now researchers like Lee have more time to do analysis.

When they checked the data against student behavior in 2013? “We were right on,” DePaepe said. Some findings might have been anticipated. Race, disability, and income correlate strongly with stopping out of school. So does being the first in your family to go to college. But there were surprises, too.

Who’s most likely to drop out? Students without a major and part-time students. So are students who put off remedial math courses, and first-year students who borrow $6,000 or more their incoming quarter. Financial aid, however, doesn’t seem to be a big factor for transfer students.

Another surprise: Students are more likely to leave school just when the light glimmers from the end of the tunnel—after the 13th quarter. “Right before they could have graduated,” said Elizabeth Lee, associate director of analytics and research for Institutional Effectiveness.

Maybe it’s that last remedial class they put off for four years, or perhaps they’ve run out of financial aid. “We know they have the capacity to finish—they’ve been successful for this long. It’s a shame for them not to finish,” Lee said.

The project’s multi-variant design and use of decision trees were the work of Dan Matthews, director of analytics and research, who originated and conducted the first year and a half of the study.

The prediction model is the most accurate tool staff has, and it’s the most helpful for the majority of CWU students—not the high achievers or those who struggle from the get-go, but the ones in the middle of the road.

“And now we already know, before they even get here, whether they’re at high or very high risk,” Lee said.

A key feature of the retention study is that it’s so comprehensive. It pulls data from several sources, including high school transcripts and financial aid applications. “Central has never done a study this ambitious before,” Lee said. “A lot of schools are trying to utilize these methods of taking data and acting upon it.”

With a system that accurately predicts which and when students are more likely to drop out, advisors can intervene before it’s too late. Phoning. Emailing. Face-to-face advising. Real-time support makes all the difference in their success.

Raising the Bar

Armed with this data, advisors are working to increase the average five-year freshmen retention rate from 76 percent to 83 percent by 2018. Another goal is to raise the average five-year graduation rate from 49 percent to 63 percent by 2019.

Within the Department of Student Success the advising program has three core units: exploratory, which guides first-year and undeclared students; arts, humanities, sciences, education and professional studies; and business, University Centers, and online learning—a rarity for online programming at other universities.

For exploratory advising, CWU traditionally has had a student-to-advisor ratio of 500 to one. The ratio is now near the national average of 300 to one, said Jesse Nelson, former associate dean for student achievement who has since moved to Oregon State University where he’s director of the Academic Success Center and ALS Courses. Advisors also are using new online strategies to create consistent files for all students.

Professional advisors don’t replace faculty advising and mentoring, Nelson added, but they help students adjust to university life and ensure they’re on track to complete general education and program requirements. Advisors also connect students with faculty mentors, help them declare or change majors, and advise them on co-curricular opportunities.

Deciding a Major is Key

The data say it’s critical for students who transfer to Central from another school to declare a major as soon as possible. As a result, CWU now has staff dedicated to ensuring all students have a major before they even get to campus.

“If you have an expectation of what you want to do, it’s important to get attached to a department,” Nelson said. “If your path to a degree isn’t clear, frustration grows and students are more likely to leave.”

Early alert, a system in which faculty report behavior or academic concerns about students, is undergoing improvements to make it even more responsive to faculty input.

“The faculty are our boots on the ground,” Lee noted. “They see students on a daily basis.”
Last fall quarter, 82 faculty submitted student alerts. The system identified 598 students with at least one alert, and 49 students were flagged with alerts from multiple faculty. The data was crosschecked with student survey results, reported behaviors of concern, and student conduct data to inform and focus outreach efforts.

The identified students receive an email encouraging them to visit their instructor and reminding them of tutoring, counseling, and other campus resources. When multiple faculty show concern about a student, the alert system notifies the student’s academic and faculty advisors.

Then the hard part comes. Advisors have to sit down with students and tell them the data show they’re at risk.

“That’s a weird conversation,” Nelson admitted.

