



WORCESTER
STATE
UNIVERSITY

WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Achievement Awards 2023





WORCESTER STATE FOUNDATION

INSPIRE GENEROSITY. TRANSFORM LIVES.

It is with sincere gratitude that we acknowledge the support of the Worcester State Foundation, Inc. and the generous supporters, including many of the **41,000 Worcester State alumni**, who have given more than **\$51 million** to the Foundation since its inception in 2001. Wise stewardship of those gifts has allowed the Foundation to directly support student needs and transfer more than **\$38.4 million** to Worcester State University over those **21 years** to assist our hard-working and high-achieving students, while at the same time allowing the endowment to continue to grow, reaching **\$40.4 million** on June 30, 2022.

The Worcester State Foundation is pleased and proud to honor and reward the highest-ranking students in each of the academic disciplines. We join with the families and friends of today's honorees in the celebration of their achievements.

Academic Achievement Awards



GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MALONEY

Each year, faculty, staff, and donors come together to honor Worcester State's most accomplished students in what is known as the Academic Achievement Awards. Those who have been selected to receive awards, this year and every year, can be described as hard-working, motivated, and intelligent. To that list, I would add: rock star!

Students often tell us a faculty member – or several – was the most important factor in their success. Faculty at Worcester State are skilled at tapping into talents that students themselves do not necessarily see, bringing out their very best. Every one of our faculty members recognized by an academic achievement awardee represents many more who have done the same thing for other students. A special thanks to our outstanding and dedicated faculty.

Many awards carry a donor's name. We know that just one scholarship can make the difference between a student persisting toward graduation in four years or not. I deeply appreciate our alumni and friends who commit financial resources to our students.

To the students, faculty, and donors we celebrate today: you are the ones who make Worcester State great. And to our honorees: congratulations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry M. Maloney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barry M. Maloney
President

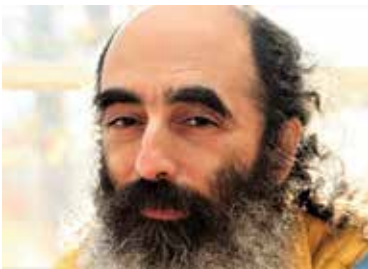


The George I. Alden Excellence in Teaching Award

This award publicly acknowledges Worcester State University professors who have made a difference in students' lives through their teaching excellence.

Each year, Worcester State University asks students, alumni, and faculty to nominate full-time faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in teaching.

From those nominations, a committee composed of students, alumni, and faculty chooses one tenured faculty member and one pre-tenure faculty member to be honored with this award.



Dr. Hy Ginsberg

Mathematics
Tenured



Dr. Riley McGuire

English
Pre-tenure

University Award Recipients

Cruz-Audet LGBTQ+ Academic Excellence Award *Griffin Weber*

This award, established by Dr. Sarah Strout, assistant vice president for Assessment and Planning, is named for Leopoldo Negrón Cruz, M.Ed. '16 and Gloria Audet. Leopoldo Negrón Cruz, a Worcester State University alumnus, has been an activist and educator for more than 30 years and served as a board member of various community groups including the Worcester Gay and Lesbian Latino Organization and the LGBTQ History Project Community Advisory Committee. Gloria Audet, a former Worcester State evening student, has been a pivotal member of the Worcester LGBTQ+ community for more than five decades, joining the Worcester Gay Union in the 1970s and marching in the city's first Pride parade in 1975. This award is given to a student who identifies as LGBTQ+ who has an excellent academic record.

Ella M. Whitney Award *Caitlin Kincaid*

This award, named for Ella M. Whitney, an 1891 graduate of Worcester State University (then known as the Worcester Normal School), recognizes the qualities Ms. Whitney exemplified as a student and alumna, including scholarship, social aptitude, personality, leadership, executive ability, growth, loyalty, integrity, and, above all else, participation in school activities.

Ellen J. Meyers M.Ed. '88 Memorial Academic Merit Award *Margaret April*

This award, established in memory of beloved Worcester State University alumna Ellen J. Meyers, M.Ed. '88, by her husband, David Meyers '76, is given to an undergraduate student achiever with disabilities who has also been actively engaged on campus or in their community.

John F. Eager Continuing Education Excellence Award *Megan Schultze*

This award, in memory of John F. Eager, the late Worcester State University biology professor and former director of the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, is given to the undergraduate evening program senior who has the highest overall GPA.

