

**WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2022  
UPDATE AT YEAR TEN  
FALL 2022**

**Overview**

William Paterson University has completed its tenth and final year of Strategic Plan 2012-2022 with progress toward achievement of the goals of the plan as the institution worked via an inclusive campus wide process to develop and begin implementation of a new strategic plan for 2022-2025.

Committee 2022 was established in 2012 to conduct an annual report for the campus community to highlight progress relative to the strategic plan and identify areas for further attention and action. University leadership has continuously reviewed Strategic Plan 2012-2022, assessing results, progress and concerns as an element of its decision-making and planning processes. Progress and challenges have also been demonstrated by institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) developed by the President and the Cabinet, and shared regularly with the Board of Trustees.

Approaching the latter stages of Strategic Plan 2012-2022, the University continued to build upon new programmatic opportunities and emerging trends in higher education while re-setting the University to thrive in the dramatically changing environment in higher education. In particular, the University accelerated development of academic programs that reach new markets. These initiatives progressed as the University pivoted toward development of the new strategic plan. For Fall 2022, 2,759 students were enrolled in WP Online programs, representing 28 percent of all University enrolled students, compared to 18 percent in Fall 2021. The new BA degree in Professional Studies and Leadership enrolled 75 students, exceeding the goal of 35. Enrollment tripled from the previous year in dual enrollment programs with area high schools. A new academic program search function on the University's web site allows identification of the growing range of 4+1 and 3+2 degree options as well as graduate and undergraduate for-credit certificates, many of which are stackable with full degree programs. The Instruction Research & Technology (IRT) Center for Teaching with Technology supports the ability of faculty to grow in this changing environment by conducting professional development opportunities for faculty to incorporate technology into all aspects of teaching. To expand awareness and support for adult learners, Academic Affairs conducted professional development opportunities for faculty on best practices for online teaching.

The University positioned itself for success with significant construction and renovation of facilities. Construction of the new Child Development Center, which serves children of members of the campus community and the surrounding communities, and provides experiences for students seeking certification as early childhood education teachers, was completed along with new offices and classrooms in the 1800 Valley Road Building for the Department of Continuing Education and Professional Development. In addition, the offices of Sponsored Programs, Transfer Programs, Cannabis Studies, and Center for Holocaust and

Genocide Studies also moved into 1800 Valley Road. Major renovations to Wayne Dining Hall were completed, offering a reimagined, modern facility with themed stations in a colorful interior space. Replacement and upgrades to furnishings and finishes, branded in the University's colors, in the University Commons/Student Center provide students with modern and inviting spaces for lounging, meeting and socializing.

The University's commitment to diversity and inclusion continued to spawn initiatives and refine services that support the campus community. Student participation at Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) sponsored events increased 200 percent from fall to spring. The Center coordinated more than 100 educational and cultural events over the course of the year. The CDI advanced a new University tradition with the third annual Lavender Graduation, followed by the Pride Prom, co-hosted by the Pride Alliance. The Counseling Health and Wellness Center and CDI maintained a strategic partnership to increase student opportunities for mental health dialogue that promotes inclusion and belonging. The Center also launched a LGBTQIA+ peer led support group. The CDI developed new social media platforms for the Center for Latinidad with steady growth in engagement and followers. The summer employee Learning and Development program included required sessions focused on safe space/LGBTQIA+ issues.

Consistent with best practices and in response to needs expressed by prospective and current students and their families, the Career Development Center (CD) expanded its outreach and offerings. The Center staff continued to drive the use of the job and internship portal Handshake, whereby increasing the number of opportunities posted for full- and part-time jobs, internships, fellowships, graduate assistantships, and other on-campus opportunities. Furthermore, the Center increased student touchpoints by 56 percent and post-graduation student outcomes (job and/or graduate school) continue to outpace the national average for public institutions. Career Development, Academic Affairs and the Marketing and Public Relations department partnered to develop new academic department home pages with an emphasis on program specific career outcomes. The Pesce Family Mentoring Institute exceeded its KPI with 300 mentor/mentee matches and 96 percent of Class of '21 graduates who participated in the Pesce Family Mentoring Institute had secured a post-graduation outcome within six months of graduation.

Enrollment challenges continued as the University fell short on the KPI for Undergraduate Headcount, while exceeding the KPI for Graduate Headcount. The first-year retention rate increased to 71.5 percent through targeted interventions provided by professional advisors in the Advisement Center and through integrated supports within the Will. Power. 101 program.

