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Dr. Pratibha Menon (left) and Dr. Lisa Kovalchick will train afterschool program providers in cryptography and computer programming.

National Honor for Voter Efforts

California University of Pennsylvania has been recognized as one of the nation's "schools doing the most to turn students into citizens."

The Washington Monthly magazine lists Cal U on its honor roll of "Best 80 Colleges for Student Voting." The information is online today at www.WashingtonMonthly.com.

Schools on the honor roll received a perfect score on a scale that awards points for participation in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE), a project at Tufts University that calculates voter registration and turnout rates for college campuses, and submission of election-year "action plans" to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, which encourages universities to promote civic engagement.

Both private institutions and public universities made the list of honorees.

"Colleges have a responsibility to inspire students to be active citizens," writes Daniel Block, an editor at the Washington Monthly.

"And because voting tends to be habitual — if you vote in this election, you're far more likely to vote in the next one, and the ones after that — colleges and universities have an opportunity to boost democratic participation, not only in 2020 but for

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Grant Addresses Workforce Needs in Computing

Jobs requiring a computing degree are in red-hot demand and projected to stay that way for at least several years.

Two professors at Cal U have received a grant that will help Pennsylvania meet that workforce-development need.

Dr. Lisa Kovalchick and Dr. Pratibha Menon, who teach in the computer information systems program, recently received a PAsmart Advancing Grant to help fill what the commonwealth predicts will be 300,000 jobs related to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by 2026.

The grant, for \$172,155, will help train providers of afterschool programs in the areas of computer programming and cryptography — secure information and communication techniques that rely on mathematical concepts.

"The expected number of computer science jobs, or even just computing in general, is expected to increase dramatically in the next 10 to 20 years," Kovalchick said. "We don't have the interest to fulfill that. We don't have enough graduates. We want to change that."

Advancing grants encourage partnerships among local education

agencies, higher education institutions, businesses and other computer science/STEM-focused organizations.

Cal U is partnering with the Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network (PSAYDN), Intermediate Unit 1 and the PA STEM Girls Collaborative Project to administer the grant, which targets underserved populations.

Menon and Kovalchick will provide three daylong sessions using three STEM training programs, developed by the University of Chicago, MIT and Carnegie Mellon University.

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Constitution Day Focuses on Polarized Politics

Is a polarized political environment the new normal, or is there hope for a return to civility?

This question will be examined when Cal U observes Constitution Day with two events Sept. 17-18.

"Uncivil Wars: The New Normal?" is the title of a panel discussion at 11 a.m. Sept. 17 in Eberly Hall 110.

On Sept. 18, William Meloy and Loring Prest, faculty members in Cal U's Department of Library Services, will conduct an interactive session, "Uncivil Wars: Fake News," at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. in Manderino Library 208.

Faculty panelists on Sept. 17 include Dr. Sheri Boyle (Social Work); Dr. Justin Hackett (Psychology); and Drs. Joe Heim, Sean Madden, Michael Slaven, and Laura Tuennerman, all from the Department of History, Politics, Society, and Law.

Event coordinator Dr. Melanie Blumberg, director of the American Democracy Project at Cal U, will serve as the moderator. Students

will be encouraged to voice their policy concerns during the discussion.

"Most college students do not remember the time when officeholders of different partisan stripes treated one another with respect or when public policy resulted from bargaining and compromise," Blumberg said. "Politics today is marked by heated rhetoric, name calling, and tweet storms."

"Good policy seldom results from a polarized political environment."

During their presentations, the librarians will share practical tips for detecting and avoiding so-called "fake news," particularly as it impacts today's divisive political environment.

Participants will learn new strategies for guarding against misleading information and engaging in reasoned and civil political discourse.

Meloy is chair and associate professor of the Department of Library Services and the research and electronic collections librarian. Prest, a past department chair, is a professor and



Along with fellow faculty member Loring Prest, William Meloy, chair of Cal U's Department of Library Services, will share practical tips for detecting and avoiding 'fake news.'

electronic resources librarian.

This year's Constitution Day program is an American Democracy Project initiative sponsored by the Office of the

President, the Office of the Provost/Academic Affairs, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Department of History, Politics, Society, and Law.



