



*Graduate student Abdelrahman Gad inspects a small, four-propeller drone while wearing a headset that allows him to control it.*

## Mechanical Engineering Students Using Their Heads to Build Brain-Computer Interfaces

Sitting in his apartment, Purdue University Fort Wayne graduate student Abdelrahman Gad is recording a video that looks like action from an X-Men comic book or a big-budget movie mimicking telekinesis. But Gad's efforts are not special effects, and his results are reality.

At his mental commands, a small, four-propeller drone lifts about three feet off the carpet and executes in-air turns around a box in the middle of the room. Gad is wearing a headset connecting to 16 contact points around his head, and the device uses a computer to translate his thoughts into commands for the drone. Gad has been developing this project for a little more than a year, working on the flight portion for the last month. Sessions take 2 or 3 hours, and the drone's battery lasts 15 minutes.

"Before I even started using it myself, I couldn't believe I could control the drone with my head," Gad said. "The first time that I moved the drone with my brain, it was remarkable, fascinating."

Under the guidance of Zhuming Bi, professor of mechanical engineering and a Fulbright-Nokia Distinguished Chair in

Information and Communications Technologies for the 2023–24 academic year, Gad and recent PFW graduate Hussein Bilal, M.S. '23, are working to expand humanity's possibilities. Similar to Gad operating a small drone, Bilal can manipulate a mechanical arm, twisting the device in directions using the power of his mind—and a brain-computer interface.

[READ MORE](#)



## Senior Plans Out Future of Service That Includes Stint as Leader of the Free World

When he was 6 or 7 years old, current Purdue University Fort Wayne senior Evan Gregory promised his grandfather he would make a difference someday. A Vietnam War veteran, the grandfather was and is Gregory's hero, and the boy decided he could best fulfill his goal by becoming president.

And that is still Gregory's goal. He's taking steps to learn as much as he can now to become a better elected representative in the future. Already majoring in criminal justice and sociology, he recently added another in history, which will push his graduation back a semester.

"I have to know everything, plain and simple," Gregory said. "If I don't know everything, I will not be making the best decisions, I will not be fair to myself or other people."

[READ MORE](#)



## Feb. 29 Omnibus Event Will Count Toward Civics Literacy Requirement

Students will have a chance to add to their **Civics Literacy Proficiency Requirement** at the end of the month by attending an Omnibus series event featuring guest speaker **Donna Brazile**.

What is the Civics Literacy Proficiency Requirement? That takes some explanation.

Believing the general population's understanding and participation in civic responsibilities had been declining for decades, the Purdue University Board of Trustees **voted in June 2021** to implement a civics literacy graduation requirement. Purdue University Fort Wayne rolled out its version of the obligation during the fall 2022 semester.

[READ MORE](#)



## Donna Brazile Omnibus Series Tickets Available Thursday at 1:30 p.m.

The current season of the Omnibus Speaker Series at Purdue University Fort Wayne will continue Feb. 29 with veteran Democratic political strategist **Donna Brazile**. The event begins at 7:30 p.m. in Auer Performance Hall.

Tickets to see “Political Outlook: A Comprehensive Picture of What’s Going on in Washington” will be released Thursday at 1:30 p.m. They are free and available on a first-come, first-served basis through the **Schatzlein Box Office** or PFW’s **online ticketing platform**. A \$1.50 convenience charge is assessed per ticket for online orders, with a limit of four tickets per person.

[READ MORE](#)

## Commencement Reminders for Graduating Students

Don’t forget to keep these deadlines and details in mind if you are planning to participate in the May 8 commencement at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum:

- If you would like to see your name in the commencement program, remember to apply to graduate by March 31. Complete the application in **goPFW** under Registration Tools in the Enrollment section.
- After you apply to graduate, **register yourself and your family for the event**. Tickets aren’t needed, but sharing an estimated number of your family and friends who will be attending the ceremony and the after party is very helpful for PFW’s advance planning.
- **Order your cap and gown**. All orders will be shipped directly to the address that you enter, along with a return shipping label. December graduates who aren’t planning to attend commencement in May can order a cap and gown for pictures.
- Visit the **commencement website** often for important information, reminders, and updates.

# Eventful

---

There's always plenty to do at Purdue Fort Wayne. To find your favorites—or discover new activities—check the full [events calendar](#) often to see what's happening on campus.

FEBRUARY

14

Wed., noon–2 p.m.

## I Heart U Cookies

Celebrate Valentine's Day by decorating heart-shaped cookies with The Multicultural Center...

---

FEBRUARY

19

Mon., 5–6 p.m.

## EndNote Basics Virtual Session

EndNote is a reference manager that helps you save time formatting citations, so you can focus on your research. enjoy peace of mind with data restoration functions that protect your work and improve your writing workflow...

---

FEBRUARY

16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24

8 p.m.; 2 p.m. on Feb. 18

## The Tempest

This fairy tale romance/comedy by Shakespeare begins when a violent and terrifying storm wrecks a ship and scatters the passengers throughout a mysterious, magical island, filled with spirits and witches...

## News Spotlight

A sampling of external news coverage of Purdue University Fort Wayne.

## Bill relaxing wetlands protections headed to Holcomb's desk

WANE 15 | Feb. 7

## Keeping kids safe online

FOX 55 | Feb. 6

# Mastodon Moments

*Seen and noted around campus. Monitor our university social feeds for more great moments of Mastodon life.*



*It's "Random Acts of Kindness" week. Abby Wang, assistant director of Student Leadership, and Kate Long, coordinator in the Office of Student Conduct and Care, encouraged passers-by in Walb Student Union to jot down some kind regards and snag a pop fidget bracelet on Monday.*

Athletics



Events Calendar



News Center



Don Life Archive



*Don Life* is an official university communication sent weekly on Wednesday to all currently enrolled students. *Don Life Special Edition* is a supplement to the regularly scheduled newsletter. It covers breaking news and time-sensitive information directly related to university operations.

**PURDUE UNIVERSITY<sup>®</sup>**  
**FORT WAYNE**



