

Greenstein: Access to Higher Ed is Key

Emphasizing the importance of preserving access to quality higher education, the chancellor of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education addressed the Cal U community on Oct. 10.

That goal, said Dr. Daniel Greenstein at an open forum, will require all 14 schools in the System to pay attention to their culture and to each other.

Greenstein made the visit to Cal U — his third since being named chancellor in 2018 — as part of his fall tour of all 14 State System universities.

The chancellor addressed questions from the audience related to the ongoing State System Redesign, the effort to transform universities and expand educational opportunities for students.

Social mobility, economic development, equity and social justice are the driving forces behind the redesign, which is in the second of three phases.

"Higher education is probably the most reliable pathway into the middle class," Greenstein said.

"In Pennsylvania by 2025-2026 the estimate is at least 54 percent of the adult population will require some form of post-secondary education. And virtually all new jobs that are being created since the recession require some form of post-secondary education."

A piece of the plan to keep a State System education accessible and affordable was the tuition freeze for the 2019-2020 academic year.

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Dr. Carol Bocetti (left) conducts field work and research with Cal U student Leah Williams. Her work on the Kirtland's warbler recovery team was instrumental in having the species removed from the endangered list.

Warbler's Status Career Highlight for Bocetti

It's official: The Kirtland's warbler is no longer considered to be an endangered species.

The removal of the songbird, which is found only in Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio, from the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act was announced Oct. 9 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Kirtland's warbler has recovered from a low of about 167 pairs in 1987 to the current estimate of about 2,000 pairs.

The recovery of the bird is the culmination of decades of work for Cal U's Dr. Carol Bocetti, a professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences. A member of the Kirtland's warbler recovery team since 1998, Bocetti

became the team leader in 2006.

Working with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others, she spearheaded efforts to develop a conservation strategy and commitment to managing habitat, a significant step toward recovery and long-term conservation of the Kirtland's warbler.

"This is the highlight of my career," said Bocetti. "My science contributed to the improved management of the species. This success feels very personal."

Her research documented the link between certain characteristics of jack

pine ecosystems and the nesting and reproduction of the Kirtland's warbler.

While no longer considered to be an endangered species, the Kirtland's warbler will be classified as conservation reliant, meaning its habitat will need ongoing management.

"We won't have all the protections that go along with being on the endangered species list. But we do have a strong and vibrant partnership that will continue to sustain the species," Bocetti said.

In 2016, Bocetti and her team won the U.S. Forest Service Wings Across the Americas Bird Conservation Partnership Award.

In 2011, Bocetti was honored as

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5K, Proposal Highlight Vulcan Fest Homecoming

A beautiful finish.

It applied to the weather on Saturday during the second Vulcan Fest Homecoming Weekend, which started out not so terrifically but ended with sunshine and splendid fall temperatures.

And it applied to the Vulcan Fest 5K. More than 100 people ran or walked the course around and through campus in the rain, but the excitement of finishing the first such race at Cal U brought smiles to nearly everyone's faces.

Matthew Jenkins, a senior studying tourism, hospitality and event studies, was the overall men's winner, and Ally Wilson, a senior criminal justice major was the fastest woman.

"I'll do this every year if I'm able once I'm an alumna," Wilson said. "The course was good."

"I used this for a warm-up," said Jenkins, who was planning to run in a marathon at Ohio State Park on Sunday. "My stretches felt great, and I thought, 'I'm going to win this!'"