Problem Solving

Amber Darting is an academic advisor for the College of Business and she teaches University 101—a crash course for first-year and transfer students about CWU policies and procedures, selecting a major, advising, and other resources.

Not all student struggles are academic. Finances, family obligations, housing, a spouse losing a job, and illness also affect retention.

“Sometimes there’s not a good answer,” says Darting, who’s referred students to the counseling center, to the office of Student Success, and to CWU University Centers in the Puget Sound area. On one occasion Darting helped a student get accommodations when her husband was transferred to a military base out of state.

Next Steps

The student success project is only in its infancy. Over the next several years staff will continue to improve the path students take to earn their degrees. Researchers will keep improving the prediction model’s algorithms, and use it to forecast retention in other student populations, such as online learners, athletes, and graduate studies.

Institutional Effectiveness is also working on active reports so advisors have access to information 24/7.

“Basically, data on demand,” Lee said. “It helps spur more sophisticated thinking and empowers more informed conversations.”

Advisors will continue to use the data to fine-tune ways to support different student groups. For instance, Running Start students have different needs than traditional freshmen. Transfer students still need an orientation to campus, but not necessarily to higher education. And how can orientation and advising be translated to a digital environment to assist the university’s swelling population of online students?

‘Advising kept me sane’

Jennifer Treadway earned her political science and law and justice degrees in just three years. It took two summer sessions and a loaded junior year taking 18, 20, and 21 credits per quarter. Living on campus was a huge help, as were excellent time management skills and having access to her professors outside of class. Frankly, Treadway’s drive and desire to finish early were necessary, too. But she credits one department for helping her hold it all together.

“Advising kept me sane,” Treadway announced.

After realizing the value of Academic Advising and support programs like Career Services and the Learning Commons, Treadway took full advantage of the extra guidance. Advising staff helped her pick classes that were challenging and made the most sense for her career. Tutoring and supplemental instruction helped keep her 3.85 GPA. Career counselors helped her fine-tune her resume.

“Advising is so important to keep you on track,” says the 21-year-old, who, after commencement in June, hopped a plane to Washington, D.C. for a summer internship with U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell. She plans to go to law school next.
The End of an Era

Larry Gookin retires baton after 34 years

by Barb Arnott
It’s not unusual for the Central Wind Ensemble to perform at invitation-only venues, like the 2015 National Association for Music Education Conference in Spokane. It was Larry Gookin’s final conference concert as director of bands at CWU—a post he held for 34 years. It was not unusual for the Wind Ensemble to deliver a jaw-dropping performance of David Maslanka’s Symphony No. 4. The unusual came when Gookin put down his baton and the audience of more than 1,000 leapt to their feet and delivered a thunderous, seemingly endless standing ovation.

A gang of CWU music alumni had staked out the front row. All the men wore ties. “And some of them never wear ties,” Gookin pointed out. “It was just kind of a hilarious camaraderie happening before we even played.”

As Gookin took the stage, the crowd rose to its feet in applause. “Before we even played a note,” he chuckled, retelling the story from his office in Ellensburg. “And . . . Phew.”

Without warning, his emotions catch him off guard. A 20-second pause helps him regain composure. “It was pretty amazing,” he finally utters. “It was just one of those magical concerts. I’ve never had that happen—that long of an ovation,” Gookin confessed. “I think the audience’s response was definitely inspired by the great music playing. Then there was that other element—a thank you, I guess. Everyone was emotionally ripped on it. It was great.”

Gookin described his retirement from a 44-year career as a music educator and performer as bittersweet. “When you’re in the arts, and spend this much time and energy working with students, and conducting and playing and whatever musical thing I’ve been involved with, it becomes such a big part of your life. Then to all of a sudden think about giving that up . . . it’s a little tough to think about. But at the same time I know it’s the right time to be leaving.”

Larry Gookin

It was in sixth grade when Gookin made up his mind to pursue a music career. The Montana native wasn’t born into a musical family. His inspiration came instead from high school band director Don Lawerence who gave Gookin trombone lessons and got him involved with music.

