



NEWS FOR THE COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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WKU breaks ground on new Gordon Ford College of Business building

Western Kentucky University broke ground in June for a new state-of-the-art building to house the Gordon Ford College of Business.

Speaking at the groundbreaking, WKU President Timothy C. Caboni highlighted the importance of the new building to the university. “It is a historic day in the life of the Gordon Ford College of Business and our beloved WKU,” he noted. “I have often said that a great college of business needs a great place in which to do business. This new facility is that great place and will enrich business instruction and our university in a number of important ways.”

The 113,000-square-foot Collegiate Georgian-style building will be built on the site formerly occupied by Tate Page Hall and fulfills an important component of WKU’s 2021-2031 Campus Master Plan.

The project is made possible by the Kentucky General Assembly. As part of House Bill 1, in April 2022, legislators approved funding for a new Gordon Ford College of Business, providing \$74.4 million from the state in the 2022-24 budget.

“It is an amazing day to be here on the Western Kentucky University campus. We have a lot to celebrate,” Lieutenant Governor Jaqueline Coleman said at the groundbreaking. “As we build on our historic

economic momentum in Kentucky, we all acknowledge that investments like this are necessary. When we all work together, we can achieve big things. We are breaking ground on the first building funded by the state at Western Kentucky University since 2014.”

The new Gordon Ford College of Business building will feature a modern, flexible, open-space interior that supports active learning, academic innovation, curriculum enhancement, and a strong community. Students will have access to resources that prepare them for careers in business, including a virtual reality simulation lab, Bloomberg trading terminals, a one-stop-shop Student Success Center, and a Center for Financial Success. The spaces will more uniformly serve the needs of students and elevate the teaching and research of the faculty and staff.

The Gordon Ford College of Business has experienced significant enrollment increases in recent years, and the new building will support that ongoing enrollment growth while celebrating the history of business education in Kentucky. The facility will also help enhance the student experience by offering amenities like a food and coffee shop.

In addition to the benefits it will provide to campus, President Caboni also recognized the role the building will play in strengthening the region’s business community. “Fostering additional partnerships with regional business leaders, this space increases our role in the development of the business community and workforce by offering training and credentialing opportunities and spaces intentionally created to further networking and job placement opportunities for our students,” he shared.

Construction work will be performed by Messer Construction, and the project is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2025. View the latest renderings and schematic designs at www.wku.edu/businesscollege.



WKU students forecast, document storms during 14th Storm Chase



Eight Western Kentucky University meteorology students participated in the annual Field Methods in Severe Weather Analysis and Forecasting course during the month of May.

Even though the class is commonly called the WKU Storm Chase, the two-week trip to the Great Plains focuses on forecasting and documenting severe storms, University Meteorologist Josh Durkee said. The 2023 trip is the 14th since the course was launched in 2010.

“Students participating in this field course develop advanced skills to prepare for careers in professional forecasting and emergency management,” Dr. Durkee said. “Many students who have taken this course over the years are currently working in National Weather Service and emergency management offices, and broadcast television outlets around the country.”

During the trip, each student has the opportunity to serve as team leader, develop that day’s forecast, determine expectations for that day’s journey and make a presentation to the group.

The students traveled an area between Interstate 35 to the east, the Rocky Mountains to the west, the Canadian border to the north and the Mexican border to the south.

The class traveled 6,727 miles across 11 states in 14 days. The total miles driven since the class began is 104,721 across 206 days, which is more than four trips around the earth.

More: Follow [@wkustormchase](#) on Twitter

WKU School of Media finishes third overall in Hearst program

Western Kentucky University’s **School of Media** continued its tradition of success in the **Hearst Journalism Awards Program** with a third-place finish in the 2022-2023 **Overall Intercollegiate Competition**.

WKU has finished in the top five nationally for 14 consecutive years and has placed in the top eight for 30 straight years with four overall championships in 2000, 2001, 2005 and 2018.

In this year’s Hearst program, WKU won the Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition and tied for first in the Intercollegiate Multimedia Competition.

The top 10 schools in the Overall Intercollegiate Competition are University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Florida, WKU, University of Missouri, Pennsylvania University, Syracuse University, Arizona State University, University of Montana, Indiana University, and University of Iowa.

In the Intercollegiate Multimedia Competition, WKU and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill tied for first with the highest accumulated student points from the four competitions.

20 WKU students awarded Gilman Scholarship for study abroad

A total of 20 WKU students earned the **Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship** for study abroad in the March 2023 application cycle—as many as all other colleges and universities in Kentucky combined.

The Gilman Scholarship broadens the student population that studies or interns abroad by supporting undergraduates who might not otherwise participate due to financial constraints. The 20 recipients in this application cycle earned scholarships totaling \$81,500 with an average award amount of \$4,075.

Of those who worked with the WKU Office of Scholar Development, 42% of WKU’s applicants were named recipients.



WKU has won the Hearst multimedia championship nine times since it was added in 2010 and has won the photojournalism championship for seven straight years and 29 times in the past 34 years.

WKU students have won 15 Hearst individual national championships since 1985 — photojournalism in 1987, 1988, 1991, 1992, 1996, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2014 and 2016; multimedia in 2015; writing in 1985; and radio news in 2006.

Often called “The Pulitzers of college journalism,” the Hearst Journalism Awards Program includes two photojournalism, five writing, one audio, two television, and four multimedia competitions offering up to \$700,000 in scholarships, matching grants and stipends; 105 member universities of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication with accredited undergraduate journalism programs are eligible to participate in the Hearst competitions.

The average national selection rate for the Gilman Scholarship over the past five years is 24.6%.

About The Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship: Funded by the U.S. Department of State, the Gilman Scholarship program funds internships or study abroad programs for undergraduate Pell Grant recipients. Since 2001, the Gilman Scholarship has enabled more than 33,000 Americans to study in countries around the world, representing diverse backgrounds including ethnic minority students, students with disabilities, and first-generation college students.

