A Sizzling Summer at Wheeling Jesuit University

It’s been an action-packed summer at Wheeling Jesuit - research labs and residence halls updated, alumni events enjoyed, university-community partnerships growing, and, of course, summer school. Let me share one of the more exciting aspects of our summer school.

Learning is a year round proposition at WJU. In July, we conducted the month-long Cristo Rey Summer Academy (CRSA) for 65 high-achieving, low-income high school juniors from ten Cristo Rey schools. Our goal was to jumpstart their college careers with planning, preparation, and mentoring. Cristo Rey high schools are Catholic college prep schools serving 9,000 disadvantaged students in urban areas nationwide. WJU has enrolled outstanding Cristo Rey students who now attend WJU. We count ourselves as fortunate to have them with us. We are a better university because they are here.

WJU is committed to helping talented students from low-income families attain a college education at WJU that will bolster their future economic and social mobility and instill Jesuit values of service, character and responsibility that will serve them for life.

But college acceptance is only half the battle; college success is the ultimate goal and that’s where WJU really delivers. 64% of our Pell Grant supported students graduate, higher than the 59% national average. “When children born into the bottom fifth of the income distribution get a college degree, their chances of making it to the top nearly quadruple, and their chances of making it out of the bottom increase by more than 50%.” -Brookings Institution Report

CRSA at WJU provided students with expert guidance and support to apply to college, advice in choosing best-fit schools, preparation for successful college transition, and mentoring to persist in their studies and graduate. The Academy was supported financially by visionary benefactors and WJU Board members. WJU is deeply appreciative of their generous support, as are the students they sponsored.

A story about the CRSA follows as well as information about other WJU summer activities.

I hope you had a chance to spend some time with family and friends this summer. Refreshing and renewing your mind, body and spirit are so important to our health and happiness.

Be assured of my prayers.
Peace,

Rev. James Fleming, S.J., Ph.D.
WJU President
Fall 2015

Reserve the date!
Support and attend WJU’s Gaudiosa,
April 16, 2016, to raise scholarship funds.
Contact Jasmine Lo at gaudiosa@wju.edu for information.
Cristo Rey Summer Academy Program a Resounding Success

In July, WJU held two Cristo Rey Summer Academy (CRSA) sessions to provide 65 juniors from Cristo Rey high schools information on making it to college and making it in college. The CRSAs were free of charge to the students, thanks to the generosity of numerous donors.

The CRSA was an immersive, two-week college prep experience with guided help in two areas: Making it to college: filling out college applications, choosing potential schools, timelines, and obtaining financial aid. Making it in college: developing time management skills, course selection, balancing academic and social activities, and accessing support services. Other CRSA activities included two abbreviated college courses, service learning, guest lectures and reflection.

“I loved it,” said Nautica Prater, a CRSA participant. “My best friend decided to come here and she pulled me along with her. I am so glad I decided to come and have this experience.”

The two-week events were held on campus July 5-17 and July 19-31. Students from Cristo Rey schools in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C. and New Jersey attended. Cristo Rey high schools are Catholic, college prep schools serving 9,000 high-achieving, students from low-income families in urban areas. Throughout high school, the Cristo Rey students work at companies and organizations to help earn their tuition.

The CRSA workshops were led by WJU experts and faculty members, working with the students in groups and individually. Wheeling Jesuit students also served as group leaders and mentors. The CRSA students had an opportunity to explore the WJU campus and surrounding areas during leisure and recreational activities. They also formed friendships with other CRSA and Wheeling Jesuit students.

“One of the joys of the Academy was introducing the students to college life in a unique context,” said Fr. Matt Cortese, SJ, the Academy Director. “We wanted to provide them with the knowledge and tools they need to discover their desires for college and discern what sort of college experience would be best for them.”

Wheeling Jesuit University has a special connection with the Cristo Rey High School network, which counts many Jesuit schools in the group. WJU has many former Cristo Rey High School students currently attending and the University hopes to admit more in the future.
Thank you Cristo Rey Summer Academy Donors and Supporters!

The Cristo Rey Summer Academy Program was offered at no charge to the students, thanks to the generosity of donors who are committed to helping WJU help academically talented, low-income students earn a degree.

Events in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. raised significant funding to allow students, including those from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Baltimore and Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Washington, D.C., to attend the CRSAs. WJU Board Member Jim Smith was instrumental in organizing CRSA fundraising efforts in the Baltimore area. Smith is a member of the Maryland-based Smith, Gildea and Schmidt law firm.

“I have great admiration for the students who attended WJU’s Cristo Rey Summer Academy. They face challenges, but are undeterred in their goal to attend college and thrive once there,” said Smith. “I want to thank the generous donors, including my fellow Board Members, who supported this worthy program.”