Students Bring Excitement to Campus

Cal U welcomed first-year students on Friday, Aug. 23, as part of Welcome Weekend. A team of more than 150 volunteers — including faculty, staff, and returning students — was ready to help at the residence halls on Cal U's main campus and Vulcan Village on the upper campus. In addition to the many on-campus weekend activities, which included a New Student Convocation the first night and fireworks the following evening, students also attended the California Borough Recreation Authority's seventh annual RiverFest celebration. Above, University President Geraldine M. Jones meets sisters and roommates Avrey (center) and Riley Barnes, and women's volleyball players Kiandria Cowart (left) and Tyana Quivers lend a helping hand during Move-in Day.



Cal U Welcomes Families

Cal U students will welcome their families to campus Sept. 20-22 with a series of special events.

Family Weekend festivities begin at 6 p.m. Sept. 20 at the Convocation Center with a painting event designed to allow participants to tap into their creative sides.

At 7:30 p.m., a cookout, sponsored by the Alumni Association and Student Alumni Ambassadors, will be held at Kara Alumni House. On the menu: glow-in-the-dark sticks and plenty of games.

Saturday

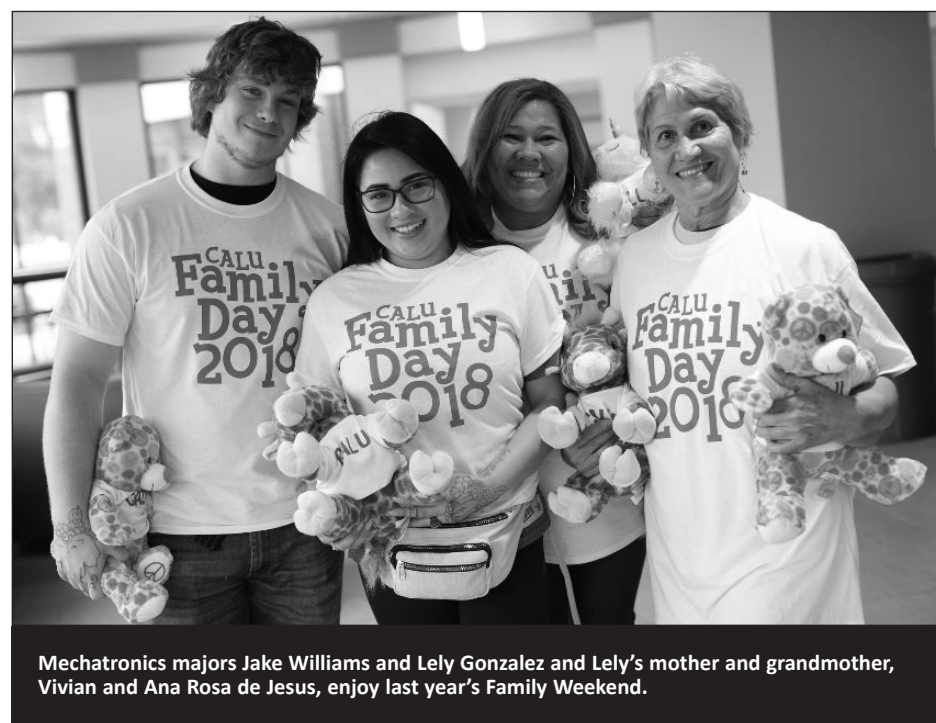
Registration for Family Day begins at 9 a.m. at the information desk on the first floor of the Natali Student Center. Free T-shirts will be given to the first 300 people. A complimentary pancake breakfast for all registered guests will be available from 8:30-10 a.m. in the Natali food court.

At 10 a.m., the University Choir will perform a free concert in the Convocation Center courtyard. In case of rain, the performance will be moved to the Morgan Hall auditorium.

Family yoga will be available at 10 a.m. on the Quad.

An assortment of family-fun activities will take place from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Third Street, in front of the Natali Student Center. The rain location will be inside the facility.

A pumpkin patch with painting and other special activities will be held at SAI Farm from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Vulcan



Mechatronics majors Jake Williams and Lely Gonzalez and Lely's mother and grandmother, Vivian and Ana Rosa de Jesus, enjoy last year's Family Weekend.

Flyer shuttle service will be provided to and from the SAI Farm every hour.

The student chapter of The Wildlife Society will present its 14th annual Family Field Day from noon to 4 p.m. at Frich Hall. The public may attend this free event, which is conducted in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

Cal U's football team will host Shippensburg University at 1 p.m. at Adamson Stadium

Students, faculty and staff with valid CalCards will be admitted free, as will children ages 12 and younger. A Kids Zone outside Adamson Stadium from

11 a.m.-1 p.m. will feature inflatables, face painting, henna tattoos. The Vulcan Huddle tent for alumni and families, also outside the stadium, opens at 11 a.m.

