



**December 5, 2022**

**Editor's note:**

The next edition of The Pioneer Press will be the last until the new calendar year. To ensure we can share photos of the goodie bag drive-through event, the next edition will be emailed Tuesday, Dec. 13.

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**President's Perspective**

I had just finished writing my message for The Pioneer Press when I received very good news. The board of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges voted to fully reaffirm our accreditation!

Because of declining enrollment, Tusculum has had to manage very tight finances. The reaffirmation process took tremendously hard work from the cabinet, deans, academic departments and administrative offices. Dr. Tricia Hunsader, our provost and vice president of academic affairs, led the efforts in a stellar and dedicated way. Benita Bare, our vice president of finance and chief financial officer, provided outstanding guidance and detailed work to demonstrate our responsible financial management.

After a year of monitoring our finances, the SACSCOC board recognized our financial responsibility, fiscal discipline and significant improvements. I am extremely proud of everyone's diligence and focus in the midst of our financial pressures, being short-staffed and struggling with the transition of two systems. Nevertheless, we still have a lot of work to do to improve our finances, namely through enrollment growth.

Most will never see all of the behind-the-scenes work that is performed daily for the university or fully appreciate the level of commitment by our employees. It takes all of us working together – and we did it!

Go Pioneers!

Dr. Scott Hummel  
President

#### **Word of the Week**

“When all the nations surrounding us saw it, ... they realized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.” – Neh. 6:16

#### **Photo of the Week**



Clockwise from bottom left, students Brandon Hale, Grace Westhoven, Anna Hill, Austin Wallace, TJ Caldwell and Tristan Kirkham relax and have a great time at the Midnight Breakfast. You can view other photos from the event on Tusculum's [Facebook page](#). Photo by the Office of Communications of Marketing and Communications

### **The cafeteria schedule for the Christmas break**

The cafeteria will serve breakfast and lunch Friday Dec. 9. It will be closed for dinner that day and will reopen Monday, Jan. 9, for breakfast.

If students need meals during the time the university is closed, please contact Dean Zoch, general manager of Tusculum University Dining, at [Dean.Zoch@compass-usa.com](mailto:Dean.Zoch@compass-usa.com).

### **Library hours for the rest of the calendar year**

Here are the hours of the Thomas J. Garland Library for the remainder of the calendar year:

- Monday, Dec. 5-Wednesday, Dec. 7 – 8 a.m.-1 a.m.
- Thursday, Dec. 8-Friday, Dec. 9 – 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 10-Sunday, Dec. 11 – closed

- Monday, Dec. 12-Friday, Dec. 16 – 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 17-Sunday, Jan. 1 – closed

### **Register for spring and summer courses!**

Before students head home for the Christmas break, they should register for the spring semester and summer sessions. This will ensure they remain on track for their degree and do not find a class they want to take already filled. **Students need to register via [Self Service](#).**

Students need to remember:

- They must meet with their advisor before they can choose their courses.
- They must not have a business office hold on their student account because they will not be able to register for courses until they resolve it.

Students with questions can email the Registrar's Office at [registrartu@tusculum.edu](mailto:registrartu@tusculum.edu) or come to Office G12 on the ground floor of Virginia Hall.



Jill Oberfeiting, director of academic advising, helps Cole Peaslee register during the Midnight Breakfast. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

## **Airport shuttles are available**

Students who plan to fly end of the fall semester are eligible to receive shuttle service from the Greeneville campus. Tusculum provides shuttles to the Tri-Cities and Knoxville airports in Tennessee and the Asheville, North Carolina, airport.

Student-athletes need to sign up with their coaches, and all other students should sign up in the Office of Student Affairs. Shuttles will be available Tuesday, Dec 6- Wednesday, Dec 14, from 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

For the spring semester, shuttle signups will begin Monday, Jan. 3. Shuttles will be available from Tuesday, Jan. 10-Tuesday, Jan 17. Shuttles will run from 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. We encourage students to book flights that meet these periods, as shuttles may not be available outside these windows. If students arrive after the 7 p.m. shuttle, they should plan for overnight lodging and utilize the next morning's shuttle.

