

ViewPoint

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PACIFIC
UNION
COLLEGE
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PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE RECORDS STEADY ENROLLMENT GROWTH FOR NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

by Laura Gang

Pacific Union College continued to see an enrollment increase for the 2024-25 academic year, welcoming 1,000 students to its Angwin campus, education centers, and online programs—a rise from 930 last year.

“This enrollment growth is a testament to our Christ-centered mission, our strong academic programs, and the dedication of our faculty, staff, and students,” PUC President Ralph Trecartin said. “Despite the challenges facing higher education, our steady growth reflects our commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of our students and the communities we serve.”

Gene Edelbach, vice president for enrollment, marketing, and communication, attributes the consistent growth over the past five years to several key efforts across campus.

PUC’s faculty, staff, and administration have focused on enhancing student retention by creating a welcoming, supportive environment that helps students feel at home.

Over the past four years, new programs and innovative course delivery methods have also drawn approximately 300 students who might not have enrolled otherwise.

One of the major growth areas this year has been the aviation program. In addition, PUC is highlighting the college’s strong allied health, pre-med, pre-dental, and engineering programs, as well as a new online Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program, to continue attracting new students.

A more focused and intentional social media presence and virtual marketing have enabled PUC to reach a broader audience.

PUC continues to see growth in both its MSN and MBA programs. Additionally, partnerships with organizations like Adventist Health have helped the college attract students from diverse backgrounds, enrich the campus community, and reach students in new locations.

This year’s enrollment gains came despite delays with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid program (FAFSA). Students at colleges and universities across the U.S. faced these delays, making fall enrollment more challenging.

To address this, Edelbach said PUC’s financial aid office and enrollment counselors worked closely with prospective students, relying on early, handwritten estimates based on general information to give families a clearer financial picture. The college also introduced extra flexibility in its clearance processes, allowing students to progress even with incomplete or delayed FAFSA data. This approach helped to minimize disruptions and keep students on track for enrollment.

“We have worked very hard to regain the trust of our marketplace, especially our Seventh-day Adventist population,” Edelbach said. “Our growth is a testament to this effort. As a campus, we will continue our diligence to fully become the college that God wants us to be.”

The steady enrollment gains are among the latest positive news for PUC. In September, U.S. News & World Report released its annual Best Colleges List, ranking PUC in a tie for #3 among California colleges and #13 among regional colleges in the West. Additionally, Payscale ranked PUC as the third-highest college in the country for associate degrees with the highest earning potential. 🎓



Q&A

JACOB DURAN: NEWTON HALL SPIRITUAL RA & DIRECTOR OF DORM WORSHIP

by Ally Romanes

What do you enjoy the most about being the Spiritual RA?

What I've enjoyed most about being the Spiritual RA is seeing students connect with each other and God through simple yet meaningful programming. The energy the dorms bring each week to dorm worship has been enjoyable to watch, as it encourages students to come and enjoy a short time together. I've also enjoyed the even smaller, more intimate hall worship for Newton. Seeing residents express their thoughts about certain topics of discussion is refreshing. It allows me to peer into the lives of those who share, and, to me, that's valuable!

What made you want to get involved with dorm worship?

I've always enjoyed helping with worship services, whether through leading song service, speaking, or even behind-the-scenes work. I enjoy creating a program with intentionality and purpose. So, when a couple of the Newton RAs last year caught wind of my willingness to help with music, I was immediately plugged in and have been ever since.

What does a typical dorm worship entail?

A typical dorm worship consists of music, an icebreaker, a message, and food afterward. However,



this year, we wanted things to be a bit different. This difference is not always having a speaker every week. Though we may have a speaker for one week, we may have a game or activity the next! We want a variety in programming instead of what we're typically used to.

Do you have a favorite part of dorm worship?

I enjoy the icebreaker portion of dorm worship. I consider myself a social butterfly, and I need human interaction. Icebreakers allow me to socialize through a silly activity, which I love!

What do you hope students take away from each dorm worship?

As a student, I know how busy each of us can be with academics, extracurriculars, and relationships. And I know we are all on different roads of life. But we hope students come to dorm worship with their different experiences and enjoy the fellowship. Ultimately, we hope students find a piece of Jesus through music, a message, activities, and, most importantly, each other. 🙌

Thank you!