Worcester State Foundation Awards Criteria

These awards are given by Worcester State University with financial support from the Worcester State Foundation to the senior with the top academic performance in each area.

*Academic
Achievement
Award
Recipients*



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Business Administration and Economics

Bollus Lynch Accounting Award.....*Joanna Cavaliero*

This award, sponsored by Bollus Lynch as a way to continue its commitment to community-based support in the Worcester area, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in business administration with a concentration in accounting.

Dr. William F. O'Brien Jr. '84 Economics Award.....*John Himmelberger*

This award, named in honor of Dr. William F. O'Brien Jr. '84, a devoted Worcester State University alumnus and retired faculty member who received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Education in 2016, is given to a senior majoring in economics who has achieved high academic standing and/or demonstrated a strong interest in applying economic theory internationally through academic coursework and/or study abroad experiences.

F. Stephen Trimby Economics Award.....*Phebe Shippy*

This award, named in honor of Professor Stephen Trimby, a retired Worcester State University faculty member whose dedication to Worcester State and to the success of every student who crossed his path spanned decades, is given to a senior majoring in economics who has demonstrated exemplary work in economics, has shown outstanding potential for graduate studies and/or career success, and/or has demonstrated a commitment to use their economics education to advance the betterment of the community at large.

George and Sheila Tetler Academic Major Award in

Business Administration *Tyler LaComfora*

This award, named in honor of George and Sheila Tetler, is given to the senior with the top academic performance in business administration.

Raj-Mahendra Jain Business Administration Award..... *Tara Beaudry*

This award, established in 2016 by Dr. Renuka Jain, former Worcester State University chair of the Department of Business Administration and Economics, in honor of her parents, Raj and Mahendra Jain, is given to a female senior majoring in business administration, with at least 15 credits through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, and a GPA of at least 3.5.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Economics..... *Petr Staif*

Communication

Godfrin Family Communication Academic Recognition Award*Kevin Drevitch*

This award, established in 2021 by Lisa Godfrin '16 and her family, is given to a senior majoring in communication who has shown exemplary leadership and dedication to the department while at Worcester State University.

Matthew Wright '10 Journalism Award *Deven Chaffee*

This award, established in 2021 by Worcester State University alumnus and photographer Matthew Wright '10, is given to the highest-ranking communication senior with first preference for a student concentrating in digital media.

Tarmey Family Endowed Communication Award.....*Kristen LeBlanc*

This award, established in 2019 by Worcester State University alumna Marjorie Tarmey '63 and her family, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in communication.

Criminal Justice

Central Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association

Spirit of Service Award..... *Bright Bremang*

This award recognizes a student of a diverse background who has good academic achievement, professionalism, and a record of community service, and exhibits superior potential and commitment to the field of criminal justice.

Vanessa Dunn Memorial Criminal Justice Award.....*Grace Higgins*

This award, in memory of Vanessa Anne Dunn, a Worcester State University student in the Criminal Justice program who lost her life in 2010, just months before she was scheduled to graduate, is given to the senior majoring in criminal justice with the highest overall GPA.

English

Worcester State Foundation Award in English*Sophia Schlegelmilch*

History and Political Science

Professor Cheng & Christina Yuan History Award*Ioannis Chatzopoulos*

This award, established in memory of former Worcester State University Professor of History Cheng Yuan and his wife, Christina, is given to the highest-ranking junior majoring in history.

Ronald R. Valerio '75 Academic Major Award in History*Christin Walcek*

This award, named in memory of the late Ron Valerio '75, a devoted alumnus, past member of the Board of Trustees, Alumni Association's Advisory Board, and Foundation Board, is given to the senior with the top academic performance in history.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Political Science*Jaclyn Robinshaw*

Psychology

Beth Axelson '70 Psychology Award*Erica Hanlon*

This award, endowed by former Worcester State University Admissions Director Beth Axelson '70, who graduated from Worcester State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in psychology.

Sociology

Faith T. Zeadey Memorial Sociology Award*Yeruksew Hoyt-Rouse*

This award, in memory of the late Faith T. Zeadey, Worcester State University professor of sociology, social activist, and humanitarian, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in sociology.