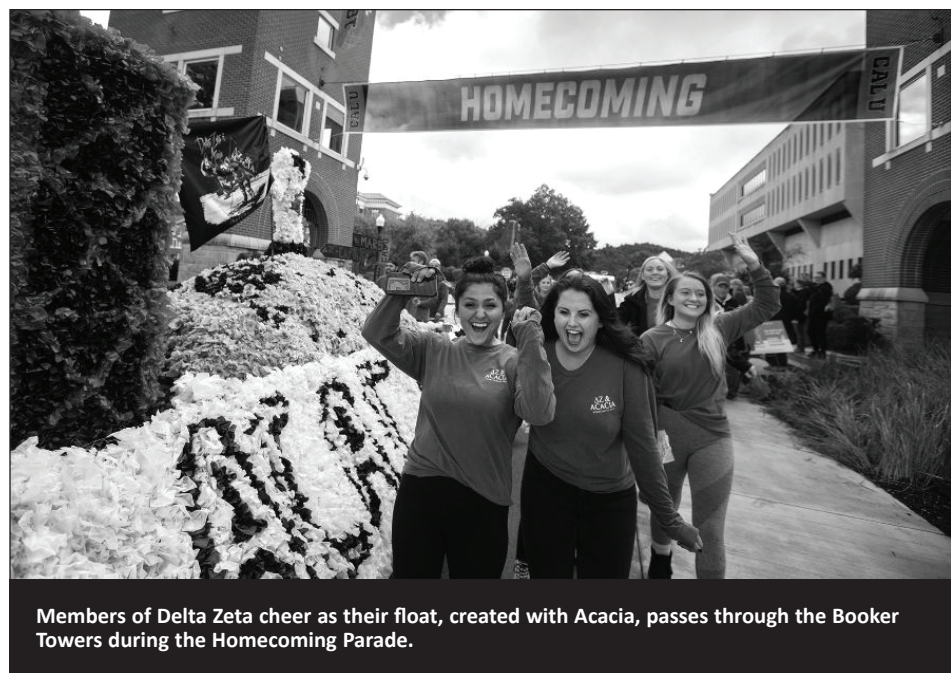
Frank S. Ptak, age 83 and Class of 1959, eagerly chose the inaugural Vulcan Fest 5K when he was looking for an October event — his 11th this year — to race-walk.

"I wanted to do it at my alma mater," he said.

Right on cue, the rain stopped as the 70th annual Homecoming Parade stepped off from the Convocation Center at noon.

Nigel Wright and his wife Amy, 2007 graduates, returned to campus with their 4-year-old daughter, Amelia, Class of 2037, who has never missed the parade.

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Members of Delta Zeta cheer as their float, created with Acacia, passes through the Booker Towers during the Homecoming Parade.

Cal U Celebrates Arts and Culture

The Convocation Center was transformed into a celebration of art and culture around the world on Oct. 1 for the third annual Liberal Arts Festival at California University of Pennsylvania.

More than 500 high school students and teachers, as well as members of the Cal U community and public attended the event.

Emphasizing the importance of a liberal arts education, the fair showcased the various forms of work and art from students and faculty in the departments of Art and Languages; Communication, Design and Culture; Criminal Justice; English; History, Politics, Society and Law; Music and Theatre; Psychology; and the Honors Program.

"Our festival continues to grow and improve," said event organizer Andrea Cencich, from the Arts and Language Department. "I'm so proud of our Cal U students, and this is truly a celebration of culture, arts, and diversity."

Assisting Cencich were Sabrina Hykes-Davis, from Music and Theatre; Amanda Magdic, from the Admissions Office; and Becky McMillen, from University Conference Services.

Hykes-Davis said the liberal arts infuses many skills from other academic areas, including her field of design and entertainment technology.

"This festival is so important because students and people can come and see all of the different facets of the College,"



Ayushna Rai, from Brentwood High School, checks out her face paint during the third annual Liberal Arts Festival.

she said. "Painting is technology, and because of this festival we get a wonderful opportunity to talk and interact."

Sydney Smichnick, a senior at nearby California Area High School, wants to study political science and minor in Spanish. She enjoyed Chinese writing and painting skulls made from sugar.

"I'm pretty interested in all of this, especially learning about different cultures, and what I am seeing today all

relates to what I want to do," she said.

Adam Majed, a junior from Brentwood High School, enjoyed looking at costumes at the "Fashions for the Stage 1880 through 1980" booth.

"The liberal arts are fun, and I like to build things," he said. "This place is really nice and I am enjoying walking around and seeing as much as I can."