Mark Richardson, executive director of Tenant Advisory Group Cushman and Wakefield, was a CRSA sponsor. “Listening to a former Cristo Rey High School student, who is now a WJU student, speak at the WJU Columbia Country Club fundraiser more than confirmed how meaningful my gift will be,” said Richardson. “The thought of assisting a local Cristo Rey student obtain a quality education at WJU makes my heart joyful.”

Thanks to the donors, CRSA students left with new knowledge and skills, better prepared to continue on their college-bound path to have a successful career in higher education.

CRSA BENEFACTORS

John and Sue Adams
Ctr. for Arab American Philanthropy Christina Attiliis
J. Norris Byrnes
Linda Smith Cavanaugh Rory and Nancy Coakley
Mr. and Mrs. Scott David Feehan Family Fund
Arthur and Drucilla Fuccillo Wayne and Holly Gioioso Dr. and Mrs. Larry Grubb Mimie and Rob Helm Christopher and Susan Helmrath Sarah Kelly and Lorcan O’Connor Francis and Janet Kelly Peter Lawler Thomas and Anita Lingan Stephen and Margaret Marshall Joseph and Stacy McAleer William and Maria McAleer Patrick and Susan Muth Planit Advertising (Matthew Doud) Joseph Reyes Mark and Celeste Richardson Robert and Elizabeth Ruyak Terrence and Veronica Sauvain Helen J. Serini Foundation Thomas and Sherrie Sidman Hon. James and Sandra Smith James and Jennifer Soltesz Richard Sullivan Mei-Mei Venners-Sherman Dean and Sarah Walter

“I am so happy to be able to spend time here at Wheeling Jesuit, at no cost. I was nervous about college, but being here for two weeks will make my transition less stressful. I like being challenged, and Wheeling Jesuit will allow me to do that. I wanted to get a grasp on college, and WJU is the perfect fit.”

--Isamel Lopez, CRSA attendee
Historic Mount de Chantal Academy Bell Memorialized at WJU

The bell that rang for almost 145 years in the tower of the Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy and Convent is now proudly displayed at Wheeling Jesuit University near the site of its former home.

A special dedication ceremony for the bell display was held on June 27 and attended by Mount Sisters of the Visitation, members of the Mount Alumnae Association and WJU faculty and staff including President Rev. James Fleming.

WJU, the Mount and the Sisters of the Visitation have an enduring history and relationship including the establishment of the Mount de Chantal Conservatory at WJU in 2013, which memorializes the Mount and the Sisters’ musical legacy.

Hands-on Citizenship Learning for Young Women at WJU

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of West Virginia hosted its annual Rhododendron Girls State program at WJU, June 22-27. Nearly 400 rising high school junior girls from across the state took part in the program creating the 51st state in the union for one week each year by setting up city, county and state governments to teach the girls, hands-on, about citizenship, leadership and patriotism.

The students also participated in classes on college prep, leadership, city, county and state government, as well as electives in journalism, public speaking, forensic science, physical fitness and chorus.

Government officials who attended this well-respected and popular annual event included: U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin; WV Secretary of State Natalie Tennant; WV State Treasurer John Perdue; and Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin.
A Bountiful Harvest Yields Community Benefits

WJU’s campus garden, started in 2012, is yielding a bumper crop of fresh vegetables again this year. Once again, the garden is tended to by WJU volunteer students, staff and community members.

The garden concept was inspired by WJU students as a way to contribute and is a Student Sustainability Board project. WJU’s Appalachian Institute (AI) Director, Elizabeth Collins and Campus Gardner, Gary Pastor, oversee the student effort. Parkhurst Dining Services, buys the garden produce and promotes the garden vegetables with “HomeGrown” signage on its menu. The crops were also sold at a weekly Farmer’s Market, providing fresh, organic and affordable produce for community purchase.

Produce was distributed to expectant mothers and families in the Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker (MIHOW) program, which aims to improve the health and child development of low-income families. Throughout the summer on Thursdays, local residents, WJU employees and students helped to maintain the community garden and learn about organic gardening.

This year, more than 65 volunteers, including 46 students, worked in the garden. In the past two years the garden has yielded more than 1,300 pounds of produce. “This garden is a true community effort,” said Pastor. “I enjoy passing along what I’ve learned over the years - educating the next generation of farmers.”