Sunday

Family Weekend concludes on Sept. 22 with Cal U Relay for Life, coordinated by the Cal U Center for Volunteer Programs and Service Learning, from noon-6 p.m. at Adamson Stadium. Relay for Life is a team fundraising event for the American Cancer Society.

For more information, visit calu.edu/familyweekend.

Grant Addresses Workforce Needs

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Crypto Club teaches cryptography and math skills; Scratch teaches coding and also encourages collaboration and teamwork, necessary 21st century skills; and the Alice Project teaches fundamental programming skills.

Participants will receive a \$100 stipend and curriculum materials to implement programming for their organizations.

The PSAYDN and IU1 will serve as training locations. Harrisburg dates are Sept. 16, Sept. 30 and Oct. 14. IU1 dates are Oct. 9, Oct. 21 and Oct. 25. For registration information, email kovalchick@calu.edu.

Engaging minds at a young age in a computing field is important, Kovalchick and Menon said.

"I work with schools and nonprofits in the western Pennsylvania region, and you can see the disparity in access to computing education," Menon said.

"Some children have access to high-quality computing education as early as kindergarten, but not every child in the region has that exposure, and those students get left behind. This tech divide only widens in high school and college. We want to start early and close this opportunity gap so that we have more people from all regions to work in computing fields."

Kovalchick, who is the collaborative lead for the PA STEM Girls Collaborative, also wants to encourage more diversity in the sciences.

"My bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. are in computer science, and with every degree, I was often the only female in the room," she said.

"Even now, I'm sometimes the only female in the room. So I want to get more girls involved, but also kids in general. We know that students are figuring out their majors in middle school, so we want to get younger students interested in computing before they choose something else."

Fall Open Houses Set

Cal U invites prospective students to explore all that the University has to offer at three undergraduate Open House events this fall.

The fall 2019 dates are:

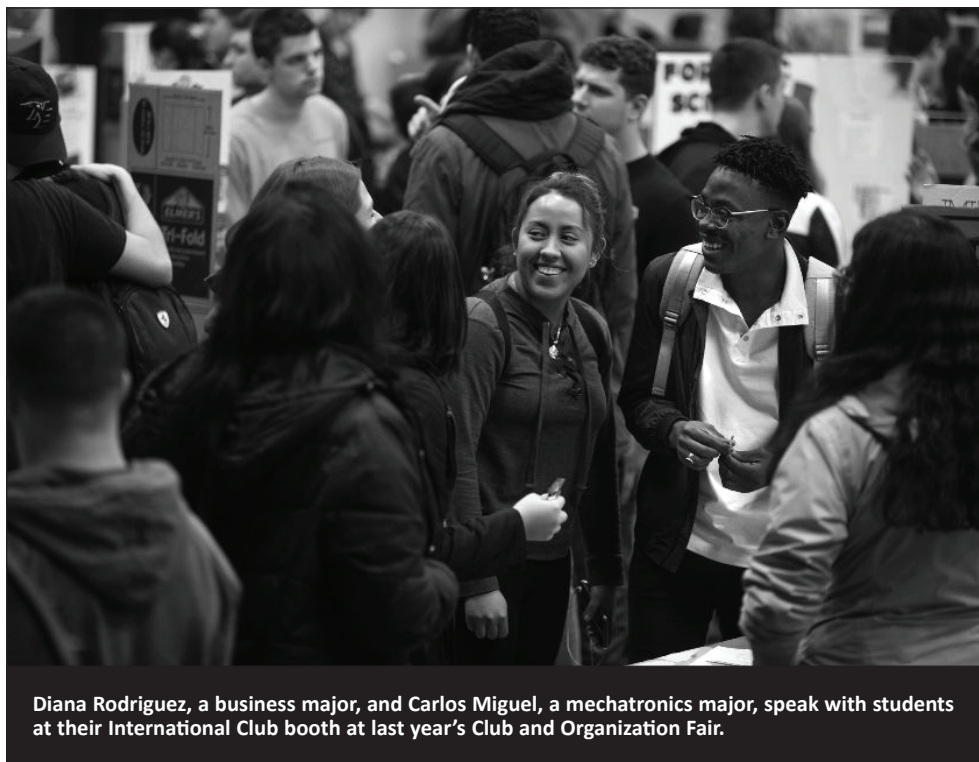
- Saturday, Sept. 28
- Monday, Oct. 14
- Saturday, Nov. 9

Oct. 14 is an Academic Experience Day, where visiting students will sit in on classes taught by Cal U faculty members.

