



## Happy New Year, Lewis Alumni and Friends!

Warm greetings from the Lewis University Alumni Office! We hope 2026 is treating you kindly so far—and that your New Year's resolutions are still going strong (or at least hanging in there with minimal bribery and caffeine).

As we kick off this January edition of the *Jet-setter*, we're excited to share updates, stories, and upcoming opportunities to stay connected with your fellow alumni. Here's to a year filled with purpose, joy, and a few resolutions that actually stick.

Cheers to a fresh start and many blessings in the year ahead!



## UPCOMING EVENTS



**NEW TIME OF YEAR: Flyer Red Dinner – Wednesday, January 28, 2026:** Join the Lewis Flyers Athletics family as we celebrate our 2026 inductees into the Hall of Fame at Bolingbrook Golf Club. Sponsorship opportunities are available. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.](#)

**NEW EVENT: Mountainfilm on Tour – Lewis University – Saturday, January 31, 2026:** Mountainfilm on Tour is coming to the Damian Auditorium at Lewis' Romeoville Campus, bringing a selection of culturally rich, human interest, inspiring documentary films curated from



the Mountainfilm festival held every Memorial Day weekend in Telluride, Colorado. There is even a Chicago connection to one of the films! Snacks and soft drinks will be provided and there will be a cash bar. The number of tickets sold is limited. To purchase tickets, [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



**Black History Month Scholar Conversation – Wednesday, February 11, 2026:** All are welcome to join the Second Annual Lewis University Black History Month featured scholar conversation with Dr. Kellie Carter Jackson, author of "We Refuse: A Forceful History of Black Resistance." Dr. Carter's book will be available for purchase at the event and there will be a book signing. [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



**Rob Delaney Scholarship Celebration:** Wednesday, February 11, 2026 — Join us at Embers in Lockport (933 S. State St., Lockport) as we remember Rob Delaney and support the Lewis aviation scholarship established in his memory. | 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. | Free food and drink | Attendees will be encouraged to support the Rob Delaney Endowed Scholarship. [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



**Women's and Men's Basketball Alumni Day – Saturday, February 14, 2026:** Get ready to gather with your fellow Flyers hoops alumni for Alumni Day! All basketball alumni are invited to cheer on Women's Basketball as they take on McKendree at 1 p.m. and then the Men afterward as they too take on McKendree! To register, please [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



**NEW EVENT: Strolling Into Legacy: A Divine Nine Celebration – Saturday, February 28, 2026:** Join us for an evening dedicated to honoring the history, impact, and legacy of Black Greek life at Lewis University and beyond. This program will feature two engaging panel discussions, one highlighting Lewis Black Greek alumni, and another showcasing "Divine Nine" graduate chapters. Emceed by Dr. Katherine Helm-Lewis and Dr. DeSean Coleman, there will also be a historical slideshow, music, food, drinks, networking opportunities, and Greek organization displays. To register, please [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



**Men's Volleyball Spring Game and Reception: Saturday, March 7, 2026** — Calling all Men's Volleyball alumni! Come out and cheer on the Flyers as they take on Ball State University at 5 p.m. in Neil Carey Arena. There will be a reception in the Seiler Room during the game for all MVB alumni. [\*\*CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.\*\*](#)



### **3rd Annual CoHFAC Kickback: Saturday, March 7,**

**2026** — Join us at the 3rd Annual CoHFAC Kickback for a memorable celebration! Enjoy a variety of delicious foods, refreshments, and an inspiring program as we honor our outstanding students and the remarkable achievements of the College of Humanities, Fine Arts, and Communications (CoHFAC). For more information and to purchase tickets, please [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#).

### **SAVE THE DATE: Lewis University Day of Giving:**

**Thursday, March 26, 2026** — Join the entire Lewis community as we show our collective support for the colleges, programs, sports, clubs, scholarships at Lewis that mean the most to us. More details to come!

### **Spring Szczepaniak Lecture — Thursday, March 26, 2026:**

"Culture Wars, Then and Now," presented by distinguished historian, Andrew Harman, Professor of History at Illinois State University, and author of *Karl Marx in America*. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#).

### **SAVE THE DATE: Golden Flyers Reunion — Saturday,**

**May 30, 2026:** Save the Date and plan to join your fellow Flyers for a reunion designated for the those who graduated 50+ years ago. **Members of the Lewis Class of 1976** will be inducted into the Golden Flyers Society at this event. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for details coming later this month!

## **CAMPUS NEWS**



**Lewis Provost, Dr. Chris Sindt,  
Potawatomi Scholar, Billie Kerner, and  
President, Dr. David Livingston**

### **Potawatomi Scholar, Billie Kerner Visits Lewis**

On November 13, Lewis welcomed Potawatomi scholar, Billie Kerner for the College of Aviation, Science and Technology Colloquium Keynote Address and Panel Discussion, "Sustainability Through a Potawatomi Lens: A Women's Perspective." Billie Kerner's presentation included stories and insights that invited the audience to reimagine sustainability as a deeply relational practice connecting people, land, and community. Afterward, Kerner and a panel of interdisciplinary scholars dialogued on Indigenous knowledge, ecological ethics, and inclusive approaches to environmental stewardship.