WJU’s Alumni Enjoy a Great Weekend

WJU grads attending the Alumni Weekend held June 19 - 21 were treated to some exciting events, including a newly organized 50 Year Club Dinner; induction of the Class of 1965 into the 50 Year Club and Golden Anniversary Celebration; Jesuit Education Discussion; President’s Circle Breakfast; President’s Dinner honoring all anniversary classes and Alumni Award recipients; and a beer tasting. Nearly 300 alumni enjoyed the weekend on WJU’s campus. More information about the weekend can be found in the next edition of WJU’s Chronicle.

Should you wish to receive the Chronicle, please contact Kelly Klubert at kklubert@wju.edu.
WJU Students Participate in Significant Environmental Study

WJU biology students and Biology Professor Dr. Ben Stout will participate in a West Virginia Water Research Institute and West Virginia University study thanks to a $350,000 grant to expand a regional water quality monitoring program called Three Rivers QUEST. The grant is funded by the Colcom Foundation which is committed to fostering a sustainable environment. The new grant also created REACH—Research Enhancing Awareness via Community Hydrology.

WJU Named Best Hidden Gem

College Raptor Inc., named Wheeling Jesuit University the best hidden gem institution in the state. The online college search and comparison tool defines hidden gem institutions as "high-caliber colleges and universities which receive fewer than 5,000 applicants per year but have a total enrollment greater than 1,000 students." The designation is determined by analyzing colleges based on enrollment and application data.

Top U.S. News & World Report Rankings

U.S. News & World Report ranked three WJU programs among the Best Online Programs for Veterans in the nation: MSN (graduate) nursing, MEL (education) and R.N. to B.S.N. Other national rankings for WJU online programs: master of science in nursing program (40th best); master of education leadership program (top 27%); and R.N. to B.S.N. program (among top 33%). WJU has consistently received high marks and top rankings from U.S. News and World Report over the last decade.

Sisters of St. Joseph Exemplary Service and Contribution to WJU Honored

The Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph in Wheeling are this year’s recipients of WJU’s Communitas Award. Recognizing the Sisters for their service and grant contribution to WJU at a special ceremony, WJU President Rev. James Fleming said, “The Sisters of the Congregation of St. Joseph are dedicated to both this University and our community. They recognize the need for systemic change in our healthcare system, and have chosen to support WJU’s health sciences education as a way to affect the needed change. We thank them for their dedicated support for our students.” WJU designed the Communitas Award — Latin for the word ‘community’— as a way to recognize those who exemplify WJU’s mission of life, leadership and service.

(From Left) Sr. Carmella Campione, Sr. Kathleen Durkin, Sr. Joan Kreyenbuhl and Sr. Mona Farthing receive the 2015 Communitas Award from WJU President Rev. James Fleming, S.J.
Challenging Young Students

Area kindergarten through third grade students will explore the world of science at a WJU Challenger Learning Center (CLC) e-Labs thanks to a Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation grant totaling $121,000. Over the next two years, the CLC will create six innovative e-Lab programs, before the global launch in 2017. E-Labs are interactive video conferences with education specialists that expand the classroom learning experience, spark young minds and motivate students to pursue science studies. WJU's CLC, in operation since 1994, is one of 40 worldwide, established in memory of the seven astronauts who tragically died after liftoff on Jan. 28, 1986.

Celebrating a Life of Service and Accomplishment

The Rev. Walter A. Buckius, S.J., former mentor and rector of the WJU Jesuit Community turned 95-years-old on July 13. Buckius resided at WJU from 1973 until his retirement in 2011. In addition to serving as the community’s rector from 1974-80, Fr. Buckius was active with Wheeling Jesuit’s campus ministry and served as an academic counselor.

Wheeling Jesuit Sports News

Our Cup Runneth Over

WJU’s Athletic Department won the Commissioner’s Cup, the Mountain East Conference’s (MEC) top honor, which recognizes overall athletic excellence among its 12 members annually. WJU captured first, up from a third place the previous year. WJU won one MEC championship in volleyball and six second place finishes – men’s cross country, women’s cross country, women’s golf, men’s track and field, women’s track and field and women’s lacrosse. Men’s soccer garnered a third place finish.

“Winning the Commissioner’s Cup is a laudable achievement for the players and coaches at Wheeling Jesuit,” said WJU President Rev. James Fleming. “It is our goal to be at the top of the Mountain East Conference in three important measures of the success of our athletic programs - winning percentages, graduation rates and alumni support.

Re-Accreditation for WJU’s Athletic Training Program

Wheeling Jesuit University’s Athletic Training Program has been re-accredited through 2025 by its governing body, The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. The popular program was started in 2006 and earned its initial five-year accreditation in 2010. More than 80 students have graduated from the program since its inception.

For more information about this communication or about Wheeling Jesuit University, please contact Sarah Kelly, Advancement VP, skelly@wju.edu.