During each of the Open House events, students and families will learn more about programs of study, housing and student life.

Each event will begin with registration at 9:30 a.m. in the Natali Student Center followed by a welcome and overview. All students receive a free Cal U T-shirt at the end of the day.

To register, go to calu.edu/visit or call 724-938-4404.



Diana Rodriguez, a business major, and Carlos Miguel, a mechatronics major, speak with students at their International Club booth at last year's Club and Organization Fair.

Club, Organizational Fair set for Sept. 10

Cal U students can get a firsthand look at the many available extracurricular opportunities on campus during the Fall 2019 Club and Organizational Fair. More than 100 clubs and organizations are expected to be represented. The fair will be on Third Street, near the Convocation Center, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Sept. 10. In case of rain, the event will take place on the second and third floors of the Natali Student Center.

"The fair is a win-win for everyone," said Jamison Roth, director of recreational services. "This is an excellent way for first-year students and undergrads to explore and find out about the many clubs and organizations that might be fit perfectly with their interests."

For more information email Roth at roth_j@calu.edu.

Two New Criminal Justice Specialties

Forensic scientists are in high demand and undergraduates who enroll in Cal U's popular criminal justice major can now specialize in new programs in forensic investigation or cyber forensics.

In the forensic investigation concentration, students apply their knowledge of forensic science to the complex task of investigating crime scenes. Building on their knowledge of criminal justice principles, forensic science and the law, students learn to utilize physical evidence — everything from fingerprints and body fluids to DNA evidence and computer data — to assist in solving crimes.

The cyber forensics concentration builds knowledge and skills for students with an interest in computer forensics and solving cybercrimes. Students learn to contribute to criminal investigations by undeleting files, restoring social media data, identifying encryption techniques, analyzing cellphone records and more. A strong background in criminal justice allows investigators to maintain the proper "chain of custody" as they uncover digital evidence.

Both concentrations provide advanced, hands-on training for practical problem-solvers with a passion for law enforcement and justice. According to the Bureau



of Labor Statistics, students can anticipate a high demand for these specialized skills when they graduate and enter the workforce.

Cal U's new programs include a blend of online and face-to-face courses. All classes are taught by highly qualified, full-time faculty members who bring top academic credentials and years of professional experience to the classroom.

For example, program coordinator Dr. Raymond Hsieh has consulted *pro bono* on the high-profile case of the so-called "Smiley Face Killer" and contributed to a textbook authored by one of the world's most renowned forensic scientists, Dr. Henry Lee. However, Hsieh is perhaps best known on campus for creating realistic mock crime scenes that allow students to develop and demonstrate their skills.

Cal U is enrolling students for the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters. Learn more at calu.edu, or explore all of Cal U's academic programs at calu.edu/academics.

Health Fair Sept. 18

Cal U's Health Education Awareness Resource Team (HEART) presents the 32nd annual Health Fair, "Ride the Health Wave," from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Sept. 18 in the Convocation Center.

The free event is open to Cal U students, faculty and staff, as well as members of the community.

More than 50 healthcare industry representatives will staff booths addressing health and wellness topics such as diabetes, smoking cessation, orthopedics, healthy eating and more.

Participants can take part in screenings and interactive activities. Rite-Aid pharmacy staff will administer flu shots for a fee; insurance cards will be accepted.

Convocation Sept. 12; Trustees Meet Sept. 18

University President Geraldine M. Jones will deliver her "state of the University" report at the 2019 Fall Faculty-Staff Convocation, set for 11 a.m. Sept. 12 in the Performance Center, inside the Natali Student Center.

The University's Council of Trustees will hold its third quarterly meeting of 2019 at 7 p.m. Sept. 18 in the Grand Hall of Old Main. The meeting is open to the public.

Student-Voter Efforts Honored

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years, or even decades, to come."

This is not the first time that California University of Pennsylvania has been recognized for encouraging students to vote. This spring, the Fair Election Center's Campus Vote Project designated Cal U a "Voter Friendly Campus" for developing a plan to get students involved in the 2018 midterm elections, facilitating voter engagement and analyzing the initiative's success.

It was the second time Cal U received the "Voter Friendly" designation.

