

LEWIS ALUMNI & FRIENDS

MONTHLY
JET-SETTER ✈️



Greetings, Flyers and Friends,

As summer begins, we are excited to bring you the June edition of *Jet-Setter*! This month, we celebrate the many ways our Lewis alumni community continues to soar — from professional accomplishments and personal milestones to meaningful connections that strengthen the Flyer network. Whether you are reconnecting with classmates, planning to attend an upcoming event, or simply catching up on the latest Lewis news, we are grateful to have you as part of the Lewis family.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our 2025-2026 Graduate Assistants, **Sarah May** (Marketing GA), **Alexa Varchetto '26** (Database Management & Stewardship GA), and **Alma Barcenas '26** (Student Call Center & Stewardship GA), for their tremendous contributions to the work of the Alumni Office team this year. Sarah (pictured below left-third from right) will complete her Occupational Therapy clinicals out of state next semester and graduate from Lewis in December. We congratulate Alexa (pictured below right-second from right) on earning her MBA, and Alma (pictured below right-third from right) on earning her Master's degree in Social Work.

Thank you for staying connected and we hope your summer is off to a wonderful start! Remember — the *Jet-setter* is "grounded" for the month of July but we'll be back in action in August!

Warmly,

The Lewis University Alumni Office Team

Photos above provided by the Lewis University Photography Club



Picture above was taken at the St. Augustine College at Lewis University stole ceremony that took place on May 9, 2026.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June

Soaring Futures: Aviation Exploration Camp - CAMP HAS REACHED CAPACITY AND IS NOW CLOSED - June 8 through June 12, 2026 | Weeklong camp for those entering 9th through 12th grade. | Explore the exciting world of aviation with interactive learning, flight experiences, and behind-the-scenes exposure to aviation careers | 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily with lunch included | Harold E. White Aviation Center | Questions? Please contact Katyln Weber at kweber@lewisu.edu.

46th Annual Flyers Athletics Golf Outing - Friday, June 12, 2026 | 9 a.m. Shotgun start | Cog Hill Golf & Country Club (12294 Archer Avenue, Lemont | Lunch & Silent Auction to follow golf | Sponsorship opportunities available | Due to increased demand, golf will take place on **two courses** this year to speed up play. | To register [CLICK HERE](#).

Women's Basketball Elite Camp #1 - Wednesday, June 24, 2026 | Join the Lewis Women's Basketball program for the first of two, one-day elite camp experiences. Led by Lewis University coaches and current players, this camp is designed specifically for high school girls looking to improve their skills, compete at a high level, and experience campus life firsthand. | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Check-in at 9 a.m.) | Eligible Campers: Girls entering 8th–12th Grade | Camp T-Shirt included | No meals provided | To register, [CLICK HERE](#).

July

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) AirVenture Alumni Gathering - Saturday, July 25, 2026 | Calling all aviation enthusiasts! Lewis Aviation will once again host a tent at EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin! Stop by during the week to enter our raffle for some cool Lewis swag. Then join us on Saturday evening (7/25) before the airshow for food, drink, and Flyer fellowship at Booth #53. Registration is required. For more information and to register, [CLICK HERE](#).

2026 Lewis Women's Lacrosse Summer Camp - Join the Lewis Women's Lacrosse Summer Camp for an exciting 3-day overnight experience from July 29-31st. Hosted by the Lewis coaches and players, the camp is designed specifically for high school girls looking to improve their skills, compete, and experience college campus life firsthand. For more information and to register, [CLICK HERE](#).

August

Women's Basketball Elite Camp #2 - Saturday, August 8, 2026 | Join the Lewis Women's Basketball program for the first of two, one-day elite camp experiences. Led by Lewis University coaches and current players, this camp is designed specifically for high school girls looking to improve their skills, compete at a high level, and experience campus life firsthand. | 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Check-in at 9 a.m.) | Eligible Campers: Girls entering 8th–12th Grade | Camp T-Shirt included | No meals provided | To register, [CLICK HERE](#).

SAVE THE DATE: Lewis U at the Joliet Slammers Game - Tuesday, August 18, 2026 | More information coming soon!

First Year Student Move-In Day - Wednesday, August 19, 2026 | Interested in helping move our new students into their residence halls? Please contact Brandon McGhee at mcgheebr@lewisu.edu. More information coming soon!

Men's Hockey Golf Outing - Join Lewis Men's Hockey as they hit the links to raise funds in support of the program! Sunday, August 23, 2026 | Inwood Golf Course - 3200 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60431 | Shotgun Start at 9 a.m. | For more information and to register, [CLICK HERE](#).

For questions, contact Brandon McGee at mcgheebr@lewisu.edu or 815-836-5123.

Golden Flyers Reunion Recap

Our sincere thanks to all who joined us for the Golden Flyers Reunion on Saturday, May 30, 2026. The morning began with Mass in the Sancta Alberta Chapel, celebrated by Fr. Dan Thorson. Fr. Dan

spoke about Pope Leo's encyclical letter, "Magnifica Humanitas" about safeguarding the human person in this time of artificial intelligence. Members of the Class of 1976, **Steve Pratapas, Linda Waner, Jim Herbert, Mary Anne Blue, and Anne Becker** served as readers and gift bearers. Following Mass, group photos were taken of all in attendance.