Urban Studies

Dr. Vincent E. "Jake" Powers Urban Studies Award*Anthony Harris*

This award, in memory of Dr. Vincent "Jake" Powers, a highly respected urban historian and founder of the Worcester State University Urban Studies Department, is given to an undergraduate urban studies student who is an innovative, original thinker, whose time in the department has emboldened him or her to pursue personal and professional opportunities not previously considered, and to achieve them with determination, grit, and courage.

Julia Mack Award for Intergenerational Leadership.....*Judith Knight*

This award, in memory of elder student Julie Mack, established by her daughter, Worcester State University alumna and former trustee Barbara Sinott '55, is given to a non-traditional undergraduate student majoring in urban studies who has fostered a dynamic intergenerational climate on campus, developed the ability to see the world and its challenges through a multi-generational lens, and shown the capacity and sensitivity to work creatively across ages to meet those challenges.

Maureen Power Service Award*Elizabeth Stone*

This award, established by Worcester State University Professor Emerita Maureen Power, helps make it possible for urban studies students to participate in service-related projects, including practica, internships, or volunteer opportunities. To be considered for the award, students present to an urban studies review committee a one-page proposal outlining their service plan and explaining why the service is significant to them and their academic/professional careers, and how it advances the mission of the department.

Schwartz Charitable Foundation Urban Studies Award*Zadia Valenze*

This award, in honor of Nathan Schwartz, founding donor of the Schwartz Charitable Foundation, who was a business visionary committed to supporting small businesses and community endeavors in Worcester County, is given to the highest-ranking undergraduate senior majoring in urban studies who best represents the mission of the Foundation.

Visual and Performing Arts

George & Sheila Tetler Academic Major Award in Art.....*Libia Goncalves*

This award, named in honor of George and Sheila Tetler, is given to the senior with the top academic performance in art.

Malcolm Gordon Memorial Visual and Performing Arts Award*Libia Goncalves*

This award, established by Worcester State University alumnus Alan Gordon '80 in memory of his father, Malcolm Gordon, former Worcester resident and nationally renowned magazine gag cartoonist, is given to the highest-ranking senior in visual and performing arts.

Mary Cosgrove Dolphin Art Award.....*Alison Anger*

This award, established to honor the late Worcester State University Professor Mary Cosgrove Dolphin, a dedicated art educator and artist who touched many Worcester State students during her service, is given to a studio art student who has demonstrated exceptional creative accomplishment in the visual arts.

Worcester State Foundation

Academic Major Award in Theater..... *Samson Abdal-Khabir*



World Languages

Dr. Dorothy A. Escribano Spanish Award..... *Paola Burgos*

This award, established by former Worcester State University Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Dorothy A. Escribano, is given to a full-time, non-traditional sophomore or junior majoring/minoring in Spanish with a minimum GPA of 2.7. The recipient must have demonstrated financial need and have participated in community and/or extracurricular activities, and demonstrated outstanding academic improvement.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Spanish *Ronald Gobeil*

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND HEALTH

Biology

Dr. Anthony Thurston Biology Award *Maureen Grady*

This award, established in 2017 by a generous gift from the George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation in memory of former Worcester State University Biology Professor Dr. Anthony Thurston, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in biology.

Dr. Marlin B. Kreider Biology Award *Amanda Lo*

This award, in memory of Dr. Marlin B. Kreider, a former Worcester State University biology professor, is given to a senior biology student who has shown a commitment to a career in biological research.

Dr. Maureen '80 and Edward Shamgochian Biology Award.....*Zakery Dabbagh*

This award, made possible by a gift from former Worcester State University Biology Professor Dr. Maureen Shamgochian '80 and her late husband, Edward, is given to a junior or senior biology or biotechnology major with a GPA of 3.5 or higher who is engaged in undergraduate research with plans to attend graduate or professional school upon completion of his or her Worcester State degree.