Students who are not athletes need to email [studentaffairs@tusculum.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@tusculum.edu) to schedule and confirm a shuttle time.

Students will be charged \$25 to use the shuttle service. The cost will be added to their student account. Students do not need to pay the shuttle driver.

## **AIRPORT SHUTTLES AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS**

*Knoxville, Tri-Cities, Asheville airports  
Dec. 6-14, Jan. 10-17, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.*

*▶ Athletes: Sign up with your coach  
Nonathletes: Sign up with Student Affairs*



### **Remaining Angel Tree gifts due by Wednesday, Dec. 7**

If you needed additional time to purchase your gifts for the Angel Tree program, please bring them to the first floor of Virginia Hall by 10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7.

The Greeneville/Greene County Community Ministries Food Bank, which organizes the Angel Tree project, picked up the first batch of gifts last week. The organization will return Wednesday, Dec. 7, at 10 a.m. to pick up the remaining gifts.

We greatly appreciate everyone's assistance with the Angel Tree program. This is a banner year for Tusculum and the Angel Tree program! All children were adopted! We issued more than 100 Angel Tree cards this year – the most ever!

The Greeneville/Greene County Community Food Bank organizes the Angel Tree project, which provides children in need with gifts for Christmas. Our Center for Civic Advancement and Bonner Leader Program are leading the initiative this year on campus.

Here are the guidelines:

- We ask that you purchase all or nearly everything on the list.
- We also request that you wrap the gifts individually and put them into a big bag.
- You should tape the Christmas card or a copy to the bag.

You can read more about our efforts in this [news release](#), which has appeared in the Johnson City Press and The Greeneville Sun.



Students Russell Priest, left, and Bode Patton hold some of the Angel Tree gifts. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **Community choir performs annual Christmas concert tonight!**

The Tusculum University Community Choir will hold its annual Christmas concert Monday, Dec. 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the Marilyn duBrisk Theatre of Annie Hogan Byrd Fine Arts Center.

The performance is free, but the choir welcomes donations to support its programs.

Christmas classics such as “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” and “White Christmas” as well as a host of other selections appropriate for the session are on the set list for tonight. You can read the entire roster of songs in this [news release](#).

If you are interested in joining the choir, the group accepts new members in January and August, when it begins preparations for the next performance. You can call Tusculum Arts Outreach at 423-798-1620.



The choir rehearses in the spring. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **Faculty and staff holiday contests and goodie bag giveaway have arrived!**

We remind faculty and staff members about important contests and events before the semester break.

### **Desk and door decorating and ugly sweater contests**

These activities will be held Wednesday, Dec. 7.

Employees should specify the category for which they want to enter: tacky, elegant, creative, bah humbug and TU spirit. Judges will visit departments and offices from 9-11 a.m. to view the decorations and ugly sweaters and determine winners. Please email Rose Peedin, executive assistant to the president, at [rpeedin@tusculum.edu](mailto:rpeedin@tusculum.edu) to participate.

Another option is for each department to choose one of its own as the wearer of the ugliest sweater and forward the name and a photo of the garment to [rpeedin@tusculum.edu](mailto:rpeedin@tusculum.edu) by noon Wednesday, Dec. 7.

### **Goodie bag drive-through**

This event will take place from 3-5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 12, in front of the Scott M. Niswonger Commons. We will move it to the Niswonger living room if the weather is too cold outside. Come for some treats and fellowship.



How will you decorate your door this year? This was one of the 2021 entrants.

### **Graduation is Saturday!**

Graduation will be held Saturday, Dec. 10, at 10 a.m. in Pioneer Arena.

There is no limit on the number of guests graduates can invite, and tickets are not required. The doors to the arena will open an hour before the ceremony.

If you prefer to watch the ceremony remotely, graduation will be streamed live and will be available by clicking [here](#). The link will also be posted to the Tusculum website.

We congratulate our graduates on this achievement!



**GRADUATION**  
**December 10, 2022**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**Pioneer Arena**

Graduate Check-In: Cafe from  
8:15-9:00 a.m.