The campus chapter of the American Democracy Project leads the University's voter engagement efforts. The nonpartisan student organization organizes voter registration drives on campus, holds campaign-season events to educate students about the candidates



and issues, helps students get to the polls on Election Day, and brings experts to campus to analyze election results.

Cal U will mark National Voter Registration Day with a registration drive from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sept. 24 in the lobby areas of Manderino Library and the Natali Student Center. Students, faculty and staff interested in helping with National Voter Registration Day should email Katie Yohe, yoh0589@calu.edu.

Dr. Bruce Barnhart, provost and

senior vice president for Academic Affairs, will ask faculty to set aside the first five minutes of class on Sept. 24 for students to register to vote by using their smart phones, tablets and laptops. Faculty teaching online classes will also be asked to encourage their students to register.

"It is heartening to know that Cal U's efforts to mobilize students to vote is recognized by a publication as prestigious as the Washington Monthly," says Cal U political science professor Dr. Melanie Blumberg, American Democracy Project adviser.

"Cal U is committed to educating students about the importance of civic engagement, whether it is volunteering in the community or voting on Election Day. The hope is that students will see themselves as stakeholders and realize they can impact decisions that affect their lives both directly and indirectly."

Athletic Day of Giving is Sept. 24

Fans can help Cal U student-athletes continue to succeed on the field and in the classroom during the second annual Cal U Athletic Day of Giving on Sept. 24.

Donations can be designated for a particular team or given to the Athletics Department. State funds cannot be used for athletic scholarships.

The Vulcans field 18 NCAA Division II men's and women's teams.

Cal U teams have won an impressive 27 Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference championships over nine different sports in the last 10 years, plus a combined 82 league titles in the sports of cross country, golf, swimming, and track and field.

The Vulcans have produced 58 Academic All-Americans over the past 10 years. Collectively, Cal U student-athletes have compiled a cumulative grade-point average of 3.10 or higher for 18 of the past 19 semesters. Last spring's cumulative GPA was 3.26.

In Spring 2019, 208 student-athletes — more than half of the total number of participants — achieved a grade-point average of 3.00 or higher, and 25 of them earned a perfect 4.00. More than 150 student-athletes were named PSAC Scholar Athletes for having a GPA of 3.25 or higher.

Of the 326 student-athletes enrolled at Cal U last year, 209 received an athletic scholarship.

In 2018, the inaugural Athletic Day of Giving raised more than \$17,000.

"Every gift, no matter the amount, helps our student-athletes earn an education and gives them an opportunity to prosper beyond athletics," said Dr. Karen Hjerpe, Cal U's athletics director.

"Our student-athletes are doing wonderful things academically and athletically, and your support is an investment in them and the future of Vulcans athletics."

To donate, visit calu.edu/athletics-give.

University Marching Band Begins Busy Season

It's a busy season for junior Kayla Hutter, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

The biology major with a concentration in mortuary science is taking 18 credits this semester while also serving as field commander for the Cal U Marching Band.

The musicians perform at all Vulcans football games at Adamson Stadium, and the 2019 season begins with 1 p.m. home games against Kutztown on Sept. 14 and Shippensburg on Sept. 21 (Family Day).

The band's 2019 field show, "California Dreamin'," features songs associated with sleep — "California Dreamin'," "Mr. Sandman," "Enter Sandman," "Livin on a Prayer," "I Dreamed a Dream," and "Sweet Dreams."

"It's a fabulous show with so many good tunes, and everyone will know at least one song in it," Hutter said. "The crowds will really enjoy this."

The busy season for the band will also include games at Edinboro (noon Sept. 28); the Coal Bowl at IUP (2 p.m. Oct. 5); at Slippery Rock (1 p.m. Nov. 2); high school band festivals at West Mifflin



Junior Emily Bond and the Cal U Marching Band are looking forward to a busy season.

High School (Sept. 21) and California High School (Sept. 28); the Collegiate Band Festival in Allentown, Pa. (Sept. 29); the Cal U Homecoming parade (Oct. 12); and the California Borough Halloween parade (Oct. 30).

Hutter welcomes the active autumn. "Since the fifth grade bands have been a really big part of my life," she said. "I can't give it up because it is who I am, and I absolutely love it."

For the fifth year the Cal U Band will

incorporate local high school bands into home football game activities.

Visiting bands will perform their high school halftime shows before Vulcans games. After the pregame performance, the high school musicians will join Cal U band members in the stands.