To listen to the recent Lewis Science CoAST

podcast with Dr. Mallory Havens, Dr. Chris White, and Billie Kerner, please [CLICK HERE](#).



**Thanksgiving Dinner Hosted by the Christian Brothers for Lewis International Students**



**The Two Cyber Defense Teams that Competed at the U.S. Department of Energy's CyberForce Competition in November**

**Congratulations to both teams!**

### **Christian Brothers Host Thanksgiving Dinner for International Students on Campus**

Over Thanksgiving Break, the Christian Brothers at Lewis hosted a delicious Thanksgiving dinner for our international students who remained on campus. This gesture reflects the very best of our Lasallian values—hospitality, community, and a deep commitment to ensuring every student feels seen, welcomed, and supported, no matter how far from home they may be.

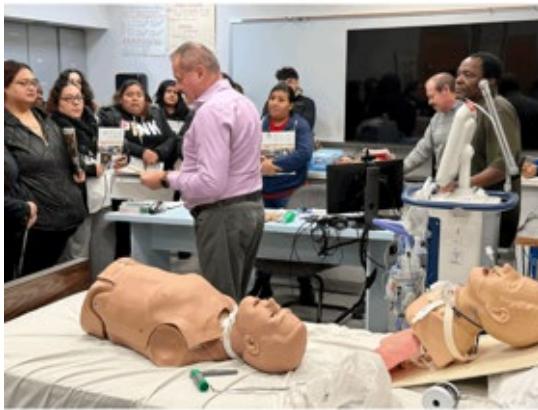
We're truly thankful for the Brothers' generosity and for the global community that enriches our campus every day.

### **Lewis Cyber Defense Club Has Impressive Finish at U.S. Dept. of Energy's CyberForce Competition (Nov. 14-15)**

The varsity team, "Order of the Purple Flamingo," placed **14 out of 93 teams** and consisted of students Nabeel Ahmed, Kyle Bye, Eamon Hall, Uzi Khan, Kacper Zalewski, and captain David Simeone. The club gave an impressive performance as they spent the entirety of Saturday collaborating as a team to defend simulated critical energy infrastructure against severe cyberattacks that challenged them to simultaneously solve anomalies and keep services running. Additionally, a second team, the "Cyber Flyers," participated in the competition and gained valuable experience in the competition environment. This team consisted of students Molly Paez, John Siek, Rayyan Syed, Andy Valdez, and captain Michael Szostak. The team is also supported by faculty sponsor, Dr. Jason Perry.

### **Little Village Medical Office Assistant Program Students Learn About St. Augustine College Pharmacy Technician Program**

Late last semester, students from Lewis' St. Augustine College Institute for Workforce Education program, who are part of the Little



Village Medical Office Assistant program, visited the St. Augustine College campus in Chicago for an exciting day of career exploration in the health sciences. Students toured the campus and engaged with faculty and staff in the Pharmacy Technician program, Respiratory Therapy program, and were given hands-on experience in the Medical Assistant Lab.

### December Commencement Highlights:

- Lasallian Student Speaker: **Raven Robinson** (Romeoville, IL), Social Work & Psychology
- Father Aquinas Colgan Award Recipient: **Jenna Christine Cheop** (Plainfield, IL), Social Work & Psychology
- Five Doctoral degrees were conferred by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences
- **Savanto Watson** was honored as the first Lewis University Prison Education Program degree recipient and had his photo displayed on the screen during commencement.

### December 2025 Commencement

More than 1,000 students participated in Lewis University commencement exercises on the Romeoville campus during the weekend of December 12-13. The weekend began Friday, December 12 with a noon Mass of Celebration in the Sancta Alberta Chapel. The Degree Ceremony for the College of Aviation, Science and Technology took place Friday afternoon and another Degree Ceremony took place Friday evening for graduates of the College of Education and Social Sciences and the College of Humanities, Fine Arts and Communications. Saturday morning, the Degree Ceremony for the College of Nursing and Health Sciences took place. Finally, graduates from the College of Business had their degrees conferred on Saturday afternoon.

Congratulations, graduates!



## Doctor of Physical Therapy Program Thanksgiving Outreach

To celebrate Thanksgiving, the Lewis University DPT Student Council gave thanks through acts of service, collecting and delivering food donations to support local partners like Pilsen Food Pantry and Loaves & Fishes.

## MISSION & MINISTRY

**Join us for Daily & Sunday Mass:** All are welcome to attend Mass, which is celebrated when school is in session on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at noon, as well as on Sundays at 7 p.m., in the Sancta Alberta Chapel on the Romeoville campus. All are welcome!

