



Board of Trustees
Student Success & Learning Committee

February 19, 2026

12:00pm -1:00pm

Horace Mann Center, Presidents Boardroom

Committee Members: Chair Chris Montemayor, Vice Chair Barney Garcia, Secretary Michael O'Rourke, Melissa Alvarado, Theresa Jasmin, William Reichelt and Dr. Gloria Williams

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place at the following link: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

-
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Call To Order | Trustee Chris Montemayor, Committee Chair |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
a. Minutes of December 18, 2025: Academic Affairs
b. Minutes of December 18, 2025: JEDI | Trustee Chris Montemayor, Committee Chair |
| 3. Items for Information
a. SU SUCCESS Grant-Spring 2026 Plan
i. First Year Success Measures

b. Athletics Report
i. Student Success among Athletes
ii. Athletic Team Success
iii. Recreation Update | William Salka, Provost

Richard Lenfest, Executive Director of Athletics and Recreation |
| 4. Items for Action
a. Approval of Honorary Degree Recipients | Trustee Chris Montemayor, Committee Chair |
| 6. Adjournment | Trustee Chris Montemayor, Committee Chair |

Attachments:

- a. Draft Minutes of December 18, 2025, Academic Affairs Committee
- b. Draft Minutes of December 18, 2025, JEDI Committee
- c. Power Point SU SUCCESS Grant
- d. Power Point: Athletics Success Feb 2026
- e. Motion. Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters recipient, General Clara Adams-Ender (Ret)
- f. Supporting documents: General Clara Adams-Ender (Ret)
- g. Motion. Honorary Doctor of Public Service recipient, Mr. Kevin Queenin

- h. Supporting documents: Mr. Kevin Queenin
- i. Motion. Honorary Doctor of Laws recipient, Mr. Maurice Watson, J.D.
- j. Supporting documents: Mr. Maurice Watson, Esquire
- k. Motion. Honorary Doctor of Human Letters recipient, Mr. Lawrence Gwozdz
- l. Supporting documents: Mr. Lawrence Gwozdz



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic Affairs Committee

December 18, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Minutes

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place at the following link:

<https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Chris Montemayor, Secretary Barney Garcia, Trustee Michael O'Rourke, Trustee William Reichelt, and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Vice Chair Jason Queenin, and Trustee George Gilmer.

Also present and participating are Westfield State University President, Dr. Linda Thompson; Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. William Salka; Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Executive Director, Jeff Xavier; and Assistant Director of Student Success Analytics, Melanie Gaudet.

Committee Chair Montemayor called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Garcia and seconded by Trustee O'Rourke to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2025 meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed.

Persistence and Retention 2015-2024

- Data is linked to the Huron project and should be available for the board at the February meeting.
- This data will help answer questions about retention, persistence, and other measures of student success.
- This presentation addresses enrollment and retention questions, examines statewide trends of state universities and focuses on first-time student cohorts at Westfield State University

First-Time Cohorts

- Focuses on first-time cohorts because they all start in the same place.
- It avoids problems of varying starting points with transfer and continuing students.
- It also looks at special support programs.

- It aims to identify available tools and ways to answer other questions.
- Analysis of Westfield State's first-time cohort shows a similar pattern to the admitted applicants, with higher percentages in both high and low GPA bands and less in the middle.
- Bringing in more students in the lower GPA band will affect outcomes, requiring extra support for those less prepared.

State University Enrollment Trends

- Data from the CARES system shows overall enrollment of undergraduates.
- Six state universities are included, excluding UMass schools.
- Westfield State University is represented by the thick blue line. (see Undergraduate, Enrollment, Persistence, and Retention PowerPoint).
- There has been a drop in overall undergraduate enrollment across state universities.

Enrollment Stabilization

- Enrollment appears to have stabilized around 2022.
- "If we had the 2025 number on there, it would continue. It would look about the same as kind of a flat, maybe slightly increasing line."
- Stability may make revenue predictions more straightforward.
- Stability is anticipated, but the population of traditional college students is expected to decline.

New Programs and Initiatives

- There are plans to bring new programs online to attract new students.
- A new building for life sciences is planned, including nursing, physician assistants, and clinical work.
- There were also three new master's programs that were approved by the board.
- The goal is to attract new students based on workforce needs.

Program Review and Adaptation

- Programs that are not attracting students will not be invested in.
- The board will review programs and make necessary changes for student success.
- There is a need to react to offering too many programs.
- The trend gives a good idea of overall volatility historically.

