



## 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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## Commencement—Additional Details for Faculty and Staff Only

As first announced in the Dec. 4 edition of *Inside PFW*, Purdue Fort Wayne will hold two commencement ceremonies this spring.

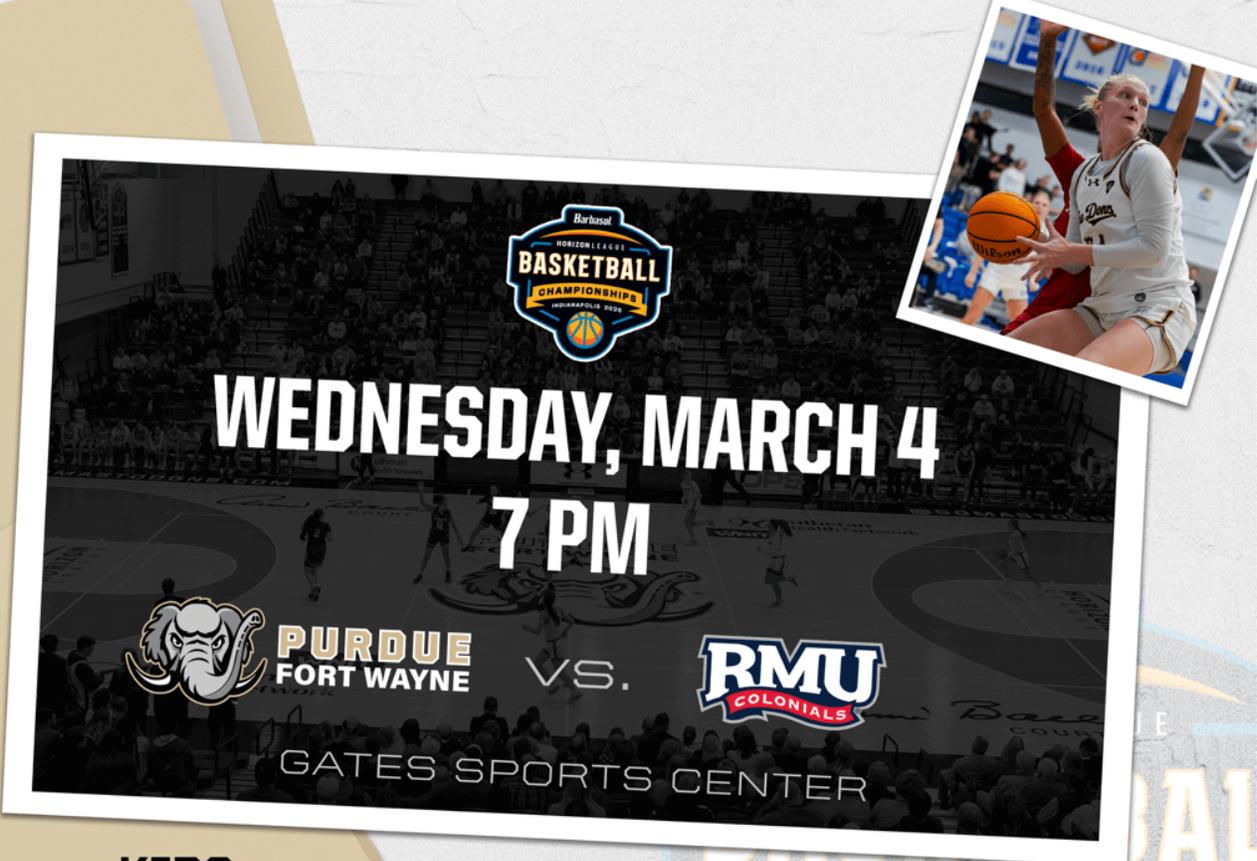
The graduate ceremony will take place May 12 at The Embassy Theatre, and the undergraduate ceremony will be held May 13 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum. Both events will begin at 4 p.m.

All faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to attend and participate in these joyous occasions, which mark the culmination of a graduate's PFW experience and are among life's special moments. Anyone wishing to participate in one or both ceremonies, including processing with the graduates, may confirm their interest by **completing a brief survey**.

For faculty and staff processing with the graduates, academic regalia (tams optional) is expected for both ceremonies. Those needing to rent regalia may use this **online form**; the university will cover the cost of rentals. As in recent years, there will be no option to pick up items on campus. All regalia will be shipped directly and include a return shipping label. The order deadline is April 27.

Individuals or groups who do not wish to process with the graduates can still play an essential role by volunteering at one or both ceremonies to ensure the graduates' experience reflects the university's level of appreciation and pride in their achievements. Volunteer support is incredibly valuable, as it takes hundreds to ensure smooth events. Please use this **online form** to sign up.

Join the university community in celebrating its 2026 graduates by standing alongside them as they officially join the PFW alumni community!



**Horizon League BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
INDIANAPOLIS 2026

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4**  
**7 PM**

**PURDUE FORT WAYNE** VS. **RMU COLONIALS**

GATES SPORTS CENTER

**KIDS K-12 FREE!**

**BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

## Horizon League Women's Basketball Championship: First-Round Game Wednesday

Experience the excitement on Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Gates Sports Center! Cheer on the PFW women's basketball team as they face Robert Morris in the first-round matchup of the Horizon League championship and compete for a spot in the next round.

Faculty and staff may claim one free upper-level ticket by presenting a valid ID at the PFW Athletics ticket office before noon on Wednesday. After that time, tickets must be purchased.

Students in grades K–12 will receive free admission, so bring family, friends, and young Mastodon fans for an exciting night of basketball. Student tickets can also be picked up at the PFW Athletics ticket office.

## Annual Employee Recognition Reception to Honor Service and Excellence

The annual Employee Recognition Reception will be held March 26 in the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union. Doors open at 4 p.m., with the formal program beginning at 4:30. The event will honor employees who have reached service milestones, recent retirees, and the latest winners of the APSAC and CSSAC Excellence Awards. Guests can enjoy a selection of hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

RSVP by March 12 via the [registration portal](#).

Those who earned a degree in 2025 and would like the achievement included in the program and on the employee recognition webpage may email [hr@pfw.edu](mailto:hr@pfw.edu) and include their name, degree earned, major, and university.

## In a Snap

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



At the Feb. 22 Spring Campus Visit Day, prospective students heard firsthand accounts of life as a Mastodon from a panel of College of Liberal Arts students.

News Center



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*Inside PFW* is produced twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday by the Office of Communications and Marketing. *Inside PFW Special Edition* is a supplement to the regularly scheduled newsletter. It covers breaking news and time-sensitive information directly related to university operations.

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY**  
**FORT WAYNE**