The costumes that Marissa Sorenson helped to design caught his eye.

"Getting involved with other aspects gives you a complete sense of what goes

on as an actor," said Sorenson, a junior majoring in theatre with a concentration in musical theatre. "The festival is such a great outlet to explain and show people what we do."

Preschool children from the Rutledge Institute for Early Childhood Education and The Village childcare and preschool were first-time participants. The little ones performed a medieval skit, decorated suitcases and pounded drums at the Arabic Corner.

"They love going to events on campus and have enjoyed this so much," said Ashley Roth, assistant director of the Rutledge Institute, director of The Village, and an instructor at Cal U. "Hopefully we will come back every year."

The festival was held in Manderino Library for its first two years.

T. David Garcia, vice president for Enrollment Management, welcomed some of the visiting students while attending his first festival since arriving on campus last March.

"Cal U is a special place and this is very impressive and an ideal way to showcase our school to prospective students," he said.

The Office of the President and Office of Academic Affairs were the sponsors. Co-sponsoring the festival were the College of Liberal Arts, the Department of Art and Languages, Department of Music and Theatre, and Office of Graduate Studies and Research.



Jason Alrutz, tree care foreman for Davey Tree, cuts limbs from the Kentucky coffeetree on the Quad.

New Roles for an Old Tree

The majestic Kentucky coffeetree in the Quad has reached the end of its lifespan. But its limbs — and its progeny — will live on at Cal U.

The 40-foot tree, known scientifically as *Gymnocladus dioicus*, was removed Oct. 3 by arborists from the Davey Tree company. Signs of decay had been evident over the past several years, and tests pointed to changes in the giant's trunk that had weakened its structure and raised safety concerns.

"I hate to take down a tree," says Mike Kanalis, director of Facilities Management at Cal U. "But safety is always our priority, and it was time."

The tree is estimated to be about 135 years old, based on the 43-inch diameter of its trunk.

Its age can be determined more specifically by examining cross-sections of the trunk. Dr. Robert Whyte, of the Department of Biological and

Environmental Sciences, has requested sections to examine and use in classroom activities.

Kanalis also is setting aside lumber for other faculty-led projects, including the children's "sensory garden" outside Morgan Hall. In the past, programs such as technology education and applied engineering and technology have crafted decorative items from big trees that once stood on campus.

"We'd like to repurpose as much of the tree as possible, so we can keep it within the academic community," Kanalis says.

Casey Marburger '10, '12, a member of the Davey Tree crew, remembers the Kentucky coffeetree from his time as a technology education major on campus.

"I've been on trimming projects with trees over 100 feet tall, but this is the biggest removal I've been a part of thus far," he says. "This tree was near the end of its lifespan, and the slow

decay was catching up with it."

Walter Balla, of the Facilities Management staff, has been anticipating the tree's demise. He's been collecting the shiny, flat pods filled with hard-shelled seeds that give the Kentucky coffee tree its common name.

Nearly a dozen seeds have germinated, and seedlings are sprouting on sunny windowsills across campus. Eventually, Balla hopes to plant the seedlings in protected spots on campus where they can grow and thrive.

The University plans to install a new tree — either another Kentucky coffeetree or a similar native species — near the same location behind Herron Recreation Center.

"The scenery has changed since I was a student," Marburger says of campus. "Plant another tree here, and it could stand for another several generations."

Campus BRIEFS

Nominations Open for Merit Awards

Nominations are being accepted for the 2020 Presidential Distinguished Merit Awards, open to tenured faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, research, or service. Students, faculty, staff or alumni may make a nomination. Self-nominations are permitted.

Nominations close at 4 p.m. on Oct. 25. Support materials from the nominees are due by 4 p.m. Nov. 15.

Each nomination must include nominee's name, category (teaching, research, service) and nominator's name. Send nominations to Dr. Summer Arrigo-Nelson at arrigonelson@calu.edu or the Department of Biology and Environmental Science, Box 45.