### Mission Trip Open to Alumni

Lewis University is making the Lewis Mission Trip to the Philippines available to alumni! The trip, which takes place from **June 6–21, 2026**, is a unique opportunity to work alongside Lewis students, living out your Lasallian values while building homes and sharing in the culture of those you serve. An information session with additional details will be held in March. The trip costs approximately \$3,000 per participant. If you're interested in learning more or participating, please email us at [alumni@lewisu.edu](mailto:alumni@lewisu.edu).

### WHAT BETTER WAY TO START THE NEW YEAR?

January is the perfect time to get organized and accomplish those goals. Every goal-setter knows that the first step is to take a bit of time to put your plans on paper.

With **FreeWill**, you can create your FREE, legally valid will in just 20 minutes—a simple, thoughtful way to care for the people who matter most and, if you choose, include a lasting gift that supports future generations of Flyers.

**FREEWILL** 

As we embark on a new year and look toward new beginnings, there's no better time to plan for what matters most. [CLICK HERE to learn more.](#)

## 2026 PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE DINNER

**F R E E W I L L**

On Thursday, December 11, Lewis President, Dr. David J. Livingston hosted the annual President's Circle Dinner, an annual holiday celebration of gratitude for members of Lewis' President's Circle. Held at Bolingbrook Golf Course, the evening kicked off with cocktails and piano music provided by alumnus, Jake Kobler '25. During dinner, Lewis Music Department faculty member, Spencer Schillerstrom played Christmas favorites on the saxophone.

During dinner, members of the President's Circle heard from a student and an alumnus. **Mahmoud Farhoud '26**, a student in the Air Traffic Control program, told PC members about leaving his family in Missouri to attend Lewis while his father was battling cancer. His story of loss, perseverance, and financial support by Lewis donors was a moving tribute to his Dad.

President's Circle members also heard from **Israel Ramos '19, '24 (Computer Science, Cybersecurity)**, a double Flyer alumnus who met his wife **Kayla Feigl '19** while at Lewis. Israel, who came to Lewis as a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, shared his experience of being much older than fellow students and having difficulty relating. By utilizing resources provided by Lewis' Department of Student Veterans Affairs, Israel found connection and was given college credit for his military service. Israel's path at Lewis was not an easy one. He was again deployed while still a member of the Marine Corps Reserve and faced a housing crisis during his time at Lewis. Because of the way the Lewis community supported him, Israel and his wife are now loyal Lewis donors and members of the President's Circle.



To learn more about the President's Circle and how you can become a member and enjoy invitations to exclusive Lewis University events, [PLEASE CLICK HERE](#).

## MEET A FLYER

Graduating in December 2026, CoHFAC Social Media content creator, **Mary Ann Shurilla** aims to join a community-focused organization, where she looks forward to



making a meaningful impact and supporting those in need.

"After Lewis, I hope to find a fulfilling job that I can thrive in using the skills I have learned in my classes from my amazing professors!"

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Every Lewis University alum is a member of the Lewis Alumni Association. If you would like more information about how you can get involved as a volunteer in the classroom, as a mentor, on social, etc., please contact Brandon McGhee '08 '10 at [mcgheebr@lewisu.edu](mailto:mcgheebr@lewisu.edu).

## ALUMNI NEWS

Thank you to **Melek Mante '22** and **Kacper Turek '24**, alumni of Lewis' Human Resource management program, who participated in the College of Education and Social Sciences Student Conference where they took part in a panel discussion and gave advice to current students.

We extend our gratitude to the following alumni who served as Alumni Speakers at our December Commencement ceremonies: **Lety Reyes '18**, **Kelly Kolton '17**, **Tyler Jankowski '15**, and **Stephen Loza '12, '15**. We appreciate their generosity of time and talent during a busy time of year!

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## FLYERS ATHLETICS

Check out **Flyer Red Dinner and Women's & Men's Basketball Alumni Day** info above in "Events!"

For all Athletics news, please check out the official [Lewis Athletics website](#).

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Don't miss the exciting fall lineup of our Arts & Ideas program—featuring highlights like a sneak peek of the award-winning *Jet Fuel* Review and the Senior Capstone Exhibition. To learn more and discover the full schedule of Arts & Ideas offerings, please [CLICK HERE](#).

If you are a supporter of Lewis University, we would love to hear from you! Your story and the reasons behind your generosity are inspiring, and we want to know what motivates your support. Please take a moment to share your "WHY" with us by [\*\*CLICKING HERE.\*\*](#)

*Together, we are building brighter futures and a better world!*

**Support Lewis University**

Questions about anything you read in this month's *Jet-setter*?  
Please email [alumni@lewisu.edu](mailto:alumni@lewisu.edu).



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