Stabilization & Enrollment

- Trustee Alvarado's question about stabilization is welcome, especially given reports of an impending "cliff."
- Enrollment decreases in recent years are attributed to COVID-19 impacts on undergraduate admissions across universities.
- Incoming students in the next few years will have experienced disruptions in their K-12 education due to COVID-19.

High School GPA Analysis

- Analysis of high school GPAs of admitted applicants over a 10-year period reveals a "bifurcation," with fewer students in the middle GPA range and more at the top, particularly at UMass Amherst.
- It's difficult to determine if UMass Amherst's admission policies are drawing students away from state universities.

- Westfield State University is following the trend of more admitted students in the high GPA band, but there's also an increase in the lowest GPA band, unlike other state universities.
- The speaker notes, "this shrinking middle is evident kind of across the state university system and here at Westfield State University for high school GPA."

GPA Thresholds & Inclusivity

- There's a potential opportunity to provide support for students with lower academic preparedness, aligning with the goal of becoming a more inclusive university.
- UMass Amherst's undergraduate admission numbers have remained consistent at about 20,000 per year.
- Data presented is based on admitted applicants, not necessarily enrolled students.
- Admitting students with lower GPAs is good, but higher dropout rates disproportionately affect retention numbers.

Retention Rates

- Retention rate is defined as the percentage of a first-time cohort that re-enrolls the following year.
- Overall, retention rates at state universities in Massachusetts show a slight downward trend from 2015 to 2023-2024.
- Westfield State's retention rate has been relatively stable and is in the middle compared to other state universities.

Special Support Programs

- The data breaks down the first-time cohort based on special support programs (FACES, Lead, Urban Ed, TRIO, learning disabilities, and veteran/military students).
- Outcomes for students in support programs are generally comparable to the overall first-time population, suggesting the programs are beneficial.
- There is ambiguity in tagging students in programs like FACES and TRIO, requiring further investigation.
 - FACES has evolved over time.
 - TRIO students may not all receive the same level of support.
- Veteran and military students often have more experience, leading to more favorable outcomes, but the numbers are small.

Retention Rates

- There is about a 15% drop from fall to spring persistence.
- There is another 15% drop from the first spring to the second fall.

Improving Data Analysis

- There is a need to become more precise in identifying dosage, student engagement, and program nuances.
- Defining student populations, like veterans and military services, allows for individualized analysis and reflects the support provided.
- Data shows how critical it is for first-semester students to be engaged and able to access support systems.
- Presentation given to the cabinet evolved after the cabinet meeting.
- GPA breakdown of overall students, first-time students, and students in support programs.

- Students from fall 22 through fall 24 were grouped together due to low numbers.
- Lower retention among those with 3.5 GPAs and above versus some in the middle.
 - It was asked where students that aren't retained going, and if they are going to comparable institutions?
 - National student clearinghouse data can potentially provide answers.
- Outcome data can be viewed by looking at the overall enrolled population versus the first-time population.
 - Persistence means re-enrolled in the subsequent term/fall or graduated within that time period.
 - Higher persistence rates point to students who have been around for a while tending to stick around.
 - Most attrition occurs within the first year.
- Overlap/duplication of students in programs.
 - Numbers are not mutually exclusive.
 - Among 719 first-time students in one or more programs: 622 in one program, 867 in two programs, and 10 in three programs.

Item for Action

- Dr. Stephen Adams, Professor of English.
 - Made contributions to the Department of English, the Westfield State community, and the field of 18th-century literature.
 - Co-founder of the International English Honor Society and led the University Honors program.
 - Served as Dean of faculty.
- Professor Jamie Wainwright, Professor of Art.
 - Developed new courses and adopted innovative tools for art making.
 - Won the Massachusetts Colleges Online Course of Distinction award.
 - Artwork is part of over 25 prominent collections across the United States.

MOTION made by Trustee O'Rourke and seconded by Trustee Garcia, The Academic Affairs Committee recommends to the full Board of Trustees: To approve the granting of Faculty Emeritus/a status, effective December 18, 2025, to the following individuals: Dr. Stephen Adams, English and Ms. Jamie Wainwright, Art. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed unanimously.

There being no further discussion,

MOTION made by Trustee Reichelt and seconded by Trustee Queenin to adjourn the meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed by majority.

Meeting adjourned at 9:42 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Minutes of October 21, 2025
- b. Power Point Persistence and Retention
- c. Motion: Faculty Emeritus/a – Dr. Stephen Adams and Ms. Jamie Wainwright

d. Faculty Emeritus/a supporting letter

Secretary's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee meeting held on December 18, 2025.

