

# donlife



For Students

March 5, 2025



## Purdue Fort Wayne to Honor Featured Faculty for 2025

Four Purdue University Fort Wayne educators will be honored as recipients of the 2025 Featured Faculty designation during a recognition luncheon today. The annual awards are being presented to **Suining Ding**, professor of interior design; **Michael Kirchner**, associate professor of organizational leadership; **Sarah LeBlanc**, associate professor of interpersonal communication; and **Richard Weiner**, chair and professor of history.

Featured Faculty are singled out for their outstanding performance in research, scholarly activity, creative endeavors, teaching, or engagement. As a quality measure that distinguishes PFW from other institutions of higher education, these accomplishments illustrate the comprehensive and significant contributions of the university's faculty in the creation of new knowledge, the fostering of student curiosity, and scholarship of engagement at PFW and beyond.

"Featured Faculty is a competitive award, and the quality of the submissions is high each and every year," said Kimberly O'Connor, associate vice chancellor for teaching and learning. "The faculty at Purdue University Fort Wayne exemplify innovation, dedication, and excellence across

their disciplines. Their work not only advances knowledge and creative practice, but also makes a lasting impact on students, the community, and the broader professional landscape.”

Along with being outstanding teachers, this year’s four honorees have also done extensive work to better northeast Indiana and the world.

“PFW faculty shape industries, communities, and academic fields on a national and global scale,” O’Connor said. “They drive meaningful change, influence professional practices, and contribute to solving real-world challenges. Their work elevates the university’s reputation and inspires collaboration and innovation across disciplines.”

Click on the following links to learn about the accomplishments of these four recipients.

[SUNING DING](#)

[MICHAEL KIRCHNER](#)

[SARAH LEBLANC](#)

[RICHARD WEINER](#)

[WATCH VIDEO](#)



## PFW Announces List of Summer Youth Programs

Often a hub for youthful inspiration, the campus of Purdue University Fort Wayne really takes on a different look and feel when the temperature rises.

Registration for PFW's youth programs for participants under the age of 18—a list that includes various summer camps—is now open. These opportunities are a chance to keep kids active when school isn't in session, but they're also a great way for parents to introduce their children to experiences that might become lifelong passions.

The program options are plentiful, and some may even steer students to futures as scientists, engineers, computer programmers, artists, poets, pianists, architects, physicists, writers, actors, musicians, athletes, singers, dancers, photographers, ceramic artists, or robot builders—and more.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Gurevich Earns Purdue Focus Award

Naomi Gurevich, associate professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, has been named a winner of the Purdue University 2025 Focus Award. Since 2001, the award is given annually to individuals affiliated with the Purdue system who have made an outstanding contribution to the furthering of Purdue's commitment to disability accessibility and the pursuit of excellence. Gurevich joined the PFW faculty in 2017.

Previous PFW recipients of the award were Rama Cousik, associate professor of special education in the Department of Counseling and Graduate Education, who was recognized in 2024, and the Disability Access Center in 2023.





## Marketing Guru Collins Drills Deep to Explore What Drives Decision Making

Partly because it was on backorder for two weeks, Wendy Maxwell couldn't wait to read Marcus Collins' "For the Culture: The Power Behind What We Buy, What We Do, and Who We Want to Be." When it finally arrived, she consumed it a couple days later.

"For one, it's not like a regular marketing book," said Maxwell, a Purdue University Fort Wayne junior majoring in accounting. "It takes all of these theories, or ideals, and concepts, and it makes it understandable so a normal person who doesn't have a Ph.D. can look at it."

Even better, Maxwell got to sit in the front row at Collins' Omnibus Speaker Series classroom presentation Thursday afternoon, get her book signed by the author, and then ask him a question during the signature event in Auer Performance Hall later that evening.

Collins, a University of Michigan professor, cultural scholar, and marketing genius, showed why his book is so powerful during riveting discussions with both audiences. His main theme was about perspective and how the way people see the world affects society because of cultural influences. Collins suggested that everyone assumes they have free will, but it is guided by others.

[READ MORE](#)

# Good to Know

---

## Mastodon Career Expo Is Today

The Mastodon Career Expo will take place today from noon to 3 p.m. in the Lutheran Health Fieldhouse. The expo is open to all students and alumni from PFW and IUFW, and there is no charge to attend. More than 100 employers will be recruiting for all positions: postgraduation, internships, part-time, and full-time jobs. All seeking employment are welcome to attend, and registration is not necessary.

## Dons WBB to Host HL Tournament Game on Thursday at Gates

The PFW women's basketball team (23-7, 18-2 HL) under the leadership of Horizon League Coach of the Year Maria Marchesano earned a bye in the HL postseason tournament that began Tuesday night and will host a quarterfinal matchup versus Wright State (10-21, 7-13 HL) at Gates Sports Center on Thursday at 7 p.m.

Coming off a bye of its own, the men's team will also play its first game of the tournament Thursday night at Youngstown State (19-12, 13-7 HL). Check the Mastodon Athletics [website](#) for ticket information and updates on both teams.

## Mastodon Campus Store Spring Break Hours

During the week of spring break—March 10–16—the Mastodon Campus Store will be open Monday–Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will be closed Friday.

# 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.*

MARCH

5

Today, noon–1:30  
p.m.

## Walk in Her Shoes: A Historical Journey of Women's History Month

Dr. Jill Kracov Zinckgraf, interim executive director of the National Women's History Alliance, will take you on a historical journey exploring how Women's History Month came to be and the ongoing fight for women's rights...

---

MARCH

5

Today, 7:30–9:30  
p.m.

## Guest Artist Recital Featuring Brenda Iglesias, Contralto, and Jonathan Young, Piano

The wide-ranging repertoire of Brenda Iglesias encompasses the principal contralto parts of the oratorio and concert repertoire, from the Baroque through the Classical and Romantic periods, as well as 20th-century music. Iglesias will be joined by faculty artist Jonathan Young for an evening of...

---

MARCH

7

Fri., 7–11 p.m.

## Spielfreaks Campus-Community Tabletop Board Game Night

Play all kinds of modern tabletop board games like Settlers of Catan, Ticket to Ride, 7 Wonders, Splendor, and more (all are appropriate for high school and up). You'll find an eager crowd ready to play your favorites and teach whatever you want to learn...

## News Spotlight

---

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

### 7 Questions With Ron Elsenbaumer

Business People | Monday

## Mastodon Moments

---

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

---



*Monday was an official open house for Donna's Den, a place for fun and friendship on the second floor of Walb Student Union, next to the Student Government Association office. The celebration included T-shirts, stickers, and an extensive taco bar. The game room features a pool table and two ping pong tables. All students are welcome to stop by.*

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**  
**FORT WAYNE**



