

# FORWARD TOGETHER

Wichita State University

October 2022

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## Shocker Nation celebrates record enrollment

Autumn is upon us, and Wichita State University is settling nicely into the comfort of a cooler season. Shockers everywhere are gearing up for the start of men's and women's basketball seasons.

Perhaps the biggest news on campus now is our fall 2022 enrollment numbers. While most universities across the state and nation are reporting declines, [Wichita State and WSU Tech are bucking the trend](#). The combined enrollment of the two campuses is a whopping 21,942 students!

When separating out the two institutions, Wichita State grew its headcount by 5.1% to 16,921 students, and WSU Tech saw a 3.9% increase for a total of 5,021 students.

What does this mean for Shocker Nation?

It confirms that we're doing the right things for the right reasons. It means that word is spreading that Wichita State is breaking down barriers and creating opportunities.



[Read more of Dr. Muma's message](#)

## Forward Together Podcast



### AD Kevin Saal is the featured guest on the latest 'Forward Together' podcast

In the latest episode of Wichita State University's "Forward Together" podcast, President Rick Muma talks with Kevin Saal, who was hired as director of athletics at Wichita State University in June.

Kevin is leading Shocker athletics during a time of significant change – name, image and likeness, the transfer portal, and conference realignment top the list.

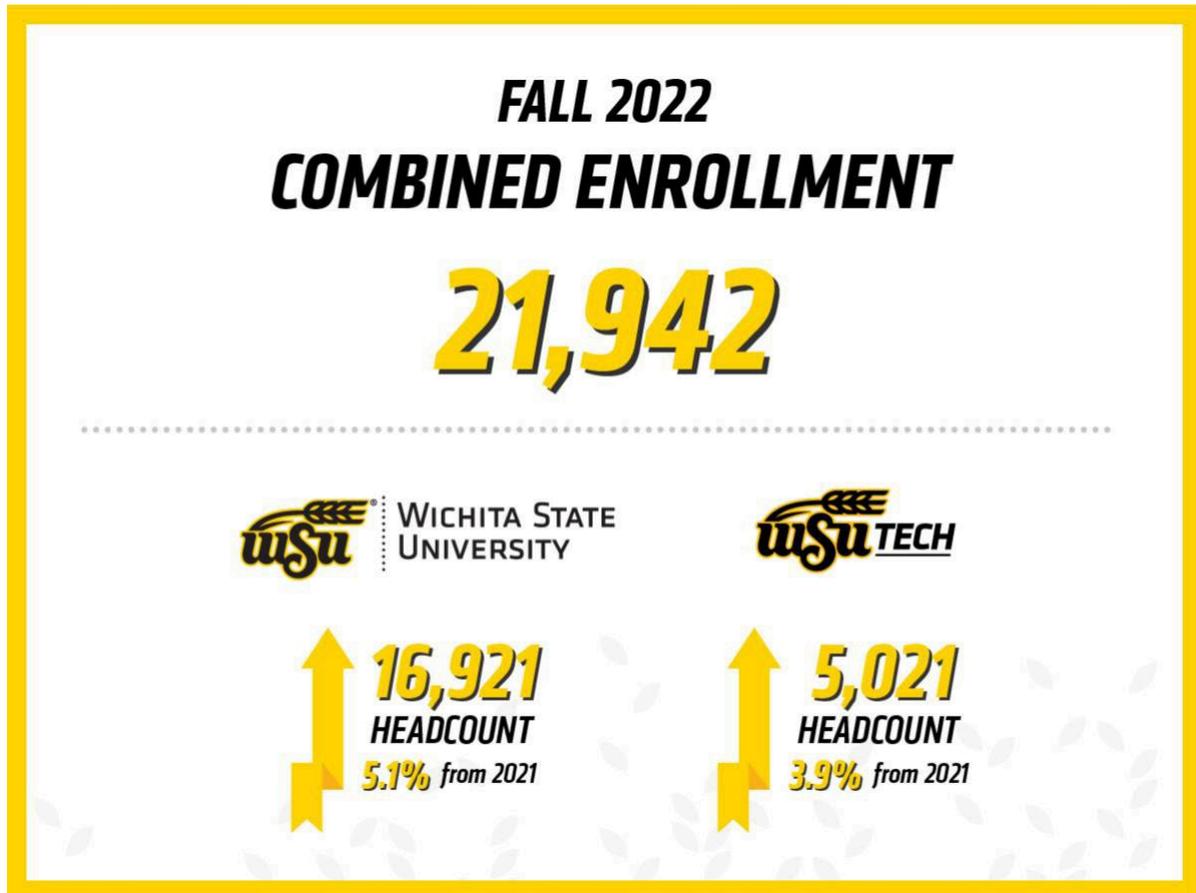
Listen to the podcast at [wsu.news/ftpodcast](https://www.wsu.edu/news/ftpodcast) or on Spotify, Stitcher, Google Podcasts, Amazon Podcasts and Apple Podcasts (iTunes).

