



For Students

January 21, 2026



Zainab Gidado and Steve Carr

International Graduate Student Earns Prestigious Fellowship

The reason Zainab Gidado came to Purdue University Fort Wayne from Nigeria is incredibly simple, yet so complex.

"If you want to change your country, you need to step out of it sometimes to see what the rest of the world is doing," Gidado said.

Gidado, M.S. '25, fully intends to return to Nigeria, but only after completing a third PFW year working on optional practical training and her doctorate in philosophy at another university.

Under the supervision of Steve Carr, professor of communication and director of the Institute for

Holocaust and Genocide Studies in the College of Liberal Arts, Gidado is focusing on genocide, violence prevention, social justice, human rights, and mass atrocities.

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TENL Program Partners with Local Charities to Support New Citizens

Purdue University Fort Wayne's Teaching English as a New Language program is known for reaching across the world through online classes to places like Myanmar, Thailand, Japan, the Philippines, China, India, Poland, and Ukraine. The classes open opportunities for both PFW students and their pupils from abroad.

But a relatively new offshoot of **TENL** is helping newcomers to the United States build community with an on-campus class. Working in conjunction with Catholic Charities, as many as 30 immigrants are taking free classes twice weekly to work on speaking and writing English. They came from various countries to build new lives but understanding and using the language is essential.

"We take a lot of things for granted here in Fort Wayne, and one of those is language," said Mary Encabo Bischoff, clinical assistant professor of linguistics and director of TENL. "For many people who are adjusting to live in the U.S., language is one of the biggest barriers, so to provide this opportunity to our community is truly a blessing for us as a campus. We have the spaces, we have the students, and we have the heart for service."

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Get Ready to Feel the Rumble Next Week

Homecoming week at Purdue University Fort Wayne is Jan. 26–31, featuring a full lineup of spirited events and activities for students to enjoy.

Throughout the week, enjoy giveaways at Mastodon athletic events, a student organization fair, a dodgeball tournament, food trucks, bingo, a Homecoming dance, and more! The celebration wraps up with the men's basketball game versus Robert Morris on Jan. 31 at 1 p.m. at Memorial Coliseum.

Check out the [Homecoming website](#) for all the details.

Eventful

There's always plenty to do at Purdue Fort Wayne. To find your favorites—or discover new activities—check the full [events calendar](#) often to see what's happening on campus.

JANUARY

22

Thurs., 7–9 p.m.

SAB Game Show Series: Name that Tune

Whether you're a walking encyclopedia of 80s rock or a pop princess, come out and show us what you've got. Don't let your favorite song play without knowing the name. Bring your friends and let the games begin...

JANUARY

23

Fri., noon–1 p.m.

Life after the Tassels: Budget Bootcamp

Start preparing for life after college. Budgeting (bills, student loans, rent, and more) and credit (how does it work, how to build/maintain it). Free lunch for those in attendance!

JANUARY

23

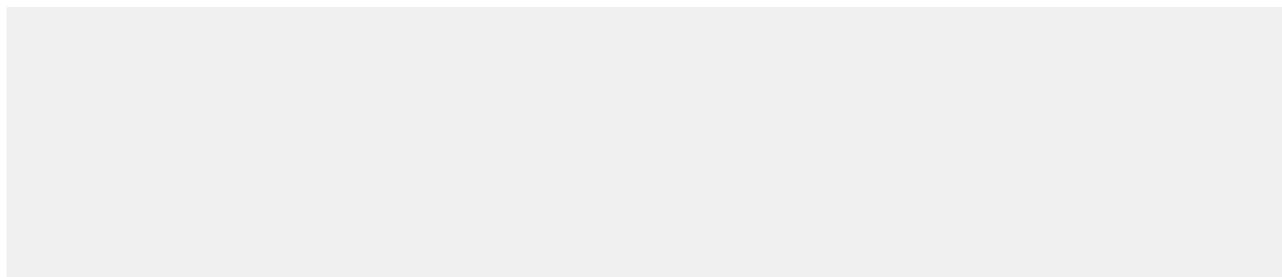
Fri., 9 p.m.–midnight

Indoor Ice Skating

Join us for a FREE indoor ice skating event. There will be a shuttle departing from Walb Circle (under the skybridge) from 9 p.m. to midnight. Skate rentals at the Parkview Icehouse are included in this free event...

Mastodon Moments

Seen and noted around campus. Monitor our university social feeds for more great moments of Mastodon life.





Students line up at the Mastodon Campus Store Jan. 14 to purchase supplies for the new semester, a clear sign of the big role it plays supporting life on campus.

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Don Life is an official university communication sent weekly on Wednesday to all currently enrolled students. Don Life Special Edition is a supplement to the regularly scheduled newsletter. It covers breaking news and time-sensitive information directly related to university operations.

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