SECA Charity Deadline Oct. 25

Members of the campus community are invited to participate in the annual SECA campaign through Oct. 25.

SECA, the State Employees Combined Appeal, supports a number of local, regional, national and international charities. Contributions help families and individuals in need of shelter, medical care, food, job training and other services.

Employees can make a single donation or bi-weekly deductions through the Employee Self-Service system.

For more information, visit seca.pa.gov or contact Renee Hanna at hanna_r@calu.edu or extension 1624.



Childhood education major Elijah Gilbert asks, 'Will this coconut sink or float in water?' at STREAM Fest.

Student to Visit Russia

After a virtual conversation with fellow students in Russia, Cal U junior Victoria McGough is excited to meet some of them in real life.

She will do just that for the spring 2020 semester when she attends the National Research University School of Economics in Perm, Russia, as part of a study abroad program.

"When you have the chance to go to another country, you have to be open-minded and embrace it to truly understand and get the experience you're looking for," said McGough, who has been studying Russian for several months.

McGough and classmates chatted virtually with the Perm students on Sept. 25 as part of Dr. Sean's Madden's ongoing collaboration with Dr. Tatyana Permyakova, a professor in the National Research University's School of Foreign Languages.

She was Madden's faculty collaborator during his 2012 experience as a Fulbright Specialist in Russia. The two have continued to make connections between the National Research University and Cal U.

This year marked the fifth virtual exchange among their students.

Despite the cultural and geographical differences, the two student groups found themselves sharing many traits.

Both talked about the challenge of balancing studying and working and not getting enough sleep.

The Perm students mentioned "Game of Thrones" when asked about popular American television shows or movies and one replied "awesome" when a Cal U student said she enjoyed international music.

A long-term goal of both educators is to attract students from each other's school.

McGough, who hopes to join the Peace Corps and someday be an attorney who practices international law, found the talk beneficial.

"I find it's very informative, easygoing and down to earth being able to talk to students face to face over the internet," she said.

Career High for Bocetti

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a Recovery Champion by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The award recognizes agency employees and partners who have made outstanding efforts to conserve and protect endangered and threatened species.

Bocetti and 13 students attended the joint conference of The Wildlife Society and the American Fisheries Society Sept. 29-Oct. 3.

At the event, Bocetti received a Fellows Award from The Wildlife Society, which recognizes current members who have distinguished themselves through exceptional service to the wildlife profession.

In 2018, she was named by the society as the Student Chapter Advisor of the Year. She also won that honor in 2012, the same year that Cal U's student chapter was named The Wildlife Society chapter of the year.

Learning's Fun at STREAM Fest

Cal U students and preschool children continue to prosper from STREAM Fest, a variety of science, reading, engineering, arts and math activities for children that has become a yearly event.

The fun morning in Keystone Hall was conducted by Cal U's pre-kindergarten education majors, who planned and taught the STREAM lessons.

Nearly 40 children came from the Rutledge Institute for Early Childhood Education, which supports an innovative preschool learning program on Cal U's campus, and The Village, an accredited early childhood education center in downtown California.

Drs. Clover Wright and Diane Fine, assistant professors in the Department of Childhood Education, oversee the teachers-in-training.

The event complements the field work many of the Cal U students are

doing for the first time this semester at local school districts. All components of STREAM are used in each activity.

"This gives them the experience of being able to teach in front of their peers, with their peers and in front of their professors," Wright said. "They are exhausted and elated at the end, but most of them look at this as their favorite part of the semester."

Excitement and anticipation were evident as sophomore DeAisa Wade and junior Madison Grey prepared clay for a fossil-making activity they planned.

Wade has begun her field work at Hilltop Community Children's Center in Pittsburgh.

"This gives them a hands-on project that we can observe and help with, where they will learn about fossils while having fun at the same time," she said.

"What's really nice is that we get to put together lesson plans and actually

teach them and carry out the activities as opposed to doing the lesson plan for class and on other college students," said Grey, who is doing her field work at Ringgold Elementary.