“He was a fantastic mentor and teacher,” Gookin said. “He took me aside and kind of helped me. A very, very special kind of teacher. I attribute the whole pattern of my career to that one person. He’s a pretty amazing guy.”

Gookin got his music undergraduate degree at the University of Montana in 1971. His plan was to become a studio musician, but then he decided to try teaching.

“I can remember thinking, ‘I’ll try this for a year and if I don’t like it I’ll go play professionally.’ Well it didn’t happen. I really enjoyed teaching and got involved with students.”

What was the spark? “Part of it was that I was in love. I had to go back and be with my girlfriend, of course,” Gookin said with a wide smile. He and Karen have been married 45 years.

After teaching in Montana for five years, he decided to get an advanced degree at the University of Oregon. He taught at South Eugene High School five more years before applying for college jobs.

Gookin was introduced to the quality of CWU’s music program in 1981, when the late John Moawad and the jazz band performed in Eugene on their way to the Pacific Coast Collegiate Jazz Festival in Berkeley, California.

“They were amazing. In fact, that year they won the Berkeley Jazz Festival,” Gookin remembered. The same year Gookin was hired as director of bands for CWU.

Part of your DNA

It’s hard to put your passion into words. “I think it’s the ability to be expressive and communicate through the art. You get really sucked into it to the point where you can’t stop. It just becomes part of your DNA, just the way you think and feel.”

Being an educator is also part of his identity. “I’m not sure what I enjoy more: performing the music or just having this intimate artistic connection with these wonderful students.

“When I think about what I’m going to miss the most when I leave Central, I don’t think it’s the music. I think it’s the kids and that phenomenal interaction we have at rehearsals and performances.”
Farewell Concert

And the kids are going to miss him. For Gookin’s farewell concert at CWU in June, a consortium of about 20 music alumni commissioned his favorite composer, David Maslanka, to write a piece.

“He’s been on campus before and worked with the students, so he really knows what we’re about here at Central,” Gookin said.

The piece, “St. Francis,” was inspired by Gookin’s and Maslanka’s shared spiritual connection with St. Francis of Assisi. It’s heavy and powerfully personal. A standing-room-only audience filled McIntyre Hall, to hear it and see it. At the end they gave him and the Wind Ensemble a five-minute standing ovation.

A Great Place to Live & Work

Gookin never really looked for jobs outside of CWU, though he had a number of invites to apply for positions over the years. A major university even sent a headhunter to try to persuade him to apply for a job in one of its doctoral programs.

“I decided early on that’s not the kind of career I wanted,” Gookin said. “We’ve been able to do anything here that you can do anywhere else. Sometimes it took a little bit longer to get it ready, you know, musically, but I think what’s kept me here more than anything is the attitude of the faculty and the students. It’s just a great place to live and work.”

“I asked him for some advice, and he replied very simply, ‘You have to love the music and more importantly, you have to love your musicians.’ And while I think you (Larry) may not have always liked us, or our intonation, or how loud we played, I know that you always loved us. You always left our humanity intact every single rehearsal, and you never doubted for one minute that we were able to do what you were asking us to do.”

— Sam Ormsen, director of bands at Mountain View High School in Vancouver, Washington, CWU alumnus

“I remember so clearly how he would work with everyone with the same amount of enthusiasm. So it didn’t matter if it was the shyest freshman who wasn’t even in wind ensemble yet, to a hotshot grad student. … I think the best lesson I learned was observed behind the scenes just in the way he treated people. And I think that’s why we love him so much; I think that’s why he’s been such a successful teacher because you generally want to work for someone who cares about you and you care about. And that comes through in his music making and the way he interacts with students and the way he conducts.”

— Mariko Lane, band director at Juanita High School in Kirkland, CWU alumna
Conferences, Awards, & Honors

Larry Gookin has appeared as clinician, adjudicator, and conductor in the United States, Canada, Japan, Southeast Asia, and Europe. He was principal trombone of the Eugene and Yakima Symphony Orchestras, artistic director and conductor of the Seattle Wind Symphony, and a Yamaha Performing Artist.

