



A Memorable Commencement Week at Purdue Fort Wayne

Purdue University Fort Wayne celebrated an exciting and memorable Commencement week as more than 1,300 graduates crossed the stage to officially become Purdue Fort Wayne alumni.

This year marked a special milestone for the university with the launch of Purdue Fort Wayne's first-ever standalone Graduate Commencement Ceremony, held at the Embassy Theatre. Undergraduate Commencement followed at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, where graduates, families, faculty, staff, and supporters gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2026.

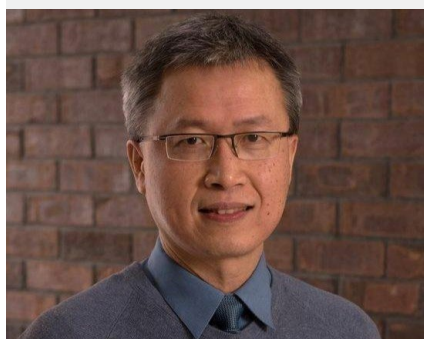
Throughout the ceremonies, graduates were recognized not only for earning their degrees, but also for the resilience, determination, leadership, and impact they have demonstrated throughout their academic journeys. The celebrations reflected the pride and spirit of the Mastodon

community and highlighted Purdue Fort Wayne's continued role as northeast Indiana's premier institution of higher education.

The week was filled with unforgettable moments, from graduates celebrating with classmates and faculty mentors to proud families cheering from the audience, and from thousands of photos capturing the excitement across campus and at the Coliseum.

Missed the ceremonies or want to relive the celebration? Video recaps, photo galleries, highlights, and more are available on the Purdue Fort Wayne website and social media channels.

RELIVE THE MOMENT



Cheu-jeey Lee



Cindy Vanderlaan



Austin Rausch

CELT Teaching Award Winners Announced

The Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching is pleased to announce the winners of its 2026 teaching awards.

Cheu-jeey Lee is the recipient of the 2026 Friends of the University Outstanding Teacher Award. This honor recognizes exceptional teaching and a meaningful, sustained impact on students at Purdue University Fort Wayne. The selection committee was especially impressed by the strong evidence of student connection and impact reflected throughout the nomination dossier.

Cindy Vanderlaan has been selected to receive the 2026 Award for Excellence in Online and Hybrid Teaching. Vanderlaan was recognized for the intentional, evidence-informed redesign of MA 22900, which addressed common barriers in online mathematics courses. Drawing on insights from participation in the CELT online course design cohort, Vanderlaan translated this work into a course structure that is clear, supportive, and well-aligned with learning goals.

Austin Rausch is this year's recipient of the Leepoxy Plastics, Inc. Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. This honor recognizes outstanding contributions to undergraduate learning. Rausch's work highlighted effective use of Universal Design for Learning and gamified, activity-based approaches in theatre courses, creating multiple pathways for students to engage in analysis, discussion, writing, and creative interpretation.

All of the award winners will be honored at the **2026 CELT Fall Teaching Conference** in August.

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Campus Closed for Memorial Day

Purdue University Fort Wayne will observe the Memorial Day holiday beginning Sunday, May 24. All campus buildings will close at 9 p.m. on Sunday and will reopen at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26.

Memorial Day is a time to honor and remember the brave individuals who gave their lives in service to the United States. Their sacrifice and dedication have helped preserve the freedoms we enjoy today.

As the campus community enjoys the long weekend, Purdue Fort Wayne encourages everyone to take a moment to reflect on the significance of the holiday and recognize those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

In a Snap

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



Fort Wayne Taiko is always a hit! The annual Fort Wayne Cherry Blossom Festival, a celebration of Japanese culture featuring performances, demonstrations, food, crafts, and merchandise, was held at Purdue Fort Wayne on Sunday.

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