As we celebrate the new year, we are so grateful for the unwavering support of our donors in 2024! Your contributions shape the future of Pacific Union College, enabling us to provide a transformative educational experience for our students. We are truly grateful for your continued commitment to our mission.

If you'd like to make a gift and count among our most loyal supporters, please consider giving today at puc.edu/givetoday. Every gift makes an impact!



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Thanks to the incredible support of our generous donors, we surpassed our goal and raised over \$25,000 on Giving Tuesday!

PUC'S EDUCATION AND THEOLOGY DEPARTMENTS SEE EXCITING STUDENT GROWTH FOR FALL QUARTER

by Sheann Brandon

Pacific Union College's Theology and Education departments are witnessing a marked increase in enrollment, reflecting a growing student interest in these fields and the college's commitment to academic excellence and hands-on experience.

For fall quarter, the Theology Department welcomed seven new students, bringing their enrollment to 18 compared to last year's 11. The Education Department saw their total program enrollment reach nearly 60.

Both Education Professor and Department Chair Dr. Jean Buller and Theology Professor and Department Chair Jim Wibberding attribute similar factors to the growth of both departments: a growing need in the fields, the high caliber of professors and academics at PUC, hands-on experience with major assignments, and the availability of scholarships and financial support.

According to Buller, PUC's Education Department stands out by placing students in fieldwork throughout every academic year versus placing students in teaching assignments right before graduation.

Scholarships also help pave the way for students to enroll in these department programs. Both education and theology students can be chosen, two per year, to receive \$20k from the Growing Young Leaders Scholarship, which the conference, the Pacific Union, and PUC sponsor.

On the theology side, Professor and Department Chair Jim Wibberding credits PUC with having a solid foundation of academically gifted and spiritually committed professors.

Interested students in either field are encouraged to explore PUC as an option for their education.

No matter the department size, Wibberding believes the Theology Department is a special place at PUC. "We invest our best in each student, whether there are two or 50," he said. "But the increase adds a fun energy to the department, and it is promising for a ministry field that needs more pastors and chaplains."

Buller, who majored in biology when she attended PUC, said she never intended to teach. "But I've been teaching for over 50 years, all grade levels, and it's the wisest choice I ever made," she said. "PUC helps instill a heart for teaching and paves the way to enter this marvelous profession." 🌱

PUC AWARDS LARGE GROUP OF MAXWELL SCHOLARS FOR 2024, SECOND YEAR IN A ROW WITH HIGH NUMBERS

by Sheann Brandon

Pacific Union College selected 17 incoming freshmen as this year's recipients of the prestigious Maxwell Scholarship, the second-largest group of students awarded since the scholarship's inception in 2009.

"We are proud to offer so many high-quality students the opportunity for a quality, Christ-focused education at PUC," said Gene Edelbach, vice president for enrollment, marketing, and communication. "We look forward to seeing where their next four years on our campus take them."

Students who receive the Maxwell Scholarship exemplify outstanding academic achievement, a marked commitment to Christian service, and robust leadership experience.

Additionally, applicants must meet GPA and ACT or SAT requirements. Maxwell Scholars receive \$36,150 annually, renewable for three years with a 3.5 GPA and a potential 4th year under qualifying conditions.

The 2024 Maxwell Scholars include students from California, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Mexico, and the Philippines:

Marilyn Do	Diego Mariano
David Hernandez Rodriguez	Salome Tembo
Anrienne Ponce	Madison Glock
Cecile Angela Abellana	Jacob Capiña
Byul Han	Makenna Tutthill
Keala Tabura	Gabriel Lopez II
Elena Blum	Ethan John Sim
Riley Ramirez	Isabela Verduzco
Danielle Mucho	

The Maxwell Scholar Program honors PUC's late president and first lady, Dr. Malcolm and Eileen Maxwell, and their dedication to Seventh-day Adventist education. Maxwell was the first alum to serve as president of PUC, with the longest tenure at 18 years.

Each year, PUC awards millions to support students with tuition costs, and 100% of students receive one or more forms of financial aid. 🌱



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Pioneer Games



The Wilson Family
 in Concert



Club Food Fest



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The most wonderful time
 of the year is...
Christmas on the Hill!