**Congratulations  
Graduates!**

**TUSCULUM**  
UNIVERSITY  
ESTABLISHED 1794

### **Come to the Dec. 13 community band Christmas concert**

Remember, the Tusculum University Community Band will hold a free Christmas concert Tuesday, Dec. 13. in the Marilyn duBrisk Theatre.

Dr. David Gonzalez, Tusculum's director of bands, will conduct the ensemble, which will play Christmas classics and other songs applicable to the season. Tusculum students who are part of the university's band will perform as part of this group.

You can read more about the performance in this [news release](#).



The Tusculum University Community Band performs during a concert in February. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### Special feature

#### **Dr. Chuck Pearson named endowed professor of chemistry!**

We congratulate Dr. Chuck Pearson, chair of the Natural Sciences Department and professor of Natural Sciences, on his selection as the Dr. Ronald H. Meen Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at Tusculum!

Dr. Heather Henson-Ramsey, dean of the College of Science, Technology and Mathematics, announced the honor during the Faculty Assembly Friday, Dec. 2. Dr. Pearson's fellow faculty members greeted the news by giving him a standing ovation.

The Dr. Ronald H. Meen Distinguished Professor of Chemistry Endowed Fund provides financial support of an outstanding educator and researcher in chemistry at Tusculum. Endowed earnings can be used for various initiatives, including research, publication and attendance at conferences or support of the professor's work at the university. They can also be used for instrumentation, technology or other academic and scholarly needs.

Dr. Meen's wife, Verna June Meen, established the endowed fund as a memorial to him and to ensure the success and future of chemistry education at Tusculum.

"The fact that we have this endowment for a position that's centered primarily on capacity for teaching is a rare blessing," Dr. Pearson told his colleagues. "It's another way this university plays an integral role

in supporting students seeking a bachelor's degree. I'm incredibly grateful to accept this title and use it to perpetuate the importance of education of undergraduates that this institution represents."

A Tusculum faculty member since 2016, Dr. Pearson was promoted to full professor effective this academic year. He has served as chair of the Natural Sciences Department since January 2021, leading an academic department that has been heavily engaged in undergraduate research. These projects include examining potential new anti-cancer drugs, habitat of unique Appalachian species and natural compounds in plants. The department also leads initiatives to reduce textbook costs for students through the use of open educational resources.

Dr. Pearson has taught in higher education for 22 years.

When he is not teaching or administrating, people will find Dr. Pearson leading or otherwise supporting academic competitions for middle and high school students. He has served as a moderator in matches at quiz tournaments and championships in various parts of the country and at the Tennessee Science Bowl. In September, he directed the Tusculum Earlybird, which brought about 80 high school students from three states to the Meen Center.



Dr. Chuck Pearson, left, stands with Dr. Joel Van Amberg, faculty chair and chair of the History, Museum Studies and Religion Department; Dr. Heather Henson-Ramsey, dean of the College of Science, Technology and Mathematics; and Dr. Hummel. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **Amanda Delbridge named President's GEM Award recipient!**

Amanda Delbridge, administrative assistant for the College of Business and College of Education and assistant director of the Center for Civic Advancement, is the newest recipient of the President's GEM Award!

Dr. Hummel announced her selection during the President's Coffee held Friday, Dec. 2. She received extensive praise from her nominators. Here are some of the comments:

"Amanda is a very caring person, and she goes way beyond what is expected. When working on projects whether it be Nettie day, working with Bonner leaders, or United Way campaign she makes sure things are in place for a successful event. Many times, she is in her office or on campus past the normal workday. Amanda is very deserving of the GEM Award."

“Amanda is a GEM for Tusculum University! She works tirelessly within TU, but also with outreach projects in the community. Since the start of this semester, she has had her hands full with the new Px (Pioneer Exchange), the Freshman Day of Service, Nettie Day, The United Way and the TU Angel Tree project. She sets up all of the places that we go and the transportation to get us there for our community service days...what a monumental task! She also works closely with the Bonner Leader students, leading the way for generating strong, community minded individuals.”