Under Gookin’s direction, the CWU Wind Ensemble has performed at state, regional, and national conventions, including the College Band Directors National Association Conference in Boulder; the Music Educators National Conference in Minneapolis; the Western International Band Clinics in Seattle; the Western/Northwestern CBDNA Division Conferences in Reno, and the College Band Directors National Association Conference in Seattle.

He was president of the Northwest Division of the College Band Directors National Association, divisional chairman for the National Band Association, VP of the Washington Music Educators Association, member of the American Bandmasters Association, member of the Washington Music Educators Hall of Fame, a CWU Distinguished Professor of Teaching, Washington Music Educators Association Teacher of the Year, CWU Carnegie Foundation (CASE) teaching award winner, National Band Association Citation of Excellence Award winner, First Chair of America Mac award winner, American Schools Band Directors Association Standbury Award winner, and University of Oregon School of Music Distinguished Alumnus.

“You’ve inspired us to be better musicians and better people. And we count it an honor that our paths have crossed with yours.”
— Mark Claasen, director of bands at Union High School in Camas, Washington, CWU alumnus
On March 28, 1890, Washington Gov. Elisha P. Ferry signed a bill that “…established in the City of Ellensburg, County of Kittitas, a school for the training and education of teachers in the art of instructing and governing in the public schools of the State.” The Washington State Normal School formally opened its doors on September 6, 1891.

On registration day, enrollment was just 51 students, though the number grew to 86 before the end of the first school year. That enrollment growth was a harbinger of things to come. Today about 10,000 undergraduates and 750 graduate students take classes in Ellensburg and at university campuses across Washington.

Along with the dramatic rise in its student body, Central has gone through several distinctive changes, in name and focus—from a normal school to a college of education, and from a state college to a state university—on the road to its 125th anniversary. During those years, the institution earned a well-deserved reputation for excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics with a host of national championships, honors, and recognition to its credit.

The institution’s 125th anniversary will be celebrated in conjunction with and throughout the 2016-17 school year. Here are just a few of the institution’s milestones and memories through the years.
1940
The Civil Aeronautics Administration grants Central authority to begin a Civilian Pilot Training unit, with ground courses taught by college faculty and flight training by a private company.

1946
With the end of World War II, and the advent of the G.I. Bill, Central experiences a veteran enrollment increase of nearly 90 percent between fall and winter quarters.

1951
Central organizes its first statewide alumni association.

1954
The Central Singers receive an invitation to perform at the Music Educators National Congress in Chicago.

1961
With state authorization to offer liberal arts education in several fields, Central becomes Central Washington State College.

1969
Students elect Ron Sims the school’s first African American student body president.

1971
The Wildcats win the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics wrestling team title. They repeat as national champs in 1974.

1977
With continued curriculum expansion and offering master’s degree programs, Central becomes Central Washington University.

1980
Roger and Deborah Fouts arrive in Ellensburg with Washoe the chimpanzee, the first non-human to communicate using American Sign Language.

1984-87
CWU dominates NAIA swimming. Men’s and women’s teams take the national title in 1986; the men also win the championship in 1984 and ’87.

1985
The Wildcats face Findlay (Ohio) in the NAIA national football championship game in the Tacoma Dome. The contest ends in a 21-21 tie.

1995
The Wildcats win the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics wrestling team title. They repeat as national champs in 1974.

1996
Jeff Charbonneau enrolls. He earns bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Central and goes on to be named the 2013 National Teacher of the Year.

1998
Central becomes Central Washington University.

2004
Grand opening is held for the $29 million music building. The state-of-the-art facility boasts a 600-seat concert hall and 150-seat recital hall.

2006
The $58 million Student Union and Recreation Center opens. The 220,000-square-foot facility, the largest building on campus, is one of the first to combine residential dining, bookstore, recreation, and student life programs and services.

