



For Students

March 4, 2026



Bold Student Aims High for Success as Athlete, Entrepreneur

Almost every culture has a saying similar to "Fortune favors the bold," usually referring to a male warrior. Purdue University Fort Wayne student Emilia Russell may become the female embodiment of perseverance, as no obstacle slows her from pushing ahead until she achieves her goals. She never allows her own trepidation or insecurities to get in the way.

Russell grew up in South Cave, a small Yorkshire village near England's North Sea. As a track and field athlete who ranked No. 12 in England in the heptathlon, Russell wanted to push herself by attending college in the United States, where the sport has greater emphasis. She studied biochemistry in Connecticut for two years before transferring to PFW for her final two seasons. Now a senior, she's studying business economics and competing in the javelin.

I've always been a person who wants to do something different than everyone else," Russell

said. "Everyone else was going to school in England, but I was like, 'I want to go to America.' I always told myself that I'd do something scary and put myself in a new environment, so I transferred and ended up in Indiana."

"Doing something scary" should be on the front of Russell's sweatshirt as she continually challenges herself. For example, she had a summer internship lined up last year . . . before she attended the **Mastodon Internship and Career Fair** last spring and found a job with Northwestern Mutual.

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While Continuing to Teach, Provost Receives Prestigious Honor

No one on the Purdue University Fort Wayne campus has a better excuse to play hooky and miss a class than Carl Drummond, the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. He's always busy, even making work calls on his long drives to and from campus, or answering at home whenever the chancellor needs him.

But since the spring of 2021, Drummond has also taught a class each fall semester, usually an

introductory physical geography course, with more than 100 students and covering a variety of earth-focused topics. Drummond estimates that 70% of the students are freshmen majoring in elementary education or early childhood development.

There are reasons why Drummond thinks his teaching is important.

“One is it’s a connection to the modern students,” he said. “I hear them, I watch them interact before class, and I get a better sense of who our students are. It’s a good experience for me.”

As Drummond said, he sees himself as a teacher more than as an administrator. It inspires and fulfills him.

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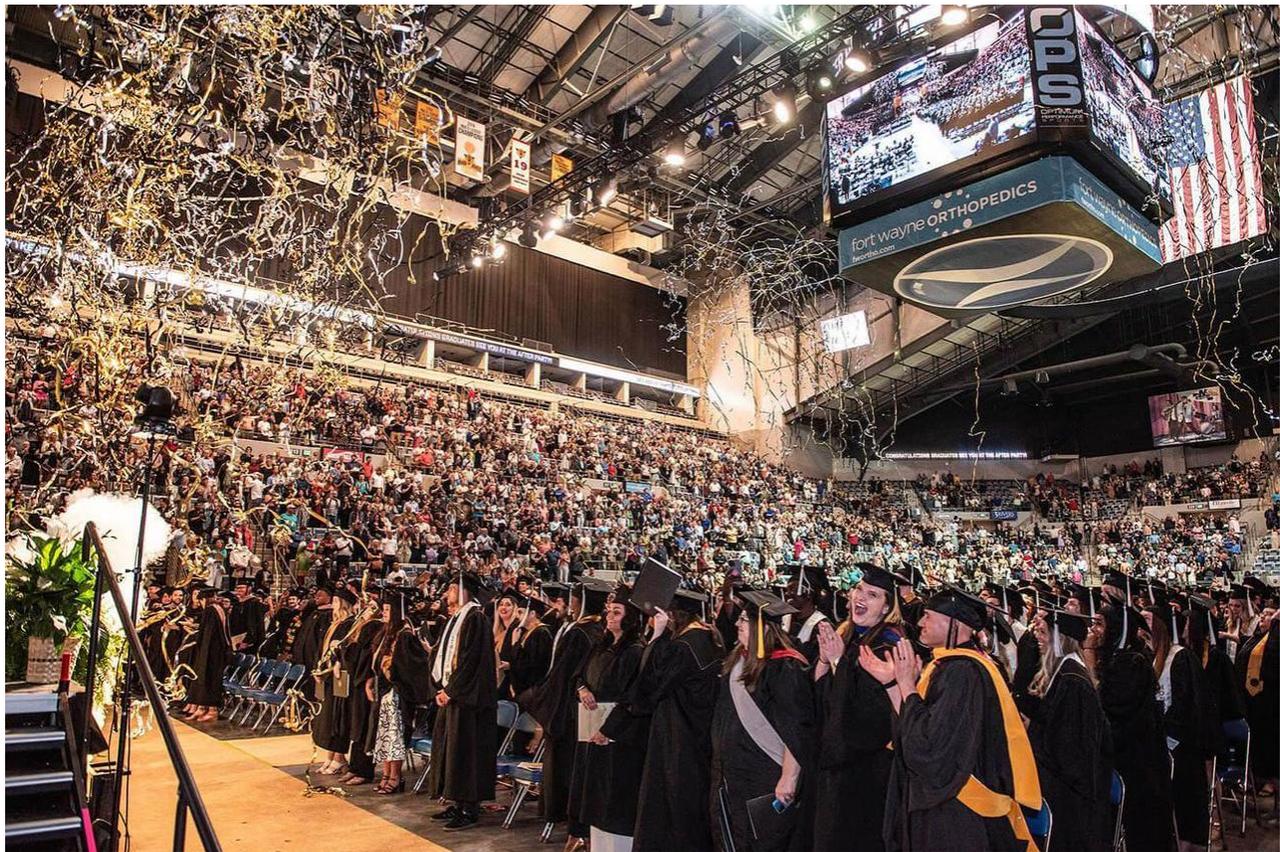
Got 15 Minutes? Help Shape the Future of PFW