Partnerships between Cal U, the Rutledge preschool and The Village are ongoing. Three days before STREAM Fest, the preschool children participated in the Cal U Liberal Arts Fair.

Later this month, Cal U's Center for Volunteer Programs and Service Learning is sending students to both locations to decorate for Halloween as a Jennie Carter Day of Service project.

"We are making full use of the resources on campus," said Ashley Roth, assistant director of the Rutledge Institute, director of The Village, and an early childhood education instructor at Cal U. "What's so nice is that not only do we go to the University, but they come to us, which just adds to our relationship."

5K, Proposal Highlight Homecoming

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"I just love this time of the year and spending the morning on campus, particularly in the fall," said Nigel, a technical program manager for Uber's Advanced Technology Group. "Our daughter loves the parade, and I really enjoy catching up with friends from my era of Cal U."

The surprise of the day came mid-parade, when Nicolas Bishop stepped away from his float to propose to McKenna Ferris, who was with the float behind. The seniors met at Cal U during their freshmen years.

"The time was right," said Bishop. "Tomorrow is our 3-year anniversary." (She said yes!)

Under sunny skies, the party moved to Roadman Park on the upper campus. Several DJs took the stage to entertain, led by DJ Bonics, famous for his work with rapper Wiz Khalifa. DJ Femi, aka Bria Thomas '15, and WCAL DJ Nick Rae also performed.

Samples of Cal U Brew — made



Cal U Homecoming royalty gathers on the football field at halftime with President Geraldine Jones. From left, 2019 Homecoming King Eric Townsend, with his daughter, Aubree, and Co-Queens Maddie Rush and Cynthia Obiekezie.

by Uniontown-based Laurel Highlands Brewing and co-owners Bob and Allison '07 Kotarsky and Matt and Amy '07 Smiley — were available. Members of the Class of 1969, back on campus for their 50th reunion weekend, also enjoyed the atmosphere prior to the Cal U vs. Clarion football game.

"There are 16 of us who met at

Cal U and have remained good friends," said Lindsay LiVolsi Merryman, who married Bill Merryman '67.

To close out a perfect day, Cal U defeated Clarion, 35-20. At halftime, Eric Townsend was crowned Homecoming King. Co-Homecoming Queens were Maddie Rush and Cynthia Obiekezie.

Students Flock to Fall Career Fair

Zach Zigmund '14 began working at Sherwin-Williams during his sophomore year at Cal U while earning his bachelor's degree in accounting.

Now a manager, he was back on campus Oct. 3 for the Cal U Fall Career Fair, hoping to attract current students for the company's management administration training program as well as part-time help.

"I use my accounting skills every day, and Cal U also taught me to interact with people, which is something I do constantly at work," said Zigmund. "We have opportunities available and came here because we know we can find top talent at Cal U."

Approximately 90 employers recruiting all majors for full-time and part-time jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities occupied booths inside the Convocation Center as hundreds of Cal U students capitalized on the networking opportunity.

Ally Wilson, a senior criminal justice major, visited the Pennsylvania State Police booth to learn more about the process from trooper and recruiter Aaron Allen. She has already passed the written and oral exams.

"I've wanted to be a police officer for as long as I can remember, and if I do not make it through the state academy, I will go through a local academy," she said. "Either way, I am going to police." Allen was impressed.

"She seemed squared away and very confident, and those are the type of people we want," he said. "She's a great candidate."

First-year student and psychology major Erin Polakovsky enjoyed visiting the Peace Corps booth and hearing about a recruiter's experience counseling in Thailand.

"I plan on going into clinical mental health counseling so hearing about that was pretty awesome. I will go anywhere to work," Polakovsky said. "I really love it here and love my major."

Junior communication studies major Stephen Elcock learned about the fair from Emma Jackson, a counselor in the Career and Professional Development Center. Stops at the Crime Victims' Center of Fayette County and Excela Health were beneficial.

"I'm looking for interpersonal communications and really liked the one-on-one basis with people at this fair," he said. "This has worked well for me."