Barney Garcia, Secretary

Date



Board of Trustees
Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee
December 18, 2025, 9:45 a.m.
Minutes

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place at the following link:
<https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Tessa Lucey, Vice Chair Michael O'Rourke, Secretary Melissa Alvarado, Trustee Gloria Williams and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member.

Members Participating Remotely: Trustee George Gilmer

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President, Dr. Linda Thompson; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. William Salka; and Director of Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning, Jenyka Spitz-Gassnola.

Committee Chair Tessa Lucey called the meeting to order at 9:48 AM and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Alvarado seconded by Trustee O'Rourke to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2025, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed.

Provost Dr. Bill Salka presented the following to the Committee:

Reorganization of the Office of Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning

- The reorganization involves re-envisioning the office.
- The office is moving from Parenzo Hall to a space in the library previously occupied by the Course Achievement Center (formerly the Care Center).
 - The new space offers private offices for the co-directors and an open area for student gatherings, avoiding designation as a space for specific affinity groups.

Division of Operations

- The operations of belonging are being divided into two parts, each led by a co-director reporting to the provost.
- Azanda Seymour will lead the first part, effective Monday.
 - This role aligns with her work in CSSE overseeing opportunity programs.
 - This director position is campus and student-facing, providing training for faculty and staff.

- Jenyka Spitz-Gassnola, current director, will focus on campus culture and external community engagement.
 - Her role involves embedding DEI efforts across the university.
 - She will assess efforts to ensure Westfield State University is supportive for all students.

Director Responsibilities

- Director 1 (Student Support/Success): Supports students directly and provides training.
- Director 2 (Campus Culture): Assesses DEI efforts and ensures a welcoming environment for all students.

DEI Training and Awareness

- DEI training will be provided for faculty and cabinet members.
- There is an education component, as well as awareness of changing times.
- There is a need to understand that students, staff, and faculty are experiencing anxiety and fear. Conversations are needed to determine how to help students.
- To ensure all members of the community understand current standards and expectations and to address reports of inappropriate comments in the classroom, additional targeted training will be provided. The aim is not to address intentional discrimination, but to meet current societal norms and expectations.

Campus Culture and Assessment

- A campus culture survey for students is being developed to assess DEI efforts.
- Assessment is crucial to understanding the effectiveness of DEI initiatives.
- The two positions are focused on assessment.
- Offices will start doing meaningful assessment, going beyond basic metrics like attendance to include surveys about the event and its impact.

Strategic Vision and KPIs

- The strategic vision position involves assessing the University as a whole.
- Director Spitz-Gassnola will collect and track KPIs across the university.
- Results will be provided to the board. Trustees will have the opportunity to suggest which data will be tracked.
- This is a work in progress. Development of a plan will occur over the winter break, with a plan being finalized and presented to the Board in the spring.

Training and Measurement

- A board member is interested in the training of faculty, staff, and cabinet.
- Timeline is important.
- A campus culture survey is underway that will measure the temperature of the campus community.
 - It's a two-part survey to changes over time.
 - Part one of the two-part survey was completed a few months ago. Part two will be repeated in March.

Data and External Support

- The division of the office into two sections will help speed things up.
- Questions to be answered as the plan is developed:
 - How is the data going to be used?

- Are there plans to use any external supports to help with this work?
- What outcomes are we looking for?
- What does “campus culture improve” mean? What will this look like?

Data-Driven Decision Making

- Leadership articulated a commitment to data-driven decision-making.
- Data, especially from the campus culture survey, will help identify gaps in university efforts.
- Training, potentially through the new faculty center, will address identified gaps.

Restructuring and Focus

- Restructuring the office will facilitate gap identification and broader conversations.
- There is a need for a plan, focusing on data and KPIs, but also qualitative aspects.
- Qualitative data should not be lost when working on programs.
- An update on the plan's progress is expected in early Q2.

Commitment to Inclusion and Survey

- The University remains committed to this work, regardless of external pressures.
- The campus culture survey results are expected by mid-March.
- Initial findings from the first survey round will be available within a month.
- Analysis is underway in collaboration with Melanie Gaudette and IR to ensure proper structuring.

Discussion on Survey and Next Steps

- A deadline was set to provide feedback, a roadmap, and KPIs and benchmarks.
- The method of sharing the survey with external communities has not been discussed, but high-level information on the general consensus from the fall and spring surveys will likely be shared. External communities and method of sharing is yet to be determined.
- Acknowledgment of the anxiety-provoking climate for the university community.