Biotechnology

Lincoln Donohue '98 Memorial Biotechnology Award.....*Bryan Escobar*

This award, established by Kevin and Susan Donohue, the parents of Worcester State University alumnus Lincoln C. Donohue '98, who graduated with the highest honors in biotechnology and went on to work at Genzyme Corp. before his sudden passing at the age of 24 in 1999, is given to an outstanding student in the biotechnology program who shows promise, dedication, and academic success.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Biotechnology.....*Joshua Fung-A-Fat*

Chemistry

Dr. Maureen '80 and Edward Shamgochian Chemistry Award*Sydney Demers*

This award, made possible by a gift from former Worcester State University Biology Professor Dr. Maureen Shamgochian '80 and her late husband, Edward, is given to a current sophomore, junior, or senior majoring in chemistry with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. The student must have engaged in scientific research and plan to continue his or her education in the sciences in professional or graduate school.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Chemistry*Rida Amroze*

Communication Sciences and Disorders

Honorable John J. Binienda Sr. Communication Sciences and Disorders Award.....*Julienette Rivera*

This award, honoring the late Massachusetts State Representative John J. Binienda Sr., a Worcester State University alumnus and educator who served in the Massachusetts State House for 28 years, is given to an undergraduate student who will be entering the Worcester State University graduate program in speech-language pathology and will focus on challenges facing children with hearing loss.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Communication Sciences and Disorders*Hannah Picchioni*

Worcester State University Chapter of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association Award.....*Ryan Costa*

This award is given to an outstanding student majoring in communication sciences and disorders in recognition of the student's demonstrated record of leadership, ability, scholastic achievement, and service to the Worcester State University-NSSLHA Chapter.

Computer Science

Worcester State Foundation Award in Computer Science*Abigail Frost*

Earth, Environment, and Physics

Dr. Earl B. Shaw Geography Award.....*Gurmitt Dhaliwal*

This award, endowed by a student of the late Dr. Earl B. Shaw, a former Worcester State University geography professor, is given to an outstanding senior majoring in geography, in recognition of the student's academic achievement and service to the Worcester State community.

Worcester State Foundation Award in Environmental Science*Grace Higgins*

Worcester State Foundation Award in Geography.....*Kwaku Asare*

Health Sciences

Worcester State Foundation Award in Health Education.....*Katie Puumala*

Worcester State Foundation Award in Public Health.....*Caitlin Conneely*

Mathematics

Dr. Richard Bisk Teaching Mathematics Award *Erin Bethel*

This award, honoring Dr. Richard Bisk, former Worcester State University faculty member and chair of the Mathematics Department, is given to a junior or senior with at least a 3.6 GPA, who demonstrates outstanding achievement in mathematics, along with a commitment to teaching for understanding.

Worcester State Foundation Award in

Mathematics for Elementary Education *Jacqueline Holden*

Worcester State Foundation Award in Mathematics *Avery Oldakowski*

Nursing

Ann “Annie” Dolan ’13 Nursing Award for Compassion *Ashley Parker*

This award, in memory of Ann “Annie” Dolan, M.S.N. ’13, who was a labor and delivery nurse who returned to Worcester State University to earn her master’s degree in nursing education shortly before her death in 2014, is given to a nursing student who has demonstrated an enthusiastic and compassionate bedside manner, and a passion to advance the art and science of nursing.

Dr. Jean and Michael Campaniello Nursing Award *Debra Vescera*

This award, established in 2015 by Jean A. Campaniello, Worcester State University professor emerita and former chair of the Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing, is given to a graduate student in community health nursing with a minimum GPA of 3.25, who has completed at least two courses in the community/public health specialty track, and has demonstrated a leadership role in the community through community service activities that improve the quality of life for residents and achieve a greater understanding and appreciation for diversity through community activism.

Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Nursing Award *Paula Lewis-Trabucco*

This award, in honor of the late Dr. Lillian R. Goodman, founder of the Dr. Lillian R. Goodman Department of Nursing at Worcester State University, and pioneer in the field of nursing education, is given to a registered nursing student who exemplifies leadership, caring, a strong commitment to professional nursing, and a vision for the future.

Dr. Paula L. Dufresne-Sullivan ’86 Humanitarian Nursing Award *Bailey Bowes*

This award, established in 2019 by Worcester State University alumna Dr. Paula L. Dufresne-Sullivan ’86, is given to a senior in Nursing Track 1, 2, or 3 who has demonstrated special qualities of compassion, leadership, and a commitment to humanitarian service to all patients, especially those in disenfranchised populations.



Eileen Bolesky Academic Major Award in Nursing..... *Al-Madinah Xhemalallari*

This award was established by Edward '67 and his late wife Eileen Bolesky. Now retired, Ed was a successful senior business executive, and Eileen was one of the first nurse practitioners in Worcester, later serving as a school nurse. The award is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in nursing.

Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital Award for Nursing Clinical Excellence.....*Kessa Vilnaigre*

This award is given to a senior who has demonstrated excellence in a nursing clinical setting and has an interest in orthopedics or rehabilitation medicine.