Fundraising achievements exceeded KPIs and extended scholarship support for students. Institutional Advancement raised \$4.1 million, exceeding the annual goal by 23.5 percent. The University received a significant and transformative commitment from Dr. Dorothy Hennings to rename Science Hall East in honor of Dorothy and her late husband, Dr. George Hennings, and secured naming gifts for the Overdorf Tennis Courts and the Martini Family Electronic Resource Center, which will be unveiled in February 2023. The University endowment has grown to

\$23.4 million, including \$18 million allocated for scholarships. During the course of this strategic plan, the scholarship endowment has increased 441 percent.

An athletic rebrand was implemented to build pride and strengthen the campus community. The University's new mascot, Pio, and newly composed spirit song were formally introduced as part of October's Homecoming Game with a full communications campaign that resulted in extensive engagement via social media. Fan engagement also increased with newly developed gameday promotions and half-time activities at athletics contests, and signage on and around the playing fields and courts. To increase administrative efficiency, the departments of Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreational Services were combined into one unit under the leadership of the Director of Athletics.

The University took a major step forward toward streamlined processes, administrative efficiencies and long-term cost reductions with the decision to invest in and begin implementation of the Workday Finance Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). These efficiencies are particularly crucial as the University rethinks systems that support operations during these changing times.

**Goal 1: Offer Programs of Highest Quality Sub-categories/objectives: high-quality academic programs; UCC effectiveness; selective expansion of professional and graduate programs; recruit, develop and retain a diverse faculty; use of technology to expand accessibility and availability**

A new Bachelor of Social Work was approved by the state and the first students will be admitted in Spring 2023. A new Master of Public Health was launched online with 37 students enrolled for Fall 2022. Several programs with lagging enrollment were redesigned.

NTTP hiring increased modestly with strategic focus on 13 hires for the growing online nursing program. Resignations and retirements continued in great numbers across fall 2021 and spring 2022 along with 18 faculty layoffs and 15.5 voluntary separations.

In support of the launch of the new online undergraduate degree programs in 2021-2022, training coordinated in Quality Matters informed course redesign for faculty developing online course shells. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in collaboration with the Provost's office, continued training and assistance in assessment for both the colleges and administrative units across campus. IE also added more resources to its webpages for assessment training. Once again, 100 percent of Academic Affairs programs and all of the academic colleges uploaded their assessment data onto Campus Labs, which is now known as Anthology.

**Goal 2: Achieve Student Success by Increasing Matriculation, Retention and Graduation Sub-categories/objectives: student recruitment strategy that leads to success and professional and personal growth; increase student engagement; increase availability and variety of academic support, advisement and career guidance; enhance student academic and intellectual engagement with faculty, staff and fellow students in the classroom and through co-curricular experiences.**

All-Student Headcount, Undergraduate Headcount, Graduate Headcount, Full-Time First-Year Retention Rate, Four-Year Graduation Rate are the primary enrollment-related KPIs. As of fall 2022 (November 21, 2022), the University enrolled 9,920 students, which was 159 short of the goal; the University enrolled 7,301 undergraduate students, which was 445 short of the goal; and 2,619 graduate students, which was 286 above the goal. The retention rate for first-year students was 71.5 percent, which is 1.3 points higher than the top of the range goal of 68.7 to 70.2 percent. The four-year graduation rate was 26.1 percent, compared to the goal of 30 percent. Implementation of WP Online helped to boost new graduate enrollment by 14.1 percent to 1,228 students and new transfer undergraduate enrollment by 8.2 percent to 911 with a particular increase in the RN to BSN program. First Year Retention increased in 7 out of 10 tracked categories, including a 12.3 percent increase for black students, 9.1 percent increase for resident students and 5.8 percent increase for first generation students.

Student engagement outside of the classroom continues to support student persistence and success. Retention rates for club sport and NCAA athletes, club/Greek organization members, students involved in civic engagement and students involved in the Pioneer Leadership Institute were higher than the overall University rates.

**Goal 3: Provide students with exceptional opportunities beyond the classroom Sub-categories/Objectives: strategic partnerships with leading institutions and governmental organizations; small number of focused, high-visibility graduate programs; link students off-campus learning intentionally and directly to their classroom experiences; develop regionally and nationally recognized co-curricular activities linked to academic programs.**

Collaborations between the Career Development Center and Academic Affairs were highly productive. The Center hosted eight career fairs in partnership with academic departments and colleges. Partnerships with employers led to the offering of 688 events for students including on-campus, virtual, or hybrid events posted to Handshake.

The David and Lorraine Cheng Library continued to engage area schools through the Real Men Read program, virtual library instruction and class visits, and professional development sessions for teachers and school libraries.

Civic engagement activities, an area where WP students have excelled through recent years, have been directly impacted during the pandemic as agencies have been hesitant to have students visit sites. Participation began increasing during the summer with 86 students serving six agencies during Pioneer Services Ventures, more than 100 attending the CASL/Honors

College Civic Engagement Fair and increased interest in the Changebuilders program and volunteering opportunities in the Pioneer Pantry.