2008
Softball teammates Mallory Holtman and Liz Wallace help an opposing player score a homerun after the player’s injury prevented her from running the bases on her own. Their sportsmanship receives an ESPN ESPY (Excellence in Sports Performance Yearly) for Best Moment in Sports.

2011
Kamola Hall celebrates its centennial. It opened in 1911 and was named in 1916 for the favorite daughter of the Kittitas Native American Chief Owhi.

2012
Trevor Greene, a 1989 CWU alumnus, is named the National Principal of the Year.

2015
The physical campus is still changing. The new state-of-the-art science building will open fall 2016 and crews will soon begin work on the old Samuelson Union Building, transforming it into a computer science, math, and information technology center.
School Spirit Set in Bronze

A nine-foot-long bronze Wildcat sculpture now crouches on the east patio of the Student Union and Recreation Center, welcoming visitors to the busiest entrance on campus.

The new statue is already proving to be a hit with students, not to mention faculty, administrators, and alumni. Many have snapped selfies or had photos taken with—and on—the giant cat. Rubbing it for good luck has also become common practice.

The student-driven initiative to install a permanent symbol of school spirit had been in the works for three years. Rob Lane, former student body vice president for student life and facilities, helped move the project to the final construction phase.

“It’s a symbol of our identity and pride in our campus. It looks awesome!” Lane said. “I’ll be excited to see how future student leaders and our administration will work to make the patio (surrounding the statue) a more central meeting area for our school.”

Matthew Palmer, a sculptor from Friday Harbor, is the artistic talent behind the bronze. “Universities cultivate an environment of learning and social development for engaged and active people in a park-like setting,” he said. “It’s where monuments of this sort still make sense.”

Student government, along with the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Student Success, University Housing and New Student Programs, Wildcat Shop, Alumni Association, CWU Foundation, and the Student Union and Recreation Center Art Committee funded the project.

“It was great to see so many departments on campus that wanted to come together and make it happen,” Lane said. “This will be the place where students will take a picture right after they get accepted and the same place where they will take a picture right before commencement.”

Which is exactly what Lane plans to do before he takes part in next year’s graduation ceremony.
Show Wildcat Pride on Your Ride

An updated design for Central license plates is ready to roll. The new tag features the Wildcat head and the CWU signature mark set against mountains from the Stuart Range.

The special plates are an easy way to support students: $28 from each purchase funds scholarships through the Alumni Association. As a junior, James Rae received one of those scholarships. The native of Randle, in Lewis County, graduated summa cum laude in political science.

“Receiving that scholarship helped put me in a position where I could focus on getting involved in research my last couple of years at Central,” Rae said. “It was the catalyst for me jumping up to the next level.”

Rae’s next level is a PhD in psychology. He wants to be a university social psychology researcher.

Fellow alumnus Schulyer Lakey developed the new design while interning with the Public Affairs department.

“It was my first project,” Lakey recalls. “As a student, it felt like such a huge responsibility to design something to represent the school. It was an awesome way to start the job.”

Lakey is excited to see the plates on cars and trucks driving around Washington.

Purchase yours at dol.wa.gov or your local vehicle licensing office.

Class Ring Reminds Grads, ‘Once a Wildcat, Always a Wildcat’

A new senior class ring designed and selected by students will forever remind alumni of their beginnings. The custom work portrays the mountains of the Stuart Range, Barge Hall, and the university seal.

“These symbols are designed specifically to represent the university and our students,” said President James L. Gaudino. “Those wearing the ring will be reminded that they are, and will always be, a vital part of this institution.”

The ring is for current students and all alumni, noted Bob Ford, senior director of Alumni and Constituent Relations. “Any graduating year and degree can be inscribed on the rings—they’re fully customizable.”

A panel provides space for personalization: Students and alumni can add their major or extracurricular activity and can choose the stone and metal. The ring is available at the Wildcat Shop and Jostens.com.

