

# donlife



For Students

February 19, 2025



## Greater Fort Wayne Internship Provides Senior with One of Many Opportunities at PFW

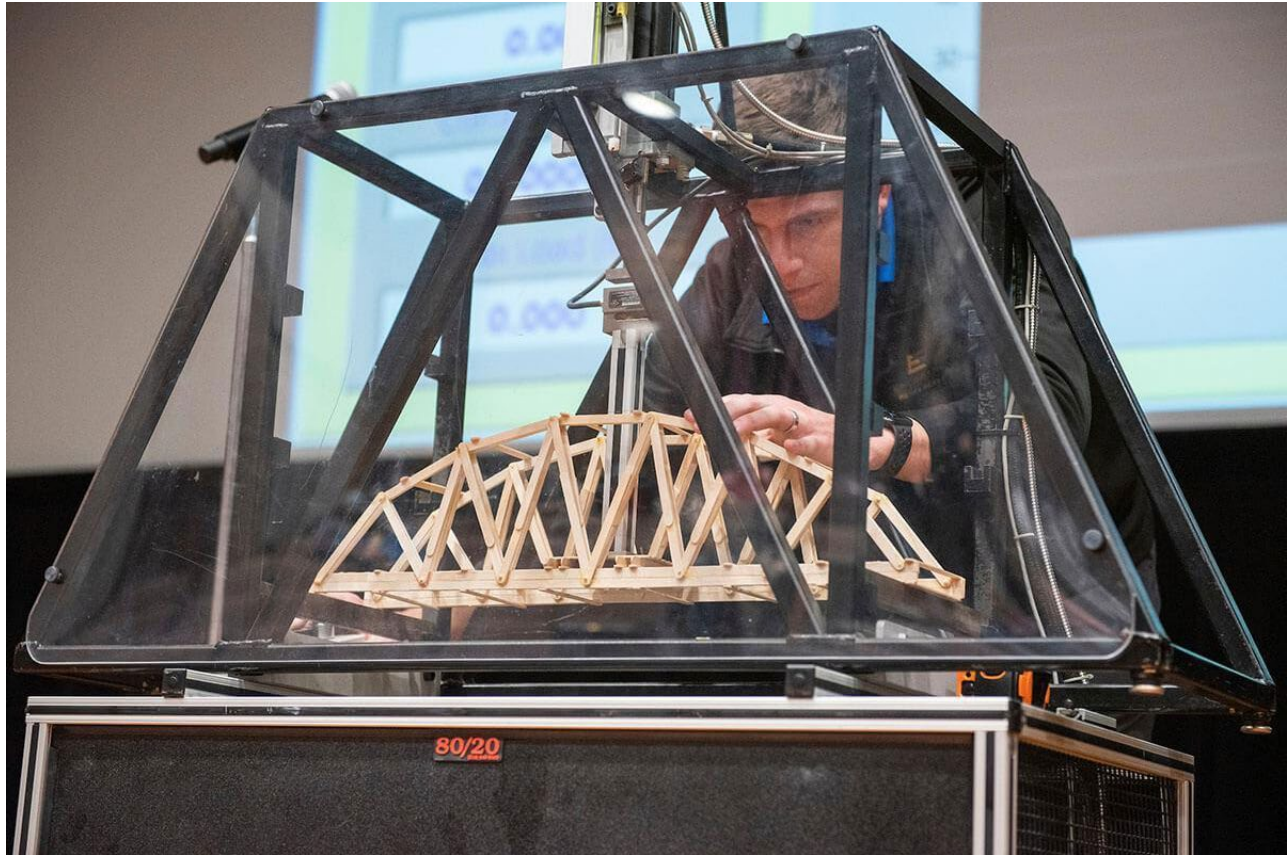
Even before he graduated from Homestead High School, Ben Burkle knew Purdue University Fort Wayne would help set him up for his future. Now a double major in political science and history and on track to complete his studies in May, Burkle almost wonders if the university served him too well by presenting so many intriguing opportunities.

"I have a lot of different ideas for what I want to do, but I don't have it all planned out right now," Burkle said. "I guess a little bit of that is kind of scary. I know what I want to do, but I don't know the best way to do it."