Robyn Leo Memorial Nursing Academic Achievement Award.....*Rose Raymond*

This award, established in memory of Dr. Robyn C. Leo, '82, former associate professor of nursing, is given to a senior nursing student who embodies leadership, collaboration, and empathic principles with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. This student has successfully overcome barriers in pursuit of their career, adapts to challenges creatively, and strives for growth opportunities. The student chosen for this award has demonstrated a passion for nursing and a strong commitment to work with women and/or children as part of their future practice.

Occupational Therapy

I. Robert and Aviva Frelander Occupational Therapy Award.....*Amanda Chaires*

This award was established by the late I. Robert Frelander, charter member of the Worcester State Foundation Board and a 2002 recipient of an honorary degree from Worcester State University, and his wife, Aviva, a Worcester-area philanthropist. It is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in occupational therapy.

EDUCATION, LIBERAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Education

Class of 1952 Endowed Elementary Education Award*Jaelyn Windman*

This award, in honor of the Worcester State University Class of 1952 and its many esteemed educators and devoted alumni, is given each year to the highest-ranking senior majoring in elementary education.

Donald Cousineau '57, M.Ed. '60 and Elaine (Curran) Cousineau '57, M.Ed. '60 Elementary Education Award*Julia Howes*

This award, given in honor of Donald Cousineau '57, M.Ed. '60 and Elaine (Curran) Cousineau '57, M.Ed. '60, established with love by Miss Curran's first-grade student, dear friend, and fellow alumna Diane M. Aramony, to honor their dedication to the innumerable young students whose lives they have enriched, is granted to a senior majoring in elementary education with a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Dorothy J. Hargrove '63 Early Childhood Education Award*Kateri Hart*

This award, provided by dedicated alumna Dorothy Hargrove '63 to support students who are seeking careers teaching young children, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in early childhood education.

Douglas R. "Duke" Dawson Science Education Award*Brian Barthelmes*

This award is named in memory of Worcester State University Professor Douglas "Duke" Dawson, who was known for his use of everyday materials to teach science in ways that pre-service teachers could relate to and understand. This award is given to an early childhood or elementary pre-service major who demonstrates excellence in science teaching during student teaching and maintains a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Helen Shaughnessy Elementary Education Award*Jacqueline Holden*

This award, in memory of Professor Helen Shaughnessy, a highly esteemed teacher, faculty member, chair, and administrator at Worcester State University and the surrounding school district, is given to recognize a junior or senior elementary education student who demonstrates good academic achievement, professionalism, and outstanding potential in the field of elementary education.

Lillian C. and George H. Albro '65 Education Award*Alyssia Peloquin*

This award, established by George '65 and Lillian (Brooks) '65 Albro, lifelong educators and benefactors of Worcester State University, is given to a junior or senior majoring in elementary education or minoring in middle or secondary education with preference for students who graduated from Leicester High School, or are from Leicester, Mass.



Madelin A. Wilmarth Early Childhood Education Award.....*Rachel Echaniz*

This award, in memory of Worcester State University Professor Madelin A. Wilmarth, a pioneer in the field of early childhood education, is given to the junior majoring in early childhood education with the highest GPA.

Ruth Cohen Blumsack Early Childhood Education Award..... *Erin Theroux*

This award is given to a student majoring in early childhood education with a minimum GPA of 3.5. The recipient must show exceptional abilities in working with and teaching young children.

Interdisciplinary Studies

Helen Hirshberg Barron Academic Minor Award in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies..... *Vanessa Corriveau*

This award, established by Andrea Barron to honor her mother Helen Hirshberg Barron, is given to a full-time first-generation student with a minor in women’s, gender, and sexuality studies with a minimum GPA of 3.0.

Robert H. Kyle Award for Excellence in Liberal Studies.....*Elijah Bouthiller*

This award, established by Worcester State University Associate Vice President and Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education Dr. Bobbi Kyle and her family, in memory of Robert H. Kyle, who embraced lifelong learning and interdisciplinary education, is given to the highest-ranking senior majoring in liberal studies.



*The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret.,
Academic Excellence Award Recipients*

First-Year Achievement Award.....	Emma LaPoint
Sophomore Achievement Awards	Andja Kola Liam Walsh
Junior Achievement Award	Juliana Kallio
Senior Achievement Awards	Rida Amroze Amanda Lo



“One of the best ways to show appreciation for what we have received is to give other students the same opportunities we had.”

—Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55,
USMC Ret.

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Academic Excellence Awards

In 2013, the late Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan, USMC Ret., gave \$500,000 to his alma mater, Worcester State Teachers College (as it was known in 1955). It was the largest cash gift in the history of Worcester State University. In announcing this gift, Lt. Col. Sheehan humbly and simply shared, “It’s about time I gave something back.”

Lt. Col. Sheehan, who passed away in 2016, was the most generous benefactor in Worcester State’s history, sharing an overwhelming \$4.5 million to benefit students and faculty.

After an incredibly successful and varied career in the United States Marine Corps, Lt. Col. Sheehan used his math and business skills to embark on a second successful career as a venture capitalist. He and his wife settled in Florida, where they established 14 scholarships through a number of charitable organizations.

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Academic Excellence Awards are given annually to full-time Worcester State students with the best GPA in the first-year, sophomore, junior, and senior classes. Lt. Col. Sheehan’s gifts also created an endowment for the Sheehan Honors Program, now named in his honor, which provides \$50,000 per year to support scholarship and research.

Rewarding and encouraging academic excellence became Lt. Col. Sheehan’s legacy. He had hoped his success and support would be emulated by those students to whom his awards and scholarships have provided, and will continue to provide, assistance.



“I knew I wanted to do something related to science but wanted more time to decide, and a broad major like biology would give me more time to decide while getting the education I need.”

—Emma LaPoint, Class of 2026

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Award *First-Year Academic Achievement Award*

Emma LaPoint is considering becoming an orthodontist, dentist, or optometrist, so she is majoring in biology. “It was a strength of mine in high school,” she said. “I knew I wanted to do something related to science but wanted more time to decide, and a broad major like biology would give me more time to decide while getting the education I need.”

The Westfield, Mass., native is getting a lot of hands-on work in her major, including labs involving dilutions and isolating chloroplasts from spinach leaves.

Emma is a proud member of the Worcester State University softball team—something that is very important to her. This semester, she gave up her job as a lab assistant to focus on her sport. Her hard work paid off when she was selected as the MASCAC (Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference) Softball Rookie of the Week in March.

The accolades extend to her academic performance as well, as, in addition to being named a Sheehan Scholar, she is being inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society in April.

She plans on attending graduate school after earning her degree from Worcester State.



“I feel like I need to help people from many cultures and many languages.”

—*Andja Kola, Class of 2025*

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Award *Sophomore Academic Achievement Award*

More than anything, **Andja Kola** wants to help people. That's why she is doing a double major in psychology and pre-medicine—so she can attend medical school and become a psychiatrist. She is also minoring in Spanish so she can communicate with a wider range of people. “I feel like I need to help people from many cultures and many languages,” she said. Spanish will be her fourth language, as she is already proficient in English, Turkish, and her native Albanian.

Born and raised in Albania, Andja was drawn to Worcester State because it allowed her to customize her areas of study and to study more than one field and because of the great academic staff. Here, she has participated in a number of research projects. “I love doing research,” she said.

A project she conducted herself considered the connection between bilingualism and being more outgoing and better able to cope with stress. She is currently a research assistant on a psychology project led by Associate Professor Benjamin Jee, exploring how pictures and illustrations help individuals learn science. Under the guidance of Henry Theriault, associate vice president of Academic Affairs, she is also researching how various, disparate elements came together to cause the phenomenon of witch hunts in modern Europe. She is presenting on both of these current projects at the Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity later this month.

Her free time is limited due to jobs and school, but she has been writing for *The Worcester Spy* for a year. She likes to read as much as she can, recently, mostly books related to psychology. “I love spending time in nature,” she said, “and I find Worcester has an amazing environment to do so.”



“I have wanted to serve my country for some time. I wasn’t born here, but I think I should give back. I’m appreciative of all the opportunities I’ve had here. That’s what motivates me.”

—Liam Walsh, Class of 2025

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan ’55, USMC Ret., Award *Sophomore Academic Achievement Award*

Liam Walsh has always been interested in law and the social sciences, so, when he came to Worcester State, he chose two social science majors—criminal justice and psychology—that enhance each other and would be good preparation for a law degree. “The more I’m in school and the more I do both psychology and criminal justice, the more I realize there’s a profound overlap between the two disciplines,” he said. “Criminal justice is a very multidimensional field and the application of psychology within that field can help with understanding it. And the same goes for psychology.”

