

## Kentucky to the World establishes location at Innovation Campus

Kentucky to the World (KTW) recently announced a new location in the new Collaborative SmartSpace at the Innovation Campus at Western Kentucky University (WKU). The Louisville-based KTW was recruited to be one of the Collaborative SmartSpace's initial tenants, to live and create alongside several other revolutionary and exciting partnerships with entities like the MIT Open Documentary Lab and the USC Civic Imagination Project, sharing the region's innovations with the world.

"Kentucky to the World's new home will allow us to showcase the vibrance of Bowling Green's community, economy and workforce," KTW President/CEO Shelly Zegart said. "Our goal is to inspire talented people to come from beyond our borders to find their futures—and stories about those futures—in Bowling Green and Kentucky."

The Collaborative SmartSpace is a 30,000-square-foot space meant for talented people from across the region – industry professionals, entrepreneurs, funders, researchers, students, and others – to come together in a space where they intend to meet others and collaborate. The space provides its members 24/7 access, training rooms and conference rooms, Wi-Fi, and will include a variety of opportunities and programs tailored for members – programs on which KTW will be collaborating.

KTW chose Bowling Green for its new site because it is the fastest growing city in Kentucky. The new presence builds on a partnership more than a year in the making, as several Bowling Green-based entities collaborated with KTW on its recent storytelling series, Kentucky: Resilience in the Face of Economic Change.

For a decade, Kentucky to the World's mission has been to elevate the cultural and intellectual reputation of our Commonwealth on the global stage. They accomplish this by sharing compelling stories of extraordinary people with Kentucky roots who are shaping the world with their creativity, intellect, and passion through live events, television specials, digital content, collectibles, school programs and other initiatives. For more information, visit [kentuckytotheworld.org](http://kentuckytotheworld.org).

# NEWS FOR THE COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

JANUARY 2023

## WKU recognized for efforts to increase student voting

Western Kentucky University has been recognized by the **ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge** (ALL IN) as a 2022 ALL IN Most Engaged Campus for College Student Voting.



The **ALL IN Most Engaged Campuses for College Student Voting** recognizes colleges and universities for making intentional efforts to increase student voter participation.

"WKU is committed to motivating its students to become engaged citizens in our American democracy," said Dr. Molly Kerby, AASCU's American Democracy Project Campus Coordinator. "A huge part of that effort is encouraging our students to participate in local, state, and federal elections. Our Political Engagement Project, led by Dr. Saundra Ardrey and the Political Science Department, has played an enormous role in creating educational opportunities for students to learn about the U.S. Constitution and to become active participants in the political process."

WKU joins a group of 394 colleges and universities recognized by ALL IN for completing these four actions:

- Participate in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Shared 2020 NSLVE Reports with campus voting data with ALL IN
- Developed and submitted a 2022 democratic engagement action plan with ALL IN
- Have a current signatory to ALL IN's **Higher Education Presidents' Commitment to Full Student Voter Participation**.

The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge empowers colleges and universities to achieve excellence in nonpartisan student democratic engagement. Campuses that join the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge complete a set of action items, with the support of ALL IN Challenge staff, to institutionalize nonpartisan civic learning, political engagement, and voter participation on their campus. The ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge currently engages over 9 million students from more than 950 institutions in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

## WKU, Gatton students earn top rankings for research presentations

Five Western Kentucky University students and two Gatton Academy students ranked in the top tier scorers for research presentations given at the Kentucky Academy of Science's **2022 Annual Meeting** in November.

"These presentations made clear that Kentucky's next generation of scientists are already making significant contributions to scientific research," said Amanda Fuller, Executive Director of the Kentucky Academy of Science. "Giving students opportunities to conduct research and present their findings gives them guidance and encouragement to pursue even greater achievements in the world of science."

More than 700 students and professional scientists from across the state attended the Annual Meeting, which was held Nov. 10-12 at Morehead State University. Panels of scientists who judged students' research presentations designated top presentations as "Thoroughbreds."

Western Kentucky University students who earned the "Thoroughbred" designation are:

- **Jerica Eaton**, a senior Biology major from Adolphus. Poster presentation: "Growth and Survival of Salamanders Exposed to Road Salt and Glyphosate -Based Herbicide."
- **Leah Hartman**, a junior Physics major from Scottsville. Poster Presentation: "Development of an Experimental Setup to Study Rolling Oscillations along a Curved Ramp"
- **Chloe Jones**, a senior Chemistry and Physics major from Bowling Green. Poster Presentation: "Synthesis Of Novel Double Perovskites With 4d/5d- and 3d-elements"
- **Gabriel Heckerman**, a junior Biology major from Mount Juliet, Tennessee. Poster Presentation: "The Protective Role of Melanin in the Inner Ear of Two Fish Species, *Poecilia latipinna* and *Cyprinus carpio*"
- **Greta Kreuzer**, a senior Psychological Sciences major from Lafayette, Tennessee. Poster Presentation: "The Utility of the PTSD Checklist as a Screener of Trauma Symptomology"

Gatton Academy seniors who earned the "Thoroughbred" designation for research presentations are:

- **Hannah Laney** of Ashland. Poster Presentation: "Synthesis of 4d- and 5d-Based Transition Metal Oxides"
- **Sierra Durkee** of Bowling Green. Oral Presentation: "Identification of toxic bacteriophage gene products"

The Kentucky Academy of Science is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1914. Its mission is to catalyze scientific communication and collaboration that will improve research, education, and evidence-based public engagement within the Commonwealth of Kentucky.



## WKU student awarded Rangel Fellowship for graduate degree and Foreign Service career



WKU student Ralph Gardner of Todd County was named a 2023 **Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellow**. He is one of 45 fellows selected nationwide and only the third WKU student to earn this honor.

The Rangel Graduate Fellowship supports extraordinary individuals who want to help formulate, represent, and implement U.S. foreign policy through a career in the Foreign Service of the U.S. Department of State. Gardner will receive up to \$84,000 for a two-year master's degree, two paid internships in the U.S. Congress and a U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad, and opportunities for mentoring and professional development.

Through a master's degree in international security, Gardner will focus on international threats, human trafficking, and terrorism. "I hope to use the skills and theories I've studied in psychology and criminology, along with my language skills, to help the US and other nations solve crimes and improve global security," he said.

Gardner, a senior studying criminology, forensic psychology, and Arabic, discovered an interest in the Middle East and North Africa region while at WKU. In 2021, he earned a **Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship** to study Standard Arabic and Darija in Morocco through **WKU Global**. While in Morocco, Gardner lived with a host family, and he credits this experience with broadening his perspective on diplomacy in the Arabic-speaking world. "It's important to have first-hand experience in another culture to understand complicated issues from other people's perspective, and my study abroad in Morocco gave me that understanding," he said. Gardner was also a semi-finalist for the 2022 **Critical Language Scholarship**.

In addition to his Arabic language study, Gardner's involvement with the Psychology, Law, Emotions, and Attitudes (PLEA) Lab has prepared him for a career in the Foreign Service. "Researching in the PLEA Lab showed me the importance of numerical data when trying to understand human behavior," he said. "Now, I will be able to expand that knowledge and understanding to a global level through the Foreign Service."