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## Forward Together: A monthly newsletter, November 2023

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# FORWARD TOGETHER

Wichita State University

November 2023

## First-gen students' success is a win for everyone

Being the first to do anything requires bravery in the face of the unknown. For nearly half of Wichita State University undergraduate students, that courageous step was being the first in their families to attend college.

Without family members to help guide them on the nuances of financial aid, degree plans, course schedules, how to buy books for class, or where to find tutoring or other academic support, first-generation students often start off at a disadvantage. Even something as simple as joining a club or campus organization might be overwhelming to someone who has never been exposed to so many opportunities.



However, I'm continually impressed by our first-gen students' tenacity, resourcefulness and determination; and I'm honored that they've trusted Wichita State to be part of their journey. Our aim is to make their campus experience run a little smoother and reduce some of the anxiety that comes with being the first in their family to attend college.

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

**Forward Together Podcast**

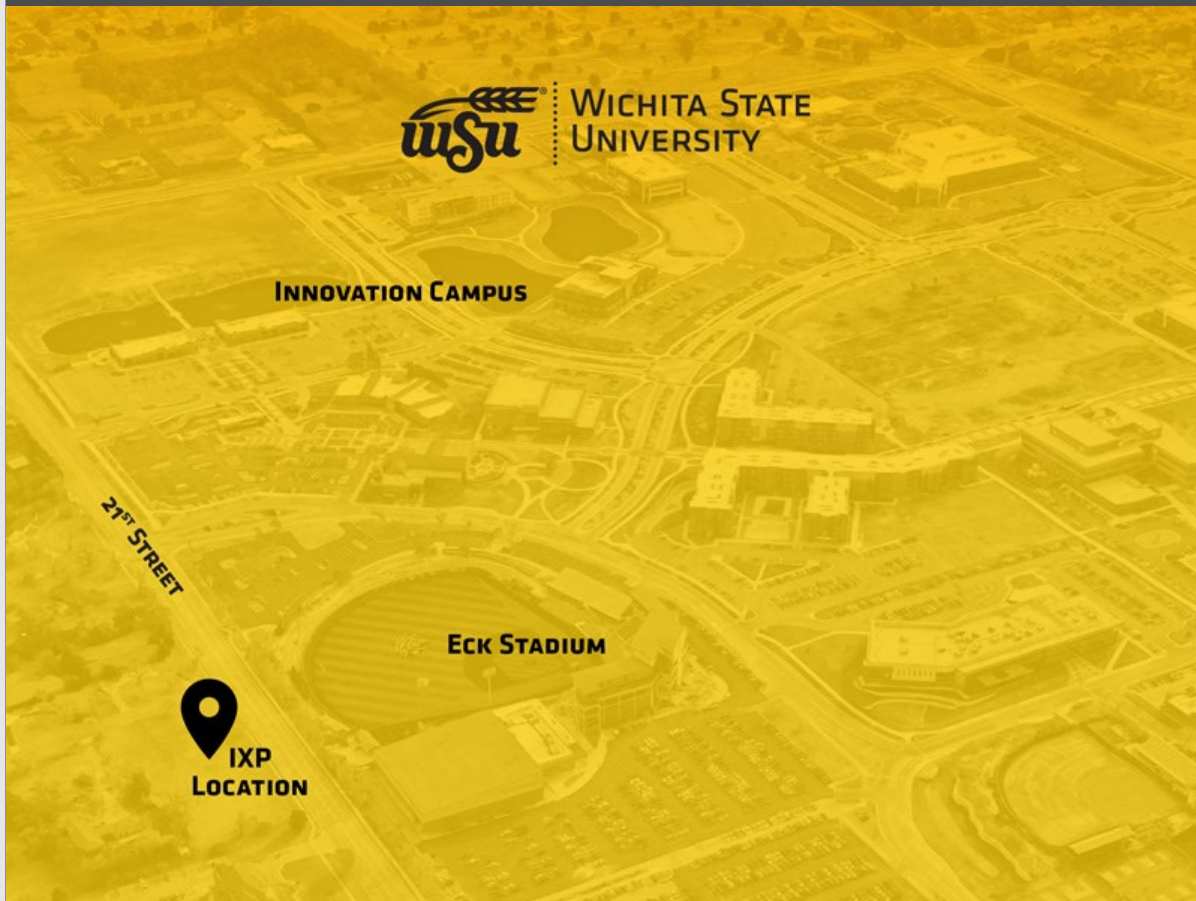
**November podcast: Judge Stephanie Dawkins Davis**

Join Wichita State President Rick Muma as he talks with the Honorable Stephanie Dawkins Davis about her career and her experience as a Shocker. Judge Dawkins Davis serves on the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals and has appellate jurisdiction over the federal district courts in Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee.

Click above to watch a video of the podcast. The podcast is also available on Spotify, Stitcher, Google Podcasts, Amazon Podcasts or Apple Podcasts (iTunes).

[Watch, listen and subscribe to the podcast](#)

## In the News at Wichita State



## Wichita State chosen as site for Kansas' first Internet Exchange Point

The first Internet Exchange Point (IXP) in Kansas is slated to be located at Wichita State University, improving internet performance, affordability and reliability for WSU, Innovation Campus and Shocker Neighborhood users and for users across much of Kansas.

The announcement was made Nov. 29 by Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly, whose administration has awarded a \$5 million grant to fund the construction of the facility. It will be owned and operated by Connected Nation Internet Exchange Points LLC, a joint venture between Kentucky-based nonprofit Connected Nation and carrier hotel pioneer Hunter Newby.

If the site is approved by the Kansas Board of Regents, the IXP will be located on a vacant lot owned by WSU at the northwest corner of East 21st Street North and Fountain Avenue, directly across from WSU's Eck Stadium.