Though he was born in Ireland and spent his first eight years there, Liam has developed a deep appreciation for his adopted country, becoming a United States citizen last August and joining the Army ROTC. “I have wanted to serve my country for some time,” he said. “I wasn’t born here, but I think I should give back. I’m appreciative of all the opportunities I’ve had here. That’s what motivates me.”

Now settled in Grafton, Mass., Liam has volunteered at the Hudson, Mass., American Heritage Museum, which houses one of the largest collections of military artifacts in the country, for three years. One of the highlights of his time there was riding in an American World War II-era tank.

Currently, Liam is an active member of Worcester State’s Criminal Justice Club. After graduation, he plans to attend law school and hopes, ultimately, to serve in the Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps. “That would be the dream job,” he said.



“It’s not just about content standards but forming them to be good humans and members of society, and that to me is just as important. Watching that develop is probably my favorite part of teaching.”

—Juliana Kallio, Class of 2024

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Award *Junior Academic Achievement Award*

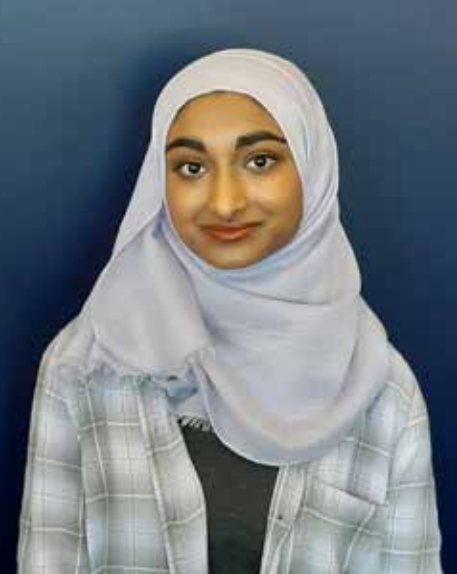
When **Juliana Kallio** was in second grade, she played school, teaching her stuffed animals what she had learned at school that day and making worksheets for her little sister. Now she is majoring in elementary education and minoring in math for K-8 education. “I really love it. We get a lot of practical experience, and I love all my professors.”

She has already worked with kids for eight years. She started as an assistant at Apple Tree Arts in Grafton, Mass., which she attended as a child, and now directs a program where children in grades one through four put on a mini musical.

Juliana has been doing the 30 hours of fieldwork for her major at Worcester Arts Magnet School, teaching sixth graders. “It’s been really cool for me because their whole mission is to integrate the arts into the general curriculum,” she said. She says having an arts background has only enhanced her mathematical abilities. “I think I’ll be a good math teacher because I can explain why you do the steps, not just what the steps are,” she said.

She finds teaching elementary students very fulfilling. “I love being a cheerleader for them and encouraging them to explore and discover more along the way,” she said. “It’s not just about content standards but forming them to be good humans and members of society, and that to me is just as important. Watching that develop is probably my favorite part of teaching.”

Juliana stays busy working as a tutor in the Math Center on campus and as an office assistant for Admissions, in addition to substitute teaching and working at Apple Tree Arts. She is also vice president of Worcester State’s Student Events Committee. When she does have free time, she cross-stitches, plays guitar, and goes thrifting.



“I firmly believe that continuous learning is essential, not only in the realm of academia but also for personal growth and development.”

—Rida Amroze, *Class of 2023*

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Award *Senior Academic Achievement Award*

Rida Amroze has been captivated by chemistry since high school. “Chemistry offers a unique perspective that allows for a deeper understanding,” she said. “It serves as the foundation for all other scientific fields.” She is now majoring in the subject, with a concentration in pre-med and a minor in forensic science, fields that appeal to her because of their potential to help others.

A member of Omicron Delta Kappa and the national chemistry honor society Gamma Sigma Epsilon, Rida has conducted organometallic research at Worcester State under the guidance of Associate Professor Jeremy Andreatta. The project won first place at the Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity 2022 poster awards.

Born and raised in Worcester County, Rida is pleased to attend college in a community she knows and loves. She is president of the Muslim Student Association, a club she co-founded as a sophomore, and secretary of Worcester State’s branch of Amnesty International. She also volunteers with the international nonprofit Helping Hand for Relief and Development, which distributes goods to refugees and disaster relief victims around the world.

