

4/25/25 Academic Affairs Highlights

Dear Colleagues,

The sands of April are swiftly draining from the hourglass and the quad seems to have become a photo studio over the last week. This is our busiest season as we finish both the semester and the year, celebrating the achievements of our students as we nudge (some of) them to the finish line. We're also down to our last few Friday e-mails.

I want to start with a different kind of accomplishment this week. We typically feature teaching and scholarship activities in this email, but I'd like to give a tip of the provost's cap to Dr. [Melinda Adams](#), College of Arts and Letters Associate Dean and Professor of Political Science, who ran in the 129th Boston Marathon earlier this week and finished with an impressive time of 3:40:42.

As always, there are plenty more highlights to cover:

- Congratulations to Dr. [Amy Connolly](#), Associate Professor of CIS/BSAN, on her elevation to the office of president for the [Information Systems & Computing Academic Professionals \(ISCAP\)](#). She previously served as ISCAP's vice president, after a two-year stint as a member of its board of directors. ISCAP, which numbers its membership at more than 200, stages an annual conference dedicated to shining a light on the accomplishments of IS, CS and IT educators, as well as publishing the [Journal of IS Education \(JISE\)](#) and three other journals.
- Congratulations – and thanks! – to Dr. [Caroline Lubert](#), a Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, for mentoring a group of Engineering undergraduates who made five presentations at the Spring 2025 meeting of the [MD-DC-VA section](#) of the [Mathematical Association of America](#). Two of those presentations won their competitions.
- Team work! Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work Dr. [John Gyourko](#), recently published two articles co-authored with students and colleagues in peer-reviewed journals. “[Financial and Psychosocial Challenges Reported by Social Work Students: Findings from a Cross-sectional Online Survey](#),” published in [Transformative Social Work](#), explores the financial and psychosocial challenges encountered by social work students completing field practicums. In the [Journal of Teaching in Social Work](#), John and five colleagues from four other universities published “[Is Child Welfare Oppressive?](#),” which explores public perceptions of U.S. child welfare systems, systemic issues in contemporary child welfare and social work educators' approaches to teaching child welfare topics.

Wednesday was Administrative Professionals Day, and I really appreciated having an opportunity last week to host an appreciation event for our dedicated Administrative

Professionals for their commitment to Academic Affairs. At the breakfast, we recognized three winners of this year's [Provost Award for Administrative Excellence](#), which was established by the [Academic Affairs Administrative Staff Advisory Council](#). This award honors two full-time and one part-time administrative staff members for their exceptional performance. Congratulations to [Megan Loucks](#), Fiscal Technician in the College of Health and Behavioral Studies, and [Karen Gerard](#), Assistant to the Director of the School of Art, Design and Art History in the College of Visual and Performing Arts (FT). An award also went to [Kristina Oates](#), Operations Support Assistant in the School of Professional and Continuing Education (PT). Thanks to each of you for the critical part you play in our division's success. I hope folks can take a moment and express their appreciation to the administrative professionals with whom they work.

I look forward to hearing more faculty and staff accomplishments (both running and stationary), so please keep filling up my mailbox with them: provost@jmu.edu.

Sincerely,

Bob