There being no further business,

MOTION made by Trustee Williams, and seconded by Trustee Alvarado, to adjourn.
ROLL CALL VOTE passed motion unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:11 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- Minutes of June 11, 2025
- JEDI Presentation

Secretary's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee meeting held on December 18, 2025.

Melissa Alvarado, Secretary

Date

SU SUCCESS Grant Update

Spring 2026

Board of Trustees
Student Success & Learning Committee
February 19, 2026

SU SUCCESS 2.0 (FY26)

- New Restrictions on How the Grant can be Spent
 - 80% on personnel/20% on other uses
 - Spending on personnel cannot supplant existing positions
 - All money must be dedicated to supporting “At-Risk” students, defined as Pell or Mass Grant eligible
 - New data reporting and assessment requirements

Assistant Vice President for Educational Excellence & Retention

- Currently Vacant, Conducting a Search
- Responsibilities:
 - Coordinate Efforts of all Offices involved with Student Persistence
 - Lead Data-Driven Assessment of all Programs
 - Administer the SUCCESS Grant
 - Supervise Student Support Offices in Academic Affairs, including Professional Development for Staff
 - Develop Predictive Models of Student Success

Academic Student Support Offices: Opportunity Programs

- Offices that support unique populations of students
 - Banacos: Two Distinct Programs
 - Accessibility Services
 - Learning Disabilities Program
 - LEAD Scholars (formerly Urban Education)
 - First-Generation, Historically Underserved, and/or Pell Eligible Students
 - Summer Preparation Program
 - TRIO
 - First-Generation, Low Income, and/or Students with Disabilities
 - Federally Funded Program
- All Offices Currently Report Directly to the Provost

Academic Student Support Offices: All Students

- Academic Advising and Transfer Transition
 - Dual Advising
 - General Advising
 - Transfer Advising
- Course Achievement Center
 - Success Coaches providing Wrap-Around Support to SUCCESS Students
 - Provides One-On-One Assistance to any student seeking support
 - Content Area Tutoring
 - Work with students on Academic Warning
- Both Offices Currently Report to the Provost

Indicators of First-Year Student Success (Trending Up)

Retention: First-Time, Full-Time Students Fall to Spring Semesters

	Persistence to First Spring
Fall 2025 – Spring 2026	89.5% (N=831)
Fall 2024 – Spring 2025	88.5% (N=828)
Fall 2023 – Spring 2024	88.2% (N=705)
Fall 2022 – Spring 2023	86.0% (N=798)

Focus on At-Risk Students

Key Indicators of At-Risk Students: Academic Warning and Class Performance

First-Time, Full-Time Students on Academic Warning after Fall Semesters

	Semester
After Fall 2025	137 (16.5%)
After Fall 2024	116 (14%)

Class Performance, Fall First-Year

Assigned Grades of D, Withdraw, or F in First Year Journey

Semester	Number (Percent) DWF
Fall 2025	189 (23%)
Fall 2024	181 (22%)

DWF in FYJ by High School GPA, Fall 2025

High School GPA	Number (Percent) DWF
3.5 – 4.0	20 (6.7%)
3.0 – 3.49	42 (20.9%)
2.5 – 2.99	57 (31.5%)
Below 2.5	70 (51.1%)
Total	189 (23.0%)

ATHLETIC SUCCESS

February 2026





ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE

ATHLETIC TEAM
PERFORMANCE

MENTAL HEALTH /
SPORTS
PSYCHOLOGY

ATHLETIC
TRAINING

STRENGTH AND
CONDITIONING

NUTRITION

PILLARS OF SUCCESS



- **Average Cumulative GPA of 490 varsity athletes 3.11 (*KPI: 3.10*)**
- 61.6% (302/490) student-athletes with 3.0 or higher cum
- 60.2% semester GPA 3.0 or higher (295/490)
- MASCAC Honor Roll: 189 student-athletes
- Little East Honor Roll: 23 student-athletes





ATHLETIC TEAM PERFORMANCE

- MASCAC Champions: Women's Cross Country, Field Hockey, Women's Soccer
- NCAA Tournament: Field Hockey, Women's Soccer
- Smith Cup: 2nd place in November





Thirty-three (33) Student Athletes
Named to Fall All-Conference
teams across seven sports

Major Awards

- Nick Parakilas – Men's Soccer
Offensive Player of the Year
- Emma Gniadek – Field Hockey
Defensive Player of the Year
- Caroline Andrade – Field
Hockey Rookie of the Year
- Julia Robak – Women's Soccer
Defensive Player of the Year
- Liv DeMember – Women's
Soccer Rookie of the Year
- Marlee Berg-Haryasz –
Women's XC Coach of the Year
- Carden Brown – Field Hockey
Coach of the Year