You can also watch a video of the podcast at [wsu.news/FTWSaal](https://www.wsu.edu/news/FTWSaal).

The next episode will focus on Wichita State as a driver for education in Kansas.

**[Subscribe here to catch all episodes of the podcast](#)**

## In the News at Wichita State



### Enrollment increases at Wichita State thanks to focus on student experience and economic growth

Combined enrollment by headcount across all Wichita State University locations for fall 2022 is 21,942, according to the annual data released today by the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR).

For the Wichita State main campus, the numbers represent an increase of 5.1% in fall student headcount from 16,097 in 2021 to 16,921 in 2022. That's the largest number of students choosing to enroll at Wichita State since 1989.

At WSU Tech, student headcount increased 3.9% from 4,834 last year to 5,021 this year — WSU Tech's highest fall semester headcount ever.

"Since the affiliation in 2018, WSU and WSU Tech have worked as one to provide an affordable and accessible education and to create a growing talent pipeline for our community," says WSU President Rick Muma. "Even with the challenges brought on by the pandemic and the economy, Wichita State University continues to make a difference in the lives of an increasing number of students and their families."

[Read about Wichita State's enrollment increase](#)

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## **WSU wins \$750K NSF grant to improve graduation rates among low-income engineering students**

As Wichita State University celebrates record enrollment, the university is bolstering its student success initiatives to increase graduation rates. As part of those efforts, the National Science Foundation has awarded WSU researchers \$750,000 to increase persistence rates among low-income engineering students, particularly those who are interested in advanced manufacturing careers.

The project — titled “Improved Persistence to Degree Completion through Enhanced Engineering Identity” — was borne from statistics that show that low-income students have lower degree-completion rates than their typical-income peers in engineering.

[Learn more what WSU is doing to help low-income engineering students](#)

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## **Wichita State releases 2023 employment forecast**

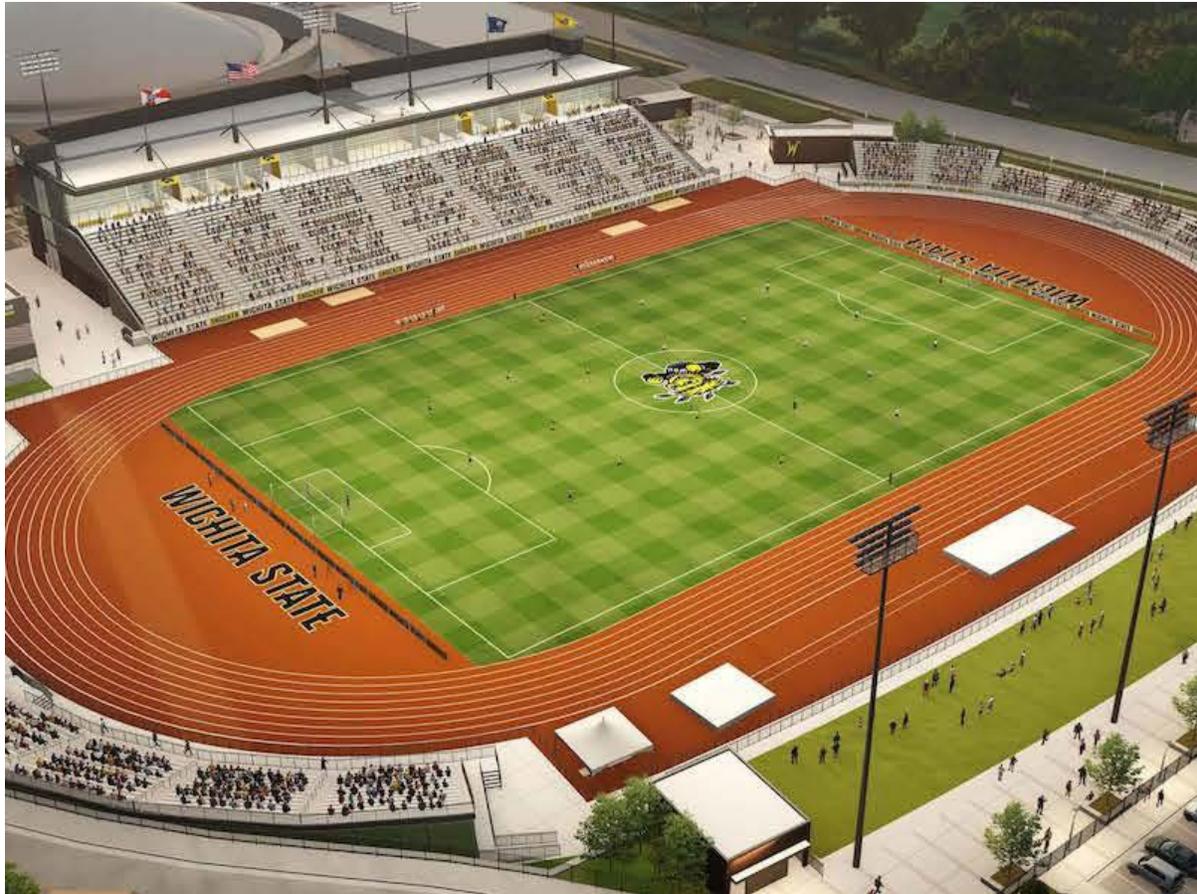
Wichita State University's Center for Economic Development and Business Research has released an updated employment forecast for Wichita, Kansas City, Topeka and the state of Kansas.