From March 2 through April 31, PFW freshmen and seniors will receive an email invitation to complete the National Survey of Student Engagement—a brief, bullet-point survey that shows how students spend their time and what they gain from college.

Your voice has a real impact. Freshmen can help improve the experience they’ll continue to have, and seniors can highlight what made their time at PFW valuable. Together, those responses will help the university see the full student journey—from day one through graduation.

PFW last participated in 2023 and is ready to hear from its students again. The survey takes about 15 minutes, and participant feedback directly informs changes.

PFW is listening. Student experiences matter, and input helps make the university better for everyone.



Graduation Countdown: Important Details and Updates

It might not seem like it today, but Purdue Fort Wayne's 2026 commencement season is just around the corner. Graduating students should keep the following in mind.

The Ceremonies

Tuesday, May 12 | Graduate Commencement Ceremony | 4 p.m. at the Embassy Theatre | 125 W. Jefferson Blvd.

Wednesday, May 13 | Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony | 4 p.m. at Allen County War Memorial Coliseum | 4000 Parnell Ave.

Required Steps

Students who plan to participate in either ceremony are asked to review the deadlines and steps below.

1. **Confirm name pronunciation and attendance** by April 13. Students must complete these steps to ensure their names are pronounced accurately as they cross the stage at the ceremony
2. **Order a cap and gown.** All orders will be shipped directly to the address that's entered, along with a return shipping label. To get the best price, order by April 20. The last day to order commencement regalia is April 27.

3. **Visit the commencement website** often for important information, reminders, and updates.

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.

MARCH

5

Thurs., 6–8 p.m.

Ken Burns' "The American Revolution" Screening and Discussion

Join PBS Fort Wayne and the College of Liberal Arts U.S. 250th Anniversary Celebration Programming committee for an excerpt of Ken Burns' "The American Revolution," featuring a post-screening Q&A with Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Kathleen DuVal. Free and open to the public...

MARCH

5

Thurs., 7:30–9 p.m.

Faculty Recital: Matthew Giallongo with Guest Artist Ellen Boll, Piano

This faculty recital features PFW faculty member Matt Giallongo. "Songs of the Night and Sea" will explore works by Fauré, Larsen, and Granero. With guest artist Ellen Boll at the piano, this program travels through nocturnal scenes, ocean imagery, and the emotional colors they inspire...

MARCH

6

Fri., noon–2 p.m.

Freshmen First Fridays

Join your fellow freshmen for fun crafts and free snacks! Come to all four events for a chance to win a prize...

Mastodon Moments

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



At Science Central on Saturday, PFW library staff members Erika Mann, Graham Fredrick, and Daniel Lin demonstrated the scanning technology used to produce a 3D-printed version of the baby mastodon skull on display in Walb Student Union. Professor Emeritus James Farlow also spoke about the discovery of Donna, PFW's mastodon mascot, and answered general questions about these creatures.

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