ATHLETIC TRAINING

- Ensures every student-athlete receives health, mental, and concussion screening.
- Providing rehabilitation to 50 student-athletes daily
- Providing AED/CPR 1st aid certification for coaches/staff
- Providing clinical supervision for Athletic Training Students in CAETE accredited program
- Contracts a team physician/sports medicine specialist that provides oversight



NUTRITION

- Fueling Station services over 100 in-season student-athletes every Wednesday. Sponsored by Westfield Bank. (627 total visits in the fall)
- Collaboration with Campus Dining's Nutritionist
- Meal Replacement/Snack program with Dining
- Per Diem Debit Cards allow for healthier options



STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

- Men's basketball avg vertical jump improved 2" (29.5-31.7) from start of season to current (KPI: 10% increase)
- Football bench press avg increased 224 to 240 lbs over two months (KPI: 10% increase)
- Reduction in games missed due to injuries
- Reduction in Season-Ending Injuries



MENTAL HEALTH / SPORTS PSYCH

- NCAA Mental Health 1st Aid Training (Spring 2026)
- Strength training builds confidence physically and builds team camaraderie.
- Partnership with Springfield College Athletic Counseling Master's program. Providing individual and team sessions improving mental skills and teambuilding.



ATHLETICS COMMUNITY SUCCESS

- Engagement – Westfield State student-athletes exceeding national norms in community engagement.
- Twenty teams + cheerleaders participate in community service (100% of teams).
- Special Olympics; Miracle League of Western Mass., Youth Clinics; Morgan's Message (suicide awareness); Holiday Gift Drive, Breast Cancer Awareness; Food Drives (Hockey Fights Hunger); Girls on the Run, Relay for Life.
- Fall and Winter Pep Rallies - 1,000 students attending



ATHLETIC RECREATION SUCCESS

Ely Fitness Center

- Fall 2025 – 1358 visits per week (avg.)
- Spring 2026 – 1741 visits per week (avg.)
- Group Exercise
- Fall 2025 – 73 participants per week
- Spring 2026 – 174 participants per week
- Gym Rat Fitness Challenge – 43 current participants



ATHLETICS RECREATION SUCCESS

Intramural Sports

- Intramural Sports Active
- Flag Football
- Softball
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Pickleball



Club Sports

- Baseball
- Competitive Dance
- Men's Lacrosse
- Tennis
- Women's Rugby
- Cheerleading
- Equestrian
- Men's Ice Hockey
- Women's Ice Hockey (co-op with Springfield College)
- Men's Volleyball



IDENTITY – SPIRIT – PRIDE

LEADER IN CAMPUS SPIRIT

- Fall Pep Rally September 18
- Winter Pep Rally February 2







Board of Trustees

February 19, 2026

MOTION

The Student Success & Learning committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, D.H.L. to
General Clara Adams-Ender (Ret) effective February 19,2026.

Westfield State University Honorary Degree Nomination Form

Westfield State Nominee: Clara Adams-Ender, Brigadier General (Ret)

Contact Information for Nominee:

Nominator (Redacted for blind review):

Date: 12/5/2025

Contact Information for Nominator (redacted for blind review):

Area of Achievement (List all that apply):

Artistic Creation

Humanitarianism

Human Rights

Innovation

Research

Scholarship Social

Activism

Other (please specify):

Describe and explain the nature of the nominee's accomplishments:

Clara Mae Leach Adams-Ender was born on a tobacco farm in Willow Springs, North Carolina, on 11 July 1939. Her parents were sharecroppers. She was the fourth of Otha and Caretha Bell Sapp Leach's ten children. Leach entered North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University where she earned a baccalaureate degree in nursing in 1961. The seeds of Leach's character emerged in her youth—her ingrained sense of hard work, spirit of determination, facility in overcoming barriers, and resolute pursuit of goals.