“She goes above and beyond for the CCA/Bonner Program! From watching her organize Nettie day to the relationships she has built with the students! She has been given the name of Bonner Mom, and I could not be more proud of her. She not only puts her amazing business knowledge into her task, but she puts her whole heart into it.”

“Amanda holds three positions at this university. She is integral in each one. She is a walking embodiment of civic engagement and curating a caring Christian environment.”

The next GEM Award will be issued at the President’s Coffee Friday, Jan. 27.



Amanda Delbridge stands with Dr. Hummel. Photo from Rose Peedin

### **Contribution form makes donating to Tusculum easy for faculty and staff**

Faculty and staff play a vital role in Tusculum's success by teaching, mentoring and serving students. By completing a [faculty and staff contribution form](#), employees can build on this record through their financial support of the university.

Dr. David Smith, director of TRIO programs at Tusculum, shares why he gives back to the university.

"Tusculum University has given much to my family and me throughout my career in higher education. In my 24-year tenure as a Tusculum University employee, I have had the privilege to work with Tusculum students, faculty, staff, and administrators who have enriched my life. I am humbled to have enjoyed such a unique opportunity to grow as a professional and bear witness to students' successes. Therefore, I feel it is my duty and an honor to give back to the university that has served my family and our community so well."

We appreciate the nine offices, departments and groups that have reached 100 percent giving! They are:

- Executive Cabinet
- Human Resources Department
- Office of Admission
- Office of Financial Aid
- Office of Communications and Marketing
- President's Office
- Office of Institutional Advancement
- Office of Institutional Effectiveness
- Thomas J. Garland Library

We encourage other offices and departments to come together and contribute to the university! Remember, no amount is too small!

Employees can also find the contribution form on the faculty and staff portal of the Pioneer Portal. The Office of Institutional Advancement is available at 423-636-7303 to answer questions.



Dr. David Smith

**Christmas Vespers Service was a fantastic start to the Christmas season**

Faculty, staff and students launched the Christmas season at Tusculum with their reading and singing at the Christmas Vespers Service.

The event was held in Annie Hogan Byrd Fine Arts Center, followed by the tree lighting outside, snacks and conversation. We were delighted to have community members join us for service and were pleased with the positive comments they shared afterward on social media.

In addition to the photo below, please view this gallery from the Office of Communications and Marketing



Mike Joy, who recently retired as head coach of the women's soccer team, plays the guitar during the Christmas Vespers Service. Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **Lantern Festival produces a celebratory mood**

We held another beautiful and moving Lantern Festival Wednesday, Nov. 30.

This ceremony enables graduating students to pass a lantern to underclassmen they believe will carry on the Tusculum tradition and to give pins to faculty and staff members who have been particularly meaningful to them. We thank student Lexie Vesser, who will walk the stage Saturday, for her leadership on this event!

Check out the photos in [this gallery](#) from the Office of Communications and Marketing, student Ashley Howell and Lauren Johnson.