**Goal 4: Enhancing the sense of community throughout and beyond the University Sub-categories/objectives: Build a community of engaged students; engage alumni with students and faculty in order to enhance institutional and personal relationships with alumni; update masterplan to ensure campus is welcoming and modernized.**

Collaborations across departments and divisions and providing theme-based content and learning in the form of digital badges continue to be successful community building and student engagement strategies. For example, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion collaborated with the Social Worker for Student Resources to facilitate the Voices against Violence bystander intervention training program, Courageous Conversations, and Take Back the Night. In this year 124 FY students completed the Pioneer Leadership Institute Badge, 101 students completed the Civic Engagement Badge, and six students completed the newest badge, in social justice leadership.

Full athletic competition resumed in 2021-22 with 285 student athletes competing at the NCAA level and 90 student athletes on club teams. The softball team earned national academic recognition ranking 44<sup>th</sup> in the country for team GPA. Ninety student athletes earned NJAC All-Academics selection, the higher number ever from WP, and the highest number of NCAA student athletes earned a cumulative GPA over 3.0 or higher after three semesters. The baseball team captured the NJAC Tournament Championship and earned a trip to the NCAA Tournament, where they advanced to the second round.

Alumni attendance at events increased 66 percent compared to the previous year. Attendance at football tailgate parties increased. A virtual book club focused on the theme of Social Justice: Learning and Building Community Across Differences grew to 380 members with 34 new members in FY 2022.

Utilizing the recommendations from the Academic Zone Plan, the Residence Hall Plan and the Athletic Zone Plan, multiple building, grounds and field projects were completed. Upgrades to street and sidewalk lighting and additional security cameras were installed on campus to enhance visibility for pedestrians and drivers.

**Goal 5: Establish the University as a model of outstanding and affordable public higher education Sub-categories/objectives: increase institutional and external resources to support students in need of financial assistance; diversity funding streams; strengthen professional development for all employees; continuous improvement of business processes; make the University fully “green.”**

The successful fundraising year, described in the Overview, included an increase in Annual Fund giving, which often creates a pipeline leading to major gifts, to the highest point in University history at \$712,000.

Professional development continued through remote delivery of the required unconscious bias workshops for faculty which were attended by all faculty members. The summer learning and development program won the 2021 National CUPA-HR award for innovation.

Working relationships with union leadership representing WP employees continues at a high level of trust and transparency in communications to support major initiatives including new Voluntary Separation Agreements for select unions.

Energy efficient technologies and operations have reduced energy consumption by more than 7 percent over the past year. All campus construction and renovation projects are designed with energy efficiency in mind. Recent examples include the major renovations to 1800 Valley Road and the Wayne Hall Dining renovations which have been constructed for sustainability, energy efficiency and environmental quality.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the University continued to manage through the impact of the pandemic and a structural deficit that has evolved through the years. The University progressed as a public regional institution dedicated to providing the support system needed for students to thrive on campus and in their careers. While moving forward relative to Strategic Plan 2012-2022, the University initiated Strategic Plan 2022-2025 to reset the University for success while navigating through complex challenges. The achievements during the course of the past 10 years set the stage for the University's commitment to the five pillars of the new strategic plan: Developing Robust Policies, Programs and Delivery Modalities for Adult Learners; Exploring Alternate Credentials and Certificates; Developing and Implementing Strategies to Reduce the Attrition of the 2,500 Continuing Students, Decolonizing the University, and Revising the Mission Statement.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2022 COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Miki Cammarata**, Vice President for Student Development

**Wendy Christensen**, Faculty in Sociology and Criminal Justice and Chair, Faculty Senate

**Mary Ann Cooper**, Alumni Executive Council

**Elizabeth DeSantis**, President PBA Local 278

**Guillermo de Veyga**, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and University Relations, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management

**Pam Ferguson**, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

**Kevin Garvey**, Associate Vice President for Administration

**Rebecca Gilliland**, Student

**Stuart Goldstein**, Vice President for Marketing and Public Relations and Co-Chair

**Jonathan Lincoln**, Associate Provost

**Angelo Mastrolia**, Chapter President IFPTE Local 195

**Michael Milling**, CWA Local Branch President

**Jennifer Owlett**, Faculty in Communication

**Joshua B. Powers**, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Denise Robinson-Lewis**, Human Resources and Chair, Director's Council

**Venkat Sharma**, Dean of the College of Science and Health and Co-Chair

**Sue Tardi**, Faculty in Sociology and AFT Local 1796 President