During her sophomore year, Leach discovered the Army Student Nurse Program and enlisted to fund her collegiate education. So began her lengthy, notable service in the Army. Leach's initial assignment in 1961 after attending the Orientation Course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, was at Fort Dix, New Jersey's, Walson Army Hospital in the Recovery and Intensive Care Unit. Another tour of duty came to pass in 1963 at the

121st Evacuation Hospital in Korea. Next Leach spent six months in the Officer Advanced Course and then transferred in 1965 to the Medical Training Center at Fort Sam Houston as a medical-surgical nursing instructor. While there, **she successfully qualified for the grueling Expert Field Medical Badge, the first woman in the Army to achieve this distinction.** In 1967, the Army chose Leach to matriculate at the University of Minnesota. There she earned a master of science in nursing degree. Having finished graduate school, her next assignment directed her to the Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing in Washington, DC, as instructor and later assistant professor. Adams taught adult nursing and played a key role in recruiting minority students to redress inequities in the institution's racial mix. The next stop along her career path took place at Fort Meade, Maryland's, hospital as assistant chief nurse in 1974, followed a year later by attendance at the Army's Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. There she earned a second graduate degree, a Master of Military Art and Science. Adams' postings from 1976 to 1987 furnished her with even greater opportunities to contribute to the Army Nurse Corps mission while simultaneously expanding her repertoire of professional skills and knowledge. These sequential positions involved serving on the inspector general team at Health Services Command, Fort Sam Houston; as chief, department of nursing at the 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt; chief of nurse recruiting at Fort Sheridan, Illinois; chief, department of nursing at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC; and special assistant to the chief, Army Nurse Corps, in the Office of the Army Surgeon General. In 1982, Adams-Ender completed program requirements and graduated from the Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

In 1987, the Army nominated Adams-Ender as the eighteenth chief of the Army Nurse Corps. As one of her first deeds, she asked Colonel John Hudock to serve as her assistant chief; he was the first male Army Nurse Corps officer to hold that senior position. Hudock was especially adept in dealing with issues of personnel numbers and force structure, talents that would stand the newly minted partnership in good stead. A complex and crippling shortage of Army Nurse Corps officers took precedence among the many issues that Adams-Ender initially faced. To resolve this, she instituted an array of strategies to recruit and retain military nurses such as the Army Nurse Candidate Program, the Accession Bonus Program, and the introduction of incentive pay to address the critically low numbers of certified registered nurse anesthetists. She also conceived and implemented the Enlisted Commissioning Program and expanded Reserve Officers' Training Corps scholarships. In addition, Adams-Ender staunchly defended the notion of the baccalaureate degree as the minimum entry standard for Army nurses, began the practice of testifying every year before Congress, placed Army

Nurse Corps fellows in various Congressional offices, and supported the creation of innovative organizational configurations to enhance hospitals' efficiency and quality of care. During this eventful time, Adams-Ender added another challenging role when she assumed responsibilities for heading up the directorate of personnel for the Army Surgeon General. Finally, Adams-Ender led the Corps through two major combat operations--Just Cause and Desert Shield/Storm--successfully responding to the voracious human resource demands these campaigns generated.

While almost all former chiefs typically retired from the service after their four-year term in the most senior Army Nurse Corps leadership position, such was not the case for Adams-Ender. In 1991, this versatile officer assumed command of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and served as deputy commanding general of the Military District of Washington. This noteworthy assignment was yet another example of Adams-Ender's ability to navigate in circumstances involving unprecedented, multifaceted challenges. She retired after serving 34 years in the United States Army in 1993.

However, Clara Adams-Ender's life story did not conclude at this point. A few among many of her post-retirement activities included forming a management consultation business called Caring About People With Enthusiasm (CAPE Associates, Inc.) which she later served as executive director of its Legacy Fund, a non-profit foundation dedicated to assisting students of modest means to complete their education; serving on the board of directors at Andrews Federal Credit Union; mentoring military officers and others, particularly under the aegis of the ROCKS organization; and contributing as a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS). Most recently, the American Academy of Nursing recognized Adams-Ender as a Living Legend and the Army War College Foundation Board honored her as an Outstanding Alumna. Brigadier General Clara Mae Leach Adams-Ender (Ret) enthusiastically embraces life from her home in Lake Ridge, Virginia.

After completing the above, mail this form electronically to sdavignon@westfield.ma.edu. Please attach a curriculum vita, resume, or significant biographical information.



Board of Trustees

February 19, 2026

MOTION

The Student Success & Learning committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of the Honorary Doctor of Public Service to Mr. Kevin Queenin effective
February 19, 2026.

Westfield State University Honorary Degree Nomination Form

Westfield State Nominee: Mr. Kevin R. Queenin '70

Contact Information for Nominee: [REDACTED].