Many alumni not only represented employers at booths but also returned to their alma mater to check out new possibilities.

Dylan Carson '17 spoke to U.S. Steel and Advanced Acoustics Concepts about networking IT jobs.

"I thought things went well, and these are a couple of leads I would not have had otherwise," Carson said.

Rhonda Gifford, director of the Career and Professional Development



Communication studies major Clarke Yancy (left) speaks with Nella Gigliotti '16 and Tom Boyle from Heeter at the Cal U Career Fair.

Center, said this year's fair had its most employers ever and attributed the success to Handshake, a comprehensive online career and internship resource offering powerful search tools and alerts.

Handshake allows students to build their personal profiles to be visible to employers and also access job recommendations based on their major and interests.

"We had at least 10 new employers, and Handshake has absolutely enhanced

our fair," Gifford said. "This tool has significantly increased our campus exposure to employers, and we are very pleased."

The Career and Professional Development Center offers services for students and alumni in the Natali Student Union, Suite 138. Resume reviews are offered 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. weekdays. Students also may contact the center for career goal appointments or information on upcoming job fairs; call 724-938-4413.

New Actors, Technicians in Spotlight

The Department of Music and Theatre showcases the talents of Cal U's newest crop of aspiring actors and technicians when it presents playwright Jason Pizzarello's hilarious *Saving the Greeks: One Tragedy at a Time* at 7 p.m. Oct. 24-25, and at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Oct. 26.

The 23rd annual First Year Show is open to the public and will be performed in the Gerald and Carolyn Blaney Theatre in Steele Hall.

"*Saving the Greeks*" is a breezy comedy full of laugh-out-loud merriment that pays homage to the melodramatic absurdity that is Greek tragedy.

The audience follows the story of Dialysis and his downtrodden slave, Peon, as they try to right all the wrongs done to the pitiful citizens of Athens.

Their efforts lead them to create Betterland, a city where formerly doomed tragedians can start their lives over again, free from the misfortunes of their previous existence. Traveling from tragedy to tragedy, Dialysis and Peon gather inhabitants for their new utopia.

"Our students have been working tirelessly to bring some of the most popular tragic Greek heroes to life while staying true to some ancient Greek comedic performance practices," said Dr. John Paul Staszal, director and



Naomi Terrell (left), Karlie Cook, Cole McGlumphy, Noah Kendall and Shauna Fahad rehearse for Cal U Department of Music and Theatre's performances of 'Saving the Greeks.'

assistant professor in the Department of Music and Theatre. "If you have always wanted to study Greek mythology, or just brush up on your Greek history, but wanted to do so with a comic twist, this is the show for you."

Subject matter offers mature content and themes that may not be suitable for younger patrons.

Ticket price is \$12 for adults; \$6 for those 60 and older and 12 and younger. Cal U students with valid CalCards pay

a \$5 deposit that is refunded at the show.

For ticket information, or to charge tickets by phone, call the Steele Hall Box Office at 724-938-5943.

Playing off the Greek theme, since the word "cereal" comes from Ceres, the Greek goddess of agriculture, the cast is partnering with Greek Life and the Cal U Cupboard for a breakfast food drive. Nonperishable foods may be donated at the door before the show or taken to Natali Room 119.

Access to Higher Ed is Key

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"I'm proud of that, it was the right thing to do for our students," Greenstein said.

Another element in the System Redesign is the culture at each campus. Recently, employees system-wide were asked to complete a survey on issues like innovation, inclusion and engagement.

"The point of gathering all this data is not to do a U.S. News and World Report ranking on culture. It's to spend time reflecting and to learn about who we are and what we want to become," Greenstein said.

While challenges remain, he praised the efforts at Cal U.

"We do what we do because we believe passionately in the purpose of higher education," Greenstein said.

"It's hard because different demands are being put on us while we are still doing our business. I want to acknowledge, thank you and honor you doing what you do every day.

"Everything you do has lasting significance."

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