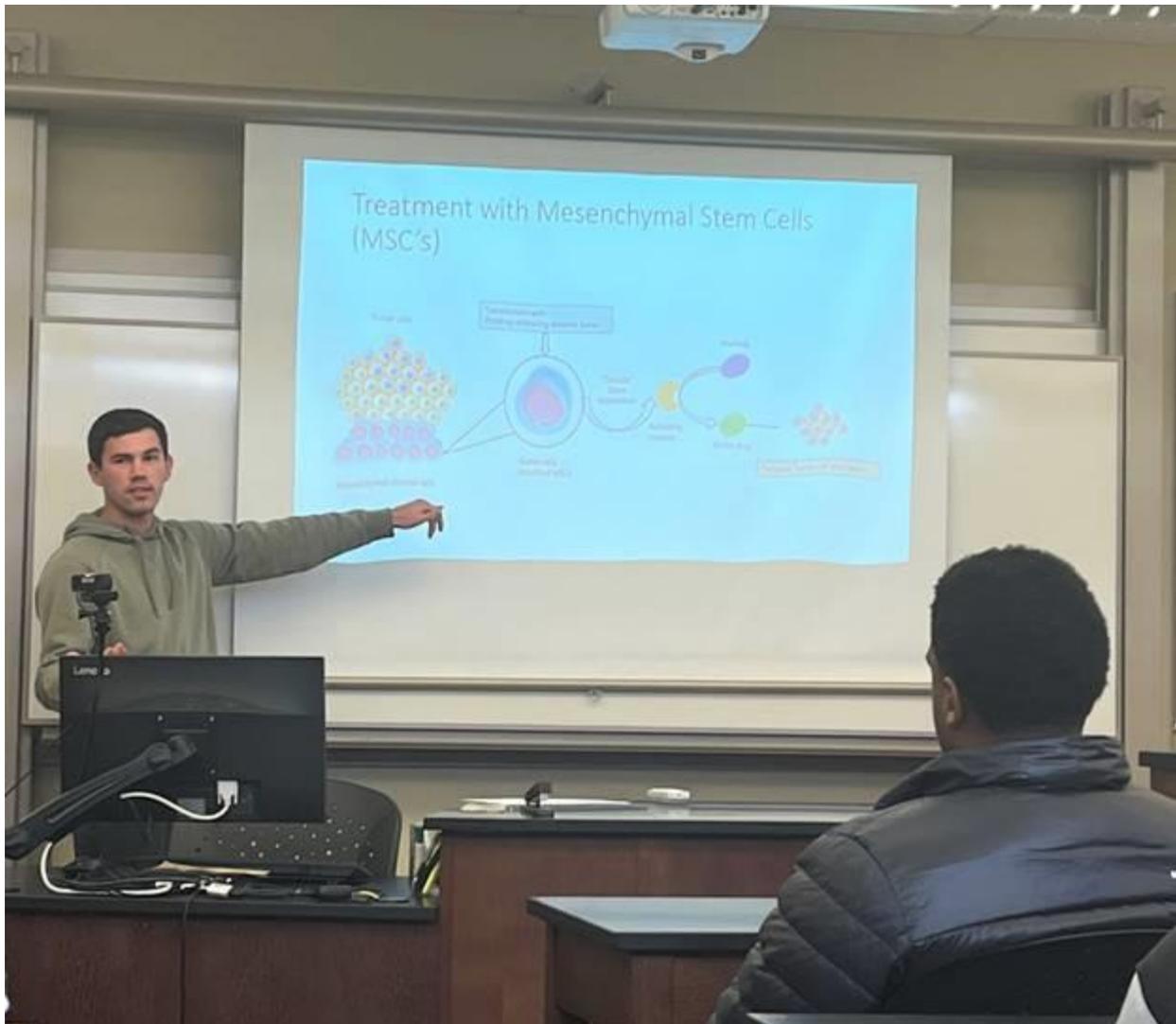
Chuck Sutton receives a pin from Lexie Vesser. Photo by student Ashley Howell

### **CSTM students sparkle in their senior seminar presentations!**

Biochemistry, biology, chemistry and environmental science students presented their senior seminar projects Friday, Dec. 2, in the Meen Center.

The students showcased their knowledge in front of faculty members and demonstrated they have become career-ready professionals. They have developed their skills through outstanding mentoring by their professors and will be excellent representatives of Tusculum as alumni.

In addition to the photo below, you can view [this gallery](#). All photos are from the Office of Communications and Marketing.



Braden Seaton presents as Dexler Benjamin watches during the senior seminar. Photo from the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **Great performances from our band members!**

Six members of the Tusculum Band shared the growing talent as musicians with their performances during “Solos and Chamber Music” Thursday, Dec. 1 in the Marilyn duBrisk Theatre.

The students performed by themselves accompanied by pianist Anne Andrus, as well as a duos and in a three-member group. We congratulate the students – Gracie Akins, Hughston Burnheimer, Derek Hatcher, Hannah Morgan, Cole Robertsen – on these results and wish them continued success in their musical pursuits.

Besides the photo below, you can view [this gallery](#) taken by the Office of Communications and Marketing.