Nominator: President Linda Thompson

Date: 01/15/2025

Contact Information for Nominator: president@westfield.ma.edu

Area of Achievement (List all that apply):

Artistic Creation

Humanitarianism

Philanthropy

Innovation

Research

Scholarship Social Activism

Other (please specify):

Describe and explain the nature of the nominee's accomplishments:

Upon his appointment to the Westfield State University Board of Trustees in 2007, Kevin R. Queenin, a native of Woburn, reflected on his decision to attend Westfield State as an undergraduate, citing its strong academic reputation and its ideal distance from home—"not too close and not too far." In hindsight, he has described that choice as "one of the best decisions I have ever made."

In light of the profound and lasting impact Mr. Queenin has had on Westfield State University through his leadership, guidance, counsel, and wisdom as both a trustee and a foundation member—and in recognition of the influence, generosity, friendship, and support he has given back to the institution—it is a privilege to nominate him for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters. This honor acknowledges his humanitarian, cultural, and philanthropic contributions to the Westfield State University community.

Prior to his service on the Board of Trustees, Mr. Queenin demonstrated dedication to the University's financial strength and long-term vitality through 22 years of active involvement with the Westfield State Foundation, including two terms each as chair and vice chair. His commitment during this period helped strengthen the University's fiscal outlook and positioned it for continued growth.

Among the highlights of his tenure on the Board of Trustees are the advancement of innovative academic initiatives and educational partnerships, campus improvements, record levels of philanthropic giving, and the ratification of a comprehensive strategic plan that continues to guide the University's future.

He is currently serving as First Vice Chair for the Westfield State University Foundation Board of Directors.

As chief executive officer of Specialty Bolt and Screw, Inc., Mr. Queenin has also made contributions to numerous civic organizations and has fostered collaboration between Westfield State University and the City of Westfield. His civic and professional service includes roles as a trustee and advisory board member for Baystate Noble Hospital, as well as volunteer work with a variety of community organizations. These experiences have afforded him a perspective that has consistently benefited the University.

Throughout his career, Mr. Queenin has demonstrated a belief in the quality and importance of public higher education to the Commonwealth. Westfield State University is grateful for his advocacy, leadership, and enduring commitment to its mission.



Board of Trustees

February 19, 2026

MOTION

The Student Success & Learning committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of the Honorary Doctor of Human Letters to Mr. Lawrence Gwozdz effective
February 19, 2026.

Westfield State University Honorary Degree Nomination Form

Westfield State Nominee: Lawrence Gwozdz, Class of 1969

Contact Information for Nominee:

Nominator: Bill Hynes, Institutional Advancement Date: 2/11/2026

Contact Information for Nominator (redacted for blind review):

413-572-8647

Whynes@westfield.ma.edu

Area of Achievement (List all that apply):

Artistic Creation

Humanitarianism

Human Rights

Innovation

Research

Scholarship Social Activism

Other (please specify):

University Support

Describe and explain the nature of the nominee's accomplishments:

As a member of the Westfield State University Foundation Board of Directors, Larry has been a consummate advocate for the University. He has shown this by working with a classmate to fundraise in creation of the Class of 1969 endowed scholarship raising over \$30,000 to fund the scholarship. Larry has also been instrumental in the success of the newly created online auction to benefit the school.

Further, Larry has been a major donor to the institution for over 8 years which has benefited the History Department, the Historical Journal of Massachusetts, Model UN, and the library. Larry's first gifts were critical in creating an Institutional Repository and Digital Archives.

He assists the journal by providing funding for Graduate Assistants and has supported the History Department by supporting an annual scholarship to a History student, funding a historical speaker series on campus, national and regional conference attendance for students, field trips to historical sites, and MTEL test fees. Further, Larry has been supporting the Model UN program on campus

so they can travel to their annual competition.

Larry holds Westfield State with great pride as it was his launching ground to graduate school at the Ohio State University and a long career working at the Pentagon as an Analyst. (

Larry's commitment to Westfield State University through his giving and advocacy has deepened the experience that our History and other students have on campus. It is for these reasons, that I respectfully nominate Lawrence T. Gwozdz for an Honorary Degree.

After completing the above, mail this form electronically to sdavignon@westfield.ma.edu. Please attach a curriculum vita, resume, or significant biographical information.



Board of Trustees

February 19, 2026

MOTION

The Student Success & Learning committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of the Honorary Doctor of Laws to Mr. Maurice A. Watson effective
February 19, 2026.

Westfield State University Honorary Degree Nomination Form

Westfield State Nominee: Mr. Maurice A. Watson, J.D.