On June 4, President James Gaudino and members of the student government officially celebrated the new ring during a ceremony that featured the Wildcat Pledge and a processional through campus to the new Wildcat statue.
Standout Players Honored

**Athletic Hall of Fame Inducts Class of 2015**

CWU’s 32nd annual Athletic Hall of Fame Class includes the 2000 cross country and 1974 wrestling teams, along with cross country and track and field athlete Lou Boudreaux, and football standouts Pat Maki and Dan Murphy.

“These are teams and players who represented this university at the highest level,” said selection committee chair Ken Kladnik, himself a member of the Hall of Fame.

**The cross country team**, led by head coach Kevin Adkisson, placed seventh nationally—the highest finish by a Wildcat team during the university’s NCAA era.

**The 1974 wrestling team** won the NAIA National Championship by more than 20 points. Kit Shaw, who won the national title that year at 142 pounds, helped lead the team. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2014.

**Lou Boudreaux**, who came to CWU from Port Orchard, holds the steeplechase record with a time of 8:55.91, which he set in 1977. He placed fifth in the NAIA national meet that year. The previous season, he finished 22nd in cross country, which made him an All-American.

“We were just a bunch of blue-collar kids that studied hard and trained harder,” Boudreaux recalls of his Wildcat teammates. “We did our best to put our best foot forward.”

**Pat Maki** is second in school history with 19 interceptions during his 1971-72 career. A school single-season record of 13 picks came during the 1972 season alone. A native of Richland, his 102-yard interception return against Western Washington University is still tops in school history.

“I can’t remember all the times I dropped an interception, but there were a lot of them,” Maki laughed. “I can recall our first game of the season in ’72, it was against Western Washington. One of their receivers was coming across the middle and I jumped the route only to have the ball hit my hands, then my facemask. Safe to say that I got teased for that one.”

**Dan Murphy**, originally from Royal City, set a school record of 3,628 rushing yards, scoring 49 career rushing touchdowns and 52 total between 1995 and ’98. He earned honorable mention for NAIA All-American in 1998 after rushing for 1,445 yards and scoring 19 touchdowns. He also set a school-record that season with eight 100-yard games.

“The records are fine (but) I’m not a big stat guy,” Murphy explains. “My philosophy (was) just to go run over the guy in front of me and get the yards for my team.”
Rugby Rocks Its First Varsity Season

Four national championship appearances in their first seasons as intercollegiate athletic teams. That’s the unprecedented success enjoyed by men’s and women’s rugby during their 2014-15 campaigns.

Students launched men’s rugby as a sport club in 1972. Since then, there have been plenty of highlights—and wins. Central made rugby a varsity sport in February 2014, based in part on the team’s tremendous success on the national stage in 15-a-side (15s) play. CWU is one of few public universities in the nation with a varsity rugby program.

“Becoming part of intercollegiate athletics put us ahead of other programs and has allowed us to recruit even more high-caliber student-athletes,” said Tony Pacheco, director of rugby and head coach of the men’s team.

The men made a third-straight trip to the Varsity Cup semis this year. On the way, they overwhelmed opponents such as Washington State University (129-0), University of Washington (50-10), University of Oregon (44-7), and Arizona State University (72-10). The Wildcats only lost to the school that eventually took the national championship, Brigham Young University.

The women’s squad, under first-year coach Mel Denham, won the Pacific Mountain Conference tournament and made it to the 15s USA Rugby Division I National championship. In the title contest, they fell to Penn State University.

Both teams qualified for the USA Rugby Collegiate 7s National Championship. (The men have qualified every year since the event’s inception in 2011.) This year, the men earned third overall. The women took second, losing in the championship contest to Penn State. This fall, five women were named all-Americans.

Men’s standout Aladdin Schirmer, from North Bend, was named to the USA national sevens team, which toured Australia and Dubai in preparation for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Pacheco was reappointed to a second term as head coach of the Men’s Collegiate All-American Sevens Team.