California and Charleroi High School bands will perform during the Sept. 21 and Oct. 26 games, respectively. On Nov. 9, Mass Bands Day will take place for a second year and include halftime show participation. Last year 99 musicians from 12 different schools performed.

"We are looking forward to doing this again, and it's a nice recruiting tool," said Dr. Frank Stetar, director of University Bands and co-chair of the Department of Music and Theatre. "We enjoy giving the younger musicians a more personal look at who we are, and everyone has a good time."

Hutter also enjoys the tradition.

"They get to see what we do and how much fun a college band is and can be," she said.

"You make so many new friends in the band, and once you do it you won't want to stop."

Law Enforcement Takes Aim at School Safety

"If you see something, say something." The Department of Homeland Security's well-known tagline sums up the best advice law enforcement can give to students and others who want to keep schools safe.

Castle Shannon police chief Ken Truver, who earned a master's degree at Cal U in 1995, made that point as the University hosted a School Shooting Prevention Leadership Forum Aug. 21-22 at the Convocation Center.

About 90 people, primarily law enforcement officials from municipal, county and state agencies, attended the forum.

It was presented by the FBI National Academy Associates (FBINAA) and the School Safety Advocacy Council (SSCA).

"In 81% of school shootings, someone had prior knowledge of the shooter's plan," said Truver, a graduate of the FBI National Academy and second vice president of the FBINAA's executive board.

"If you hear something, see something, don't assume that someone else will speak up. Students need to report what they know."

John Kennedy, director of education and training for the FBINAA, said the FBI monitors and investigates reported threats in an effort to minimize the potential for violence. Someone speaking up, even if they are unsure about whether a threat is real, truly can make a difference.

"You need to get that information to the professionals, so they can investigate to see if it's credible," Kennedy said.

The forum focused heavily on the need for schools, law enforcement agencies and first responders to work collaboratively before and during an emergency, Kennedy said.

Participants reviewed "lessons learned" from

Certificate Program Focuses on Threat Identification, Response

Cal U offers a nine-credit graduate certificate program, Threat Assessment and Management in Schools, for K-12 and university educators. The fully online program merges the perspectives of criminal justice and school psychology to help school personnel identify threats of violence and respond appropriately before and during an emergency.

previous school shootings and worked together to create coordinated emergency response plans.

Speakers included retired police Chief Tony Pustizzi, a 30-year veteran of the Coral Springs Police Department, which responded to the 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.

Western Pennsylvania is a national model for cooperative law enforcement efforts, Truver noted. In addition to the primary presenters, the Western Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, Allegheny County Chiefs of Police Association and local FBINAA chapter supported the program. Cal U personnel were among those in attendance.

"We collaborate. We know each other. Many of these men and women have worked and trained together," Truver said.

Similar forums have been held in Columbia, S.C. and Kansas City, Kan., with future events scheduled for Denver, Houston, Chicago and Boston.

"The response has been very positive," Kennedy said. "We're starting that dialogue between school administrators and law enforcement."

Less Debt for Cal U Grads

Students who graduate from California University of Pennsylvania have less student loan debt, on average, than graduates of any public university in the commonwealth.

That's according to LendEDU.com, whose fourth annual state-by-state "Student Loan Debt by College" report ranks Cal U No. 9 on its list of Pennsylvania schools whose student-borrowers incur the least amount of debt.

Ninety percent of Cal U's Class of 2018 borrowed money to help pay for their education. According to LendEDU.com, those Cal U graduates left school owing about \$8,000 less than typical student borrowers across the state.

Other "top 10" Pennsylvania schools in the 2019 report are private institutions with a far smaller percentage of students who borrow money for college.

Nationwide, Cal U's average student debt per borrower is in the 11th percentile among all public colleges and universities.

"At Cal U, we are committed to offering top quality academic programs that are affordable for students at all income levels," says T. David Garcia, vice president for Enrollment Management.

"We recognize that both the costs and the benefits of higher education have a long-term impact on the lives of our graduates."

Cal U works hard to make higher education a good value for students and their families. Tuition for 2019-2020 is just \$7,716 per year — the same tuition cost as in 2018-2019. Academic fees also remain the same.

Room costs on campus have held steady for nine consecutive years, and Cal U awarded \$3.2 million in merit and need-based institutional scholarships during the 2018-2019 academic year.

This is the third consecutive year that LendEDU has recognized Cal U in its state-by-state report on student borrowing.

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