Afterward, Vice President of University Advancement, Dr. Kip Kline welcomed the Golden Flyers and Brother Robert Veselsky, FSC said the blessing before a delicious brunch. Lewis University President-elect, Dr. Chris Sindt then presented members of the Class of 1976 with their Golden Flyer pins, signifying their official induction into the society. Jason Smith from Lewis' Archives assembled a table of memorabilia for the event and Golden Flyers enjoyed looking at old photos, yearbooks, and even a time capsule from 1977.

Following brunch, attendees were taken on campus tours with a stop at the bookstore for anyone who wanted to purchase some Flyer swag. The reunion concluded with a farewell toast on the University Green. The weather could not have been more beautiful, and our Golden Flyers enjoyed a wonderful day of celebration and friendship.



To view the professional photos taken at this year's Golden Flyers Reunion, please [CLICK HERE](#).

CAMPUS NEWS

Mission & Ministry

On May 15, the entire Lewis community was invited to celebrate with graduates and their families at a Mass of Celebration in the Sancta Alberta Chapel. The Mass was offered in thanksgiving for all of the accomplishments of our graduates as well as for the love and support of their families, friends, and educators. The celebrant was Lewis Chaplain, Father Paul Novak, OSM.

May 2026 Father Aquinas Colgan Award Winner

Joshua Brown '26, a Computer Science BS degree recipient with a perfect 4.0 GPA, earned the Spring 2026 Father Aquinas Colgan Award—Lewis University's highest recognition.

From mentoring fellow students as a peer writing mentor to earning distinction in the First Year Writing Showcase, and serving as a prose editor for the *Jet Fuel Review*, Josh made a lasting impact across campus through his scholarship, leadership, and service. Join us in offering our congratulations to Joshua Brown.

To learn more, please [CLICK HERE](#).



May 2026 Lasallian Speaker Emphasizes Fostering Community During Commencement

"May we continue to be people who create belonging wherever we go."
— **Anna Senese**, Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree recipient

The graduate student Lasallian Speaker reminds us that education is more than knowledge; it's about fostering a community where every person feels seen, valued, and supported.

Anna challenged the Lewis University Class of 2026 to carry the Lasallian Mission forward.
"Create space for every voice.
Choose connection over convenience.
Make others feel seen, heard, and welcomed."

To watch the full Lasallian address, please [CLICK HERE](#).



Lewis Students Advocate for Higher Education Funding in Springfield

Students and staff from Lewis University, including St. Augustine College at Lewis University, participated in FICU's (Illinois Federation of Independent Colleges and Universities) Student Lobby Day in Springfield, on May 6, 2026. Flyers joined students from other independent colleges and universities in Illinois to meet with legislators to advocate for MAP Awards and other funding for higher education and workforce training.

The students that traveled to Springfield were **Gabriela Garnica, Hayden Forthman, and Nassar Nassar**. They met with **Senator Meg Loughran Cappel (49 District), Senator Rachel Ventura (43 District), Representative Dagmara Avelar (85 District), and Representative Natalie Manley (98 District)**. **Dr. Liz Sturm, Dean of the College of Education and Social Science** accompanied them.



Senator Durbin Observes Workforce Training Provided by Lewis' Institute for Workforce Education

On Thursday, May 7, 2026, Senator Richard Durbin visited ASI Home Care Services in Chicago to celebrate federal funding that he helped secure for ASI's workforce training initiatives. Senator Durbin visited a class for an Illinois Works Construction Pre-Apprenticeship program, for which Lewis' Institute for Workforce Education (IWE) is providing the training. ASI is led by **Marta Cerda**,

who serves on the Advisory Council of St. Augustine College at Lewis University.



Can You Provide Flyer Internship Opportunities?

Do you own or work at a company that offers internship opportunities to college students? Lewis' College of Business is eager to connect with you! If you would like to explore partnering to provide internships to Lewis CoB students, please contact Brie Brubaker at brubakbr@lewisu.edu.

Meet a Flyer: Kate Gardella '26

"Today marked the close of one of the most impactful chapters of my life—my college career. Thank you, Lewis University, for the most joyful years!

I am deeply grateful for God's faithfulness throughout this journey. Thank you to my family, friends, professors, and peers who encouraged me, challenged me, and inspired me to take risks, think boldly, and never settle.

One of the most valuable lessons I've gained is the importance of ambition—in my learning, my career, and my personal growth. I'm excited to carry these experiences and skills forward as I begin the next chapter of my professional journey.

Here's to new beginnings!"

We congratulate you, Kate!



CoHFAC Special Events Class Hosts Fundraiser with Turning Pointe Autism Foundation

In April, a collaboration between Lewis University's College of Humanities, Fine Arts, and Communication "Special Events" class and Turning Pointe Autism Foundation brought the surrounding community together for a night of live performances, storytelling, and impact. More than \$13,000 was raised to support programs for individuals and families... highlighting what true community support looks like. This event, which was the culmination of the semester's work, took

place at Rock Stars Garage in Plainfield.