CWU’s varsity rugby programs are helping attract top-quality student-athletes from all around the world. “While they come here for rugby, they receive the benefits of our student-athlete experience. They also help expand the diversity of campus, which is good for all of our students,” said President James L. Gaudino,
Reinvigorated Alumni Association Has Busy Year

As we begin the adventure of 2016 I want to share my vision and excitement for the future of CWU and the Alumni Association. We are on the brink of unprecedented growth. With a record-breaking construction budget from the Legislature, the landscape of the university will evolve to meet the growing needs of our diverse student body.

The Alumni Association, under the guidance and determination of our new Executive Director Robert Ford, has been reinvigorated, and the Alumni Board is driving major changes and developments.

Over the past 12 months, we have established a new strategic plan. We’ve also launched a new membership program that not only delivers benefits to alumni locally and around the region, but at more than 150,000 locations nationwide.

To enhance the spirit and tradition of the university, we’ve collaborated with students in launching a new class ring and installing a bronze wildcat statue. We are actively recruiting new board members that reflect our diverse community and position our board to take on future development opportunities.

With more than 100,000 Central Alumni around the globe, our possibilities are nearly boundless: new and exciting programs and events, new traditions and opportunities, connecting and reconnecting with friends and the Central family.

Central is an amazing and magical place that transforms students. With the energized participation of our alums, we can achieve incredible goals. There is no limit to what we can accomplish.

I ask you to join me on this incredible journey. The trip has started. Be part of something special that you can look back on with pride as you proclaim, “I am a Central Alum. I am a proud Wildcat.”

Regards,

Mark Johnson, Class of 1987
President of the CWU Alumni Association Board of Directors
Boeing CEO Gives $300,000 to Create Endowed Scholarship

“I attribute much of my success to hard work, preparation and leadership—all characteristics that I honed during my time at CWU,” said Ray Conner, vice chairman of The Boeing Company and president and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes. “One of the best ways I can give back is to provide students with the same opportunity as me.”

Conner, a 1979 alumnus, and his wife Katie, established the Ray and Katie Conner Endowed Scholarship Fund earlier this year with a gift of $305,769. The gift will fund two $10,000 scholarships annually for students who are pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering, or math disciplines, or an education degree in one of the STEM fields.

“I’m fortunate that the experience of learning, listening and building relationships at CWU has lingered with me throughout my entire career,” Conner added.

Since Conner grew up in Burien, the scholarship stipulates a preference for applicants from the Highline School District. The award is also need-based, and students can be first-year or transfer students.

For more information about the scholarship, or to apply, go to cwu.edu/scholarships. To find out how you can give, go to cwu.edu/foundation.

Colonel Achieves Lifetime Goal after CWU Gave Him a Chance

After several combat deployments, many late nights, and loads of hard work, Robert Bertrand achieved his lifetime goal of being promoted to Colonel.

But it might not have happened if someone from CWU hadn’t seen potential in him more than 26 years ago.

“Without Central’s admissions office taking a chance on me I would most probably have taken a different path with potentially a much different outcome,” COL Bertrand said.

He was raised in Bellingham and finished high school with a 2.4 GPA in 1988. His conditional acceptance to CWU was denied. With no other plan for college, COL Bertrand pleaded with the admissions director for another chance.

“She took that second chance on me and put me on ‘double-secret academic probation’ for my first semester,” he remembers.

Four years later he graduated from CWU with a criminal justice degree and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Over the next two decades he moved up the ranks while serving stateside and overseas, in Alaska, New York, Bosnia, Georgia, Alabama (where he earned his masters in education at Troy University), Baghdad, Kansas, Kentucky, back to Iraq, Virginia, Afghanistan, Germany and Texas.

During a ceremony on June 30, 2014, COL Bertrand was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the U.S. Army’s 85th Civil Affairs Brigade. He serves as U.S. Army Europe’s civil-military and information officer in Wiesbaden, Germany.

“Because of the admissions team having faith in me, I was allowed to attend Central, and I proved to them and the school the investment was worth it,” COL Bertrand said.