Hannah Morgan, right, performs during “Chamber Works and Solos.” Photo by the Office of Communications and Marketing

### **COVID-19 procedures**

You can read all of our coronavirus protocols [here](#).

Should you develop coronavirus symptoms, be diagnosed or be identified as a contact, you must immediately inform the appropriate group at Tusculum.

- Students need to email the Office of Student Affairs at [studentaffairs@tusculum.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@tusculum.edu) or call the COVID-19 hotline at 423-636-0500. They should also alert their professors.

- Employees must contact the Human Resources Department at [humanresources@tusculum.edu](mailto:humanresources@tusculum.edu) or 423-636-7345 (extension 5345 on campus) as well as their supervisor.

### Reminders

- The Office of Financial Aid said some students still have to submit financial aid paperwork for this semester. If these students do not address this matter, they could receive a large bill in the future, so they should resolve it as soon as possible. Students with questions can contact the Office of Financial Aid at [financialaid@tusculum.edu](mailto:financialaid@tusculum.edu) or 423-636-7377.
- You can bring food items to the first floor of the Meen Center to assist the Service Learning in the Arts class with its drive to support students in need. Students who bring food, clothing and/or money to any event the class is hosting this semester will be entered into a raffle to win a \$20 Creamy Cup gift card! If you have questions, you can email student Lilli Gall at [lgall1@students.tusculum.edu](mailto:lgall1@students.tusculum.edu).
- The Pioneer Exchange is a combination of the food pantry and clothing closet. Students can obtain groceries, residence hall supplies, textbooks, school supplies, hygiene products and clothes at no cost. The Px is located in Room 403 of the Scott M. Niswonger Commons and is open Mondays-Fridays from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
- The Ballad Health Tusculum University Clinic located in Room 008 of the Meen Center is open for medical care. Flu vaccinations are now available. No appointment is necessary. Patients can self-pay or use their health insurance. Students can apply for payment aid, if necessary. **The clinic will close for the semester break after Wednesday, Dec. 7, and will reopen Wednesday, Jan. 18.**

### Events and activities

#### All Tusculum family members

Monday, Dec. 5, 6:30 p.m., Meen Center 300; **Breaking Bread ministry**

Monday, Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m., Marilyn duBrisk Theatre; **Tusculum University Community Choir**

Tuesday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m., Old Gym; **REFIT exercise class**

Thursday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m., Old Gym; **REFIT exercise class**

Saturday, Dec. 10, 10 a.m., Pioneer Arena; **graduation**

Saturday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m., Chalmers Conference Center; **contra dancing**

#### Faculty and staff

Wednesday, Dec. 7, 9 a.m., across campus; **desk and door decorating and ugly sweater contests**

#### Community

Monday, Dec. 5, 4 p.m., Marilyn duBrisk Theatre; **Great Literature Alive Well Playing in Greeneville, Tennessee**

## **Athletics**

Wednesday, Dec. 7, 5:30 p.m., Pioneer Arena; **women's basketball team vs. UVA Wise**

Wednesday, Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m., Pioneer Arena; **men's basketball team vs. UVA Wise**

Saturday, Dec. 10, 2 p.m., Mars Hill University; **women's basketball team vs. Mars Hill University**

Saturday, Dec. 10, 4 p.m., Mars Hill University; **men's basketball team vs. Mars Hill University**

Monday, Dec. 12, 5:30 p.m., Pioneer Arena; **women's basketball team vs. Brescia University**

**Please visit the schedule on the [athletics website](#) for potential changes with games.**

## **Faculty and staff birthdays**

- Tuesday, Dec. 6 – Michael Hawkins
- Tuesday, Dec. 6 – Dr. Chuck Pearson
- Friday, Dec. 9 – Dr. Wei Hu
- Friday, Dec. 9 – Kim Kidwell
- Saturday, Dec. 10 – Vicky Johnson-Bós

We thank you for reading The Pioneer Press! To suggest content for a future edition or submit feature photos, please email Jim Wozniak, director of communications and marketing, at [jwozniak@tusculum.edu](mailto:jwozniak@tusculum.edu).

**Go Pioneers!**