### **Kansas forecast**

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. economy grew by 5.7% in 2021 after contracting 3.7% the prior year. The first half of 2022 registered two consecutive quarters of negative real GDP growth, prompting some reporters to declare a recession. Those declarations, however, might be premature. It is important to note that the National Bureau of Economic Research is the official entity to call a recession, which is always retroactive and includes other variables beyond GDP. Currently, there are mixed signals about the broader economic conditions. Market volatility, inflation, the housing market and negative consumer sentiment contributed to economic pessimism. Alternatively, gross domestic income, employment, and retail sales have remained robust and appear to be a proverbial firewall to a recession.

[See all employment forecasts](#)

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## **Board of Trustees approves first phases for Cessna Stadium renovation**

The Wichita State University Board of Trustees approved funding in September for phases 1A and 1B for the capital improvement plan to replace Cessna Stadium, for a total project cost of approximately \$11.8 million.

When completed, the new university stadium will accommodate more than 10,000 spectators and include an eight-lane track and space for a soccer field.

**[Find out more about the future of the stadium](#)**

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## **Wichita State shortstop uses her art and athletic ability to build her NIL brand**

Wichita State senior Sydney McKinney is a student-athlete made for the era of name, image and likeness opportunities.

McKinney is a softball All-American, artist, entrepreneur, and diligent brand manager for herself. When NCAA and college administrators conceived of NIL benefits – compensating student-athletes for their talent and time – McKinney is the perfect example of the intended outcome.

“It’s like getting a job – you want to put your best foot forward,” she said. “I didn’t come to this expecting to make millions of dollars, like the boys are expecting to do. It’s wanting everybody to get to know me, wanting people to know what I’m about. Autism Speaks. Artwork. I didn’t really have to think about it. It’s more about showing people who I am and not about the money.”

**[Learn more about Sydney McKinney](#)**

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## **Expanding Your Horizons promotes STEM for girls**

Middle school girls from the surrounding area will get the chance to explore STEM careers at the 10th annual Expanding Your Horizons workshop Saturday, Oct. 22, at Wichita State University's Hubbard Hall.

This one-day event introduces middle school girls to a variety of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) areas.

Attendees will meet STEM role models, participate in hands-on activities and learn more about careers in those fields.

**[Learn more about Expanding Your Horizons](#)**

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## **NIAR unveils new ATLAS facility with Solvay Manufacturing Innovation Center**

The Advanced Technologies Lab for Aerospace Systems (ATLAS) at Wichita State University's National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) held a grand opening for customers and partners.

The event featured the unveiling of Solvay's Manufacturing Innovation Center within the facility.

Within the new joint center for ATLAS and Solvay, companies will be able to fabricate entire aircraft structures such as wings and fuselages at a fraction of the cost of making it themselves. Using automated and high-rate processing with smart and agile manufacturing technologies, Solvay and NIAR engineers will work hand-in-hand with customers to test ideas and innovative structures in real time.

These capabilities help to increase the adoption of composites, and allow aviation companies to meet increased performance and efficiency targets.

**[Learn more about the Solvay Manufacturing Innovation Center](#)**

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