Contact Information for Nominee:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Nominator: President Linda Thompson

Date: 01/21/2025

Contact Information for Nominator: president@westfield.ma.edu

Area of Achievement (List all that apply):

Artistic Creation

Humanitarianism

Philanthropy

Innovation

Research

Scholarship Social Activism

Other (please specify):

Describe and explain the nature of the nominee's accomplishments:

We respectfully submit Maurice A. Watson for consideration for an honorary degree (Doctor of Humane Letters) in recognition of his distinguished leadership and enduring commitment to education, healthcare, and public service. Throughout his career, Mr. Watson has placed students at the center of his work, using his legal and governance expertise to strengthen colleges and universities and expand access to opportunity, particularly through public higher education.

A nationally respected attorney, Mr. Watson has helped educational institutions navigate complex financial and regulatory challenges while remaining mission-focused and responsive to student needs. His leadership has supported pathways to meaningful careers in fields such as healthcare, law, and public service, reinforcing education as a critical driver of social mobility. His work in the healthcare sector has further

advanced student opportunity by aligning workforce development, experiential learning, and community health needs.

Equally important is Mr. Watson's dedication to mentorship and leadership development. He is widely recognized for investing in students and emerging leaders, modeling integrity, service, and civic responsibility. In honoring Maurice A. Watson, Westfield State University would recognize a leader whose career exemplifies the University's values and the transformative power of education to change lives and strengthen communities.

Biography

Maurice Alvin Watson, co-founder and principal of Credo Philanthropy Advisors, LLP, has more than 30 years of experience in law, social and public policy and board governance as a lawyer, advisor and board member. He has been a partner and chairman of the law firm of Husch Blackwell, which is among the 100 largest law firms in America, representing public and private schools and school systems and colleges and universities, education advocacy groups, education associations at the state and national levels.

Recognized as one of the most influential leaders in the Kansas City community and in the nation, he is a frequent speaker before groups across the country and has been named among the 100 most influential leaders in Kansas City, among the 500 leading lawyers in America, and among the most influential Black lawyers in America.

Maurice was born in Kansas City and grew up in a modest, working-class neighborhood in the urban core. He attended the City's public schools until he won a scholarship, in high school, to attend Barstow School, a college preparatory school where he was its first Black graduate in its history.

As an undergraduate at Harvard College, he concentrated in Social Studies, a selective interdisciplinary honors program, and received a baccalaureate degree, cum laude. He subsequently received his law degree at Harvard Law School.

After law school, Maurice served as legislative aide to the Honorable John Danforth in the United States Senate in Washington, D.C, where he advised on education, welfare, health care and judiciary legislation. Maurice returned to his hometown and joined the Blackwell Sanders Matheny Weary and Lombardi law firm and continued as partner and was eventually elected firm chair of its successor firm, Husch Blackwell. When elected chairman, he was the only African American to lead an AmLaw 100 law firm in the country.

In 2018, Maurice stepped down as Husch Blackwell chair and founded, with Tracy McFerrin, Credo Philanthropy Advisors, to help individuals, families, private foundations, and other donors sharpen their philanthropic focus and realize their vision to change lives and communities through effective grantmaking.

Maurice has served in numerous leadership roles, including as board chair, of large, national nonprofit organizations and foundations in the fields of education and youth development, biomedical research, health care, higher education, arts and culture, public policy and

government.

Education and Youth Development

- Kansas City Public Schools, chief outside legal counsel to the board of directors
- Higher Achievement Program, board—Washington, DC
- Education, Inc., board—Kansas City
- The Learning Exchange, board—Kansas City
- The Barstow School, board and board chair—Kansas City
- National School Boards Association, Council of School Attorneys, board—Washington, DC
- National Association of Independent Schools, board—Washington, DC
- Kauffman School, board—Kansas City
- U.S. Senator John Danforth, legislative aide and counsel-Washington, DC

Health Care

- Children's Mercy Hospital, board and board chair—Kansas City
- Heart of America Community AIDS Partnership, board—Kansas City
- National Association of Children's Hospitals, board—Washington DC
- AIDS Service Foundation, board—Kansas City
- Kansas City CARE Clinic/KC Free Health Clinic, board—Kansas City
- Saint Luke's Health System, board—Kansas City
- Stowers Institute for Medical Research, board--Kansas City

Diverse and Inclusive Talent Development

- Leadership Council on Legal Diversity—Washington, DC

Higher Education

- Kansas City Art Institute, board—Kansas City
- University of Missouri at Kansas City, board—Kansas City
- Lincoln University, legal counsel—Jefferson City
- Metropolitan Community Colleges, legal counsel—Kansas City

Arts & Culture

- Kansas City Ballet, board—Kansas City
- Ford's Theatre, board—Washington, DC