Rida is currently doing an internship at the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory, where she is integrating old case files into the new online system for the Case Management Unit, shadowing lab specialists, and touring various evidence units.

Rida plans to work in a clinical or research setting for a year or two, then start a postgraduate program. “I firmly believe that continuous learning is essential, not only in the realm of academia but also for personal growth and development,” she said. “It is crucial to maintain an open mind and strive for self-improvement in both professional and personal spheres.”



“I’m a hands-on person, and I enjoy solving problems.”

—Amanda Lo, Class of 2023

The Lt. Col. James F. Sheehan '55, USMC Ret., Award *Senior Academic Achievement Award*

From plants to the human body, biology major **Amanda Lo** is fascinated by how things work. With double minors in chemistry and psychology, she is considering medical school.

“I’m a hands-on person, and I enjoy solving problems,” she said. “The idea of someone coming to you with a problem and being able to figure out what they have seems fun, like detective work.”

Amanda is currently doing a research project with multiple species of cattail, a reedy marsh plant, to determine if DNA barcoding is a viable technique for distinguishing invasive cattail species from native ones.

“I find the process to be extremely challenging, but also very rewarding. Isolating DNA from leaves as rigid as cattail ones is a laborious and tedious process. There are so many things that can go wrong,” Amanda said. “It makes successful isolation and identification of cattail species all the more valuable to me.”

The project could have implications in invasive species research. “The environment and all of the plants in it are already in enough danger as it is from human stressors like deforestation and climate change. The last thing we need is our native species being driven out by invasive ones on top of it.”

Outside of school, Amanda works as a Spanish medical interpreter at a local free medical clinic. “I’ve learned a lot, and it’s made me very aware of my privilege. It’s made me so aware of how important it is to be there in the community and do what you can, because there is always someone who needs you.”



Academic Chairs

Biology	<i>Dr. Jennifer Hood-DeGrenier</i>
Business Administration and Economics	<i>Professor Mark Love</i>
Chemistry	<i>Dr. Meghna Dilip</i>
Communication	<i>Dr. Daniel Hunt</i>
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Computer Science	<i>Dr. Elena Braynova</i>
Criminal Justice.....	<i>Dr. Hyesun Kim</i>
Earth, Environment, and Physics.....	<i>Dr. William Hansen)</i>
Education.....	<i>Dr. Pamela Hollander</i>
English	<i>Dr. Matthew Ortoleva</i>
Health Sciences	<i>Dr. Syamak Moattari</i>
History and Political Science	<i>Dr. Charlotte Haller</i>
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Nursing.....	<i>Dr. William Chadbourne</i>
Occupational Therapy	<i>Dr. Joanne Gallagher Worthley</i>
Philosophy	<i>Dr. Frank Boardman</i>
Psychology	<i>Dr. Brandi Silver</i>
Sociology.....	<i>Dr. Francisco Vivoni</i>
Urban Studies.....	<i>Dr. Timothy Murphy</i>
Visual and Performing Arts.....	<i>Dr. Samuel O’Connell</i>
World Languages.....	<i>Dr. Antonio Guijarro-Donadios</i>



Paul Tsongas Scholarship Criteria and Recipients

These scholarships are given each year to Massachusetts residents for full in-state day school tuition and fees. Recipients must have a GPA of 3.75 and a combined SAT of 1200. The scholarship is renewable for a maximum of four years to recipients who maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3.....

- Elias Berthel*
- Aili Byron*
- Kiersten Cummings*
- Charles Darling*
- Gabrielle Decosta*
- Myra Dehestani*
- Sarayu Goriparti*
- Maureen Grady*
- Juliana Kallio*
- Olivia Langlan*
- Richard Laperchia*
- Alexander Lucier*
- Avery Oldakowski*
- Timothy O'Leary*
- Benjamin Peterson*
- Meghan Rapose*
- Jimelca Suarez*
- Claudia Symonick*
- Alan Zavalunov*

Members of the Board of Trustees 2022–23

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Thank You

The Provost's Office thanks the many employees, as well as all Academic Ceremonies Committee members, who help make this program and the event special and meaningful for our students.

Art for student awards and program cover by Mark Waitkus.
waitkusstudios.myshopify.com



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