Part of Burkle's situation is that he looks to take advantage of every chance that comes his way,

including working as an economic development intern with Greater Fort Wayne Inc., where he conducts research, finds statistics, and fills in whatever holes pop open.

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## National Engineers Week Competition at PFW Building Bridges to Engineering Careers

The only guaranteed result at Saturday's 35th annual edition of the National Engineers Week Model Bridge Building Contest at Purdue University Fort Wayne is that there will be a new winner in the high school division. That's because the last four competitions were won by either Noah DeLong or Lucas Stevens. The two Homestead High School graduates are now attending PFW as freshmen studying in the College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science.

More than 100 middle and high schoolers will participate from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union. Teams and individuals build bridges consisting of no more than 200 Popsicle sticks and wood glue. The structures, which must be at least 24 inches long, are limited in height to 12 inches or less with a width of six inches or less.

The finished products are placed in a specialized machine to judge their construction, load, and durability under continuous pressure. The bridge with the highest failure load-to-bridge weight ratio wins.



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## Past Inspires Passion for “John Proctor Is the Villain” Costume Designer

When the play “John Proctor is the Villain” opens in Purdue University Fort Wayne’s Williams Theatre on Friday, it will be a showcase project for the actors involved, but also for costume designer Rin Ulick. It’s something Ulick never dreamed could happen before coming to campus.

When the Elkhart native became a theatre major, they concentrated on becoming an actor, appearing in six plays at PFW. The focus started slowly and shifted when taking a required intro to design class as a sophomore.

“Something just clicked because it makes my love for art and research and history and also theatre more vivid, checking all the boxes for me,” Ulick said. “It was a different way of expressing my love for theatre and hit a different intellectual mark than anything had.”

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## Walters' Work in the Greenhouse Keeps Campus Beauty Blooming

A traditional saying from India says the beautiful fruit is always hidden behind the leaf.

That might be the perfect way to describe Holly Walters and her duties as a groundskeeper on the Facilities Management team at Purdue University Fort Wayne. Along with her colleagues, she's one of the reasons why the natural beauty of the campus stands out. Most winter days, Walters is tucked away in the greenhouse near the northwest corner of Kettler Hall, repotting annual plants, enticing seeds to sprout, and helping Daniel Freese, a groundskeeper crew chief, get everything organized for the spring planting.

"There's just something about her hands, not just a green thumb, but beyond that because everything she touches grows," said Rama Cousik, associate professor of special education who also **knows her way around this realm.**

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## Tickets for Marcus Collins Omnibus Presentation Now Available

Purdue University Fort Wayne's popular Omnibus Speaker Series will celebrate a milestone on Feb. 27 when marketing guru Marcus Collins steps onto the Auer Performance Hall stage at 7:30 p.m.

Collins, a leading cultural scholar, award-winning marketer, and University of Michigan professor, will be the 150th speaker in the series, which started in 1995.

Collins has worked with brands like Apple, Nike, Beyoncé, McDonald's, and Anheuser-Busch. During his career, he has developed culturally contagious ideas that inspire people to take action. His work focuses on the impact of culture and the power that comes from having great cultural proximity.

Tickets 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.

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## Eventful

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*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

20

Thurs., 7:30–9 p.m.

## Bands Concert

The university bands welcome Dr. Matthew Giallongo, director of vocal studies, as he performs selections including some of Copland's Old American Songs...

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FEBRUARY

21

Fri., 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

## Career Closet: Our Doors Are Open

Get prepared for your next big interview, a classroom presentation, or the Mastodon Internship and Career Fair by taking home a professional outfit from the Mastodon Career Closet. No registration is needed...

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FEBRUARY

25

Tues., 6–8:30 p.m.

## Eat to the Beats

Celebrate Black History Month at the fourth annual Eat to the Beats event. Blues music will be highlighted by Professor John Buteyn and PFW music students. Food provided by Smile More Catering. Free tickets are required and available in Walb 118...

## News Spotlight

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

### Dons' Support for Breast Cancer Awareness Has Fort Wayne Seeing Pink

WANE 15 | Saturday

### Classical Connection: Masterworks Concert features music of O'Malley, Schumann, and others

WBOI | Thursday

# Mastodon Moments

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



*Fresh Ideas spread the love on Valentine's Day with a cookie-decorating station in Don's at Walb.*

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