[Learn more about the location](#)



## Shockers go on career-focused road trip across Wichita with Roadtrip Nation

Roadtrip Nation took Wichita State and WSU Tech students on a road trip to learn about the career possibilities in Wichita.

The documentary, "Roadtrip Nation: Paths Across Kansas," aired on PBS Kansas, channel 8. The episodes are also available to watch online.

For decades, young people in middle America have felt unfair pressure to head to the coasts for high-paying and innovative jobs, but that story is changing. In South Central Kansas, people are finding exciting opportunities in innovative industries right in their backyards. Follow the journeys of five young Kansans as they take a deep dive into their home state's career possibilities. From aerospace and advanced manufacturing to healthcare and agriculture, discover the diverse range of career paths available in South Central Kansas.

“Paths Across Kansas” was made possible through a partnership among the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, Wichita State, WSU Tech, USD 259, the State of Kansas, Strada Foundation, Textron Aviation, Spirit AeroSystems and Bank of America.

[Watch the series online](#)



## Rudd Scholars thrive at Wichita State

Wichitan Leslie Rudd established the Rudd Foundation in 1994 and in 2018 the Rudd Scholars Program began honoring the Midwestern values that strengthen character and lead to a lifetime of success in business, community, and family.

The Rudd Scholars Program helped more than 100 Kansans attend Wichita State University and benefit from the program’s mentoring, personal and professional development, and community.

Wichita State is proud of its role helping Rudd Scholars pursue passions and realize dreams in the state’s largest city. Rudd Scholars at Wichita State are supported by many developmental activities outside the classroom.

They network with leaders in their future professions, build strong relationships among themselves and serve to help the next generation of scholars through an active and connected alumni association after graduation.

[Read more about our Rudd Scholars](#)



# FIRST-GEN AT WSU

## PROFILES



## Wichita State helps first-gen students find their place in college

Wichita State University is home to nearly 5,000 first-generation students, individuals whose caregivers weren't able to complete a college degree and who lack the firsthand experience to tackle college life. To help with their transition, Wichita State offers a number of resources to first-gen students to support them during their time in college, including F1RST GEN SHOCKERS.

[Read more about our first-gen community](#)



## Wichita State theater students learn the tricks of stage combat

The art of looking convincing in a sword fight or brawl is crucial to stage and screen. Punches don't hit flesh and knives lay flat against the victim.

The audience must believe it is real and dangerous.

"When I tell them I can kill the six inches around them, they definitely give me some interesting looks," said Emily Redfield, a Wichita State University theater performance major.

In July, WSU seniors Redfield and Cat Kee attended the National Stage Combat Workshop in Ruston, Louisiana. The three-week course offered instruction, testing and certification with weapons such as swords, shields, firearms, rapiers, daggers and quarterstaves.

[Learn more about the students' experience](#)

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## Rhatigan Student Center unveils new Wichita State mural

Shocker Nation: Visit the new “Greetings from Wichita State” mural in the Rhatigan Student Center on Wichita State’s campus and show off your Shocker Pride.

The mural was designed by Annelise Muret, art director for the Office of Strategic Communications, and is located on the east side of the RSC, near the Shocker Card Center and Campus Credit Union.

[Find the mural on the map](#)

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## **WSU Foundation and Alumni Engagement hosts inaugural Heritage Gala**

On Nov. 7, the Wichita State University Foundation and Alumni Engagement held its inaugural Heritage Gala, a combination of the Alumni Awards and President's Club events from previous years. This celebration recognized the individuals who inspire past, present and future generations of Shockers.

"Our goal was to create an inclusive event celebratory of all Shockers; students, alumni and friends," said Stacie Williamson, vice president of Alumni Engagement. "We feel fortunate to have been in the room with so many passionate Shockers and hope to build upon this event for years to come."

[\*\*Read more about the Heritage Gala\*\*](#)

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## Men's basketball comes out swinging to start 2023-24 season, volleyball finish second in AAC

Shocker Nation, our athletics teams are in full swing heading into December. See what the Shockers have in store in the coming month:

- **Men's basketball** is 7-1 after Wednesday's win over Richmond entering a Sunday, Dec. 3 game at Missouri. It is the best start to a season for the Shockers since 2019-20. The annual game at Intrust Bank Arena is on Dec. 9 against South Dakota State.
- **Track and field** kicks off its season with the Shocker Multi Nov. 30-Dec. 1 in the Heskett Center.
- **Volleyball** finished second in the AAC standings after its 3-0 victory against UAB, its highest finish since winning the conference title in 2017. The Shockers play Arkansas State Thursday, Nov. 30, in the first round of the NIVC. A win puts the Shockers into a 1:30 p.m. game Friday, Dec. 1, against either Tulsa or Kansas City.
- **Women's basketball** starts December with home games against Saint Louis Dec. 1, Houston Christian Dec. 4 and Kansas Dec. 10.

[View the full Shocker Athletics calendar](#)

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## About Wichita State University

Wichita State University is Kansas' only urban public research university, enrolling more than 23,000 students between its main campus and WSU Tech, including students from every state in the United States and more than 100 countries. Wichita State and WSU Tech are recognized for being student centered and innovation driven.

Located in the largest city in the state with one of the highest concentrations in the United States of jobs involving science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), Wichita State University provides uniquely distinctive and innovative pathways of applied learning, applied research and career opportunities for all of our students.

The Innovation Campus, which is a physical extension of the Wichita State University main campus, is one of the nation's largest and fastest-growing research/innovation parks, encompassing more than 120 acres, and is home to a number of global companies and organizations.

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