In March he returned to campus for the joint Military Ball. It was the first time he had visited the university since commencement in June 1992.
Success Came Naturally for CWU Legend Eric R. Beardsley, 1925-2014

Retired CWU athletic director Dr. Gary Frederick calls the late Eric Beardsley one of the greatest athletes in university history. CWU hall of famer Beardsley died December 17, 2014, in Lynden, Wash. He was 89.

“Even in his 60s, he was able to walk up the Nicholson Pavilion stairs on his hands,” Frederick said.

A 1946 graduate of Yakima High School, Beardsley attended Yakima Valley Community College—then Yakima Junior College—from 1946-1948. He lettered in football, basketball and track, while earning all-conference honors in all three sports.

Beardsley came to Central Washington College of Education where he enjoyed continued athletic success. He was an all-conference football halfback and all-around track and field star, winning the 1950 conference javelin and pole vault titles.

He launched the wrestling program at Moses Lake High School where, in six seasons, he mentored seven state champions. He led his Moses Lake teams to ninth, fifth, and two second-place finishes, along with one state wrestling championship. In 1959, Beardsley returned to his alma mater as Central’s first wrestling coach. He stayed through his retirement in 1985.

“He was not only a great coach but a great individual,” Frederick adds. “Anyone who wrestled for him left the program better than when they came in—not only as a wrestler but as a person.”

Beardsley’s wrestlers included 14 national champions and 32 All-Americans. Twelve of his teams placed in the top 10 nationally, including the 1971 and 1974 Central teams, which won NAIA championships. He was named the NAIA National Wrestling Coach in ’71 and ’74.

“He made Central into a national power,” Frederick acknowledges.

Beardsley was inducted into the CWU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1983 as part of the inaugural class. He was similarly honored by the NAIA Wrestling Hall of Fame, Washington State Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Yakima Valley Community College Hall of Fame, and Northwest Athletic Association of Community College Hall of Fame.

Beardsley, who also taught physical education at Central, received the CWU College of Education and Professional Studies Distinguished Alumni Award in 1996.

During the 2015 CWU Athletic Hall of Fame ceremony, members of the 1974 team remembered Beardsley as the squad was inducted into the hall. “He dedicated 34 years of his life to young men and wrestling, and he was a role model to each of us,” John Burkholder said of his coach. “When we were on that mat, we knew he was there for us. He is the type of man that you respect all of your life.”
A Special Commitment

Retired Central Professor Jean Putnam begins with the end in mind.

She believes physical education needs to be more about a child’s lifetime commitment to healthy living, so she became a professor to train teachers to instill this message in their students.

She believes Central can be a home to a strong field hockey team, so she created and led it from 1968-1980.

She believes the best teachers are those who are “empowered, motivated and inspired” as students through creative educational tools—seasoned guest lecturers, interactive workshops, and activities that go beyond the everyday curriculum. So she established the Putnam Endowment in the Department of Physical Education to support creative inspiration.

Putnam’s commitment to Central spans from the classroom, to the field, to the volunteer boardroom. It is why she’s been recognized with the 1999 Women’s Achievement Award, a 2012 induction into the Athletic Hall of Fame, and now the 2015 Retirement Association’s Distinguished Retiree Award.

Putnam continues to keep the end in mind. Not only has she committed her life’s work to Central, she will leave a bequest to ensure the Putnam Endowment benefits students far beyond her own lifetime.

You can leave your legacy at Central with a commitment through your will or living trust. For more information, contact the CWU Foundation at 509-963-2160 or foundation@cwu.edu.
October 19-24, 2015

PROUD TO BE A WILDCAT!

Homecoming 2015

Oct. 23: Distinguished Alumni Awards and 50-year class reunion (Class of 1965-1966)

Oct. 24: Alumni tailgate, homecoming football game vs. Humboldt State University with special hospitality tent for alumni

Oct. 24: Comedian Iliza Shlesinger, winner of NBC's Last Comic Standing

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