15 Year-Old Earns Lewis Master's Degree in Computer Science

Benjamin “Benny” Bamburac continued to make academic history as he earned a Master of Science in Computer Science from Lewis University during the Afternoon Graduate Degree Commencement Ceremony on May 15, 2026 for the College of Aviation, Science and Technology.

At just 15 years old, Bamburac’s achievement places him among the youngest individuals in the nation to earn a graduate degree, marking the latest milestone in an extraordinary academic journey defined by intellectual curiosity, discipline, and excellence.

Bamburac began his Lewis University studies as a 13-year-old math prodigy, pursuing a bachelor’s degree in mathematics with a minor in computer science. In May 2025, he completed two bachelor’s degrees simultaneously—one in Mathematics and another in Computer Science—before advancing directly into graduate-level study.

His accomplishments at Lewis University build upon an already historic foundation. At only 12 years old, Bamburac became the youngest graduate in the history of Joliet Junior College, completing his

coursework in December 2022 and earning an Associate of Arts degree with high honors.

Throughout his time at Lewis University, Bamburac has been recognized for his academic talent and competitive achievements. He was a member of the Lewis University team that earned first place at the 2024 Association of Colleges of the Chicago Area (ACCA) Calculus Competition, competing against teams from private colleges across the region.

In addition to his competition success, Bamburac has actively supported Lewis University's culture of undergraduate and graduate research. He has participated in the Lewis University Celebration of Scholarship, the University's annual event highlighting student research, faculty mentorship, and academic inquiry across disciplines.

To watch an NBC-5 Chicago story on Benny, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Aviation Maintenance Technician Graduates Enjoy Barbecue and Cool Cars at the Airport

"Lewis University has a long tradition of educating some of the industry's best Aviation Maintenance Technicians. Our students and faculty work hard all year long. At the end of each school year, we celebrate that work with our annual BBQ and Car Show. It was our chance to relax before final exams. Next week, some of these students will be attempting their comprehensive exams and FAA written exams. We are very proud of all of you and are excited for your next steps toward industry employment. Best of luck to all of you! Go Flyers!!!"

-Chris Stevens, Assistant Professor of Aviation and Transportation Studies and Program Director of Aviation Maintenance Education



Meet a Flyer: Noya Tanseer '26

"I am so delighted to announce that I have graduated early in three years from Lewis University,

Cum Laude and with Honors, with a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Flight Technology and a minor in Aircraft Dispatch! These past three years have been so transformative. When I first started at Lewis, I knew I wanted to challenge myself, but I didn't realize quite how busy I would be. Alongside my classes, I spent my time working towards getting my PPL, instrument rating, commercial, CFI, and CFII.

An achievement like this is never reached in isolation, and I am profoundly grateful to the community that supported me. I am deeply grateful to my family, friends, and the Lewis University aviation community for their encouragement through every academic semester and flight checkride. Having such a dedicated support system in my corner made all the difference, and I look forward to carrying these shared values into my career!

Looking forward to clear skies and tailwinds in the next chapter!"



Cafe "Pops Up" at Borromeo When Flyers Need It Most—During Finals

Lewis College of Business students were happy to patronize "SnapShot Cafe," the recent brainchild of two CoB students. Founded and operated by two volleyball players, **Abbey Sullivan** and **Nico Paula**, SnapShot Coffee is a great example of entrepreneurship in action. From building their brand to serving the campus community, these two Flyers turned classroom knowledge into real-world experience. The four-day "pop up" cafe, was located outside of Borromeo during final exams.



Lewis Adjunct Faculty Member Named Mayslake Village's Person of the Year

Congratulations to Irene Bucher, Lewis University Speech-Language Pathology Adjunct Faculty, who was recently named Mayslake Village's Person of the Year! Irene's incredible work with residents since 2020 is a powerful example of the impact Lewis faculty and students make every day—both in and out of the classroom. For more than 25 years, Lewis University and Mayslake Village have partnered to provide residents with service and compassion.



Lewis Doctor of Physical Therapy Students Volunteer at Special Olympics

In May, members of the Lewis DPT program volunteered at the 2026 Special Olympics in Joliet!

"Our Flyers were grateful for the opportunity to support an event that celebrates ability, inclusion, determination, and community. Spending time alongside these inspiring athletes reminded us of the power of service, connection, and sport in promoting health and wellness. Thank you to the athletes, families, volunteers, and organizers for allowing us to be part of such a meaningful experience."

-Dr. Arvie Vitente, Professor and DPT Program Director



Local Higher Education Leadership Unites at Season Opener of Slammers

Presidential leadership and solidarity were on display in May at the **Joliet Slammers Professional Baseball Club** season opener. Lewis University President-elect, Dr. Chris Sindt and current President, Dr. David Livingston, joined University of St. Francis' President Hendrickson and Joliet Junior College's President Namuo for a night of baseball and camaraderie. When our higher education leaders work together, all of Will County and Joliet benefit.

Special thanks to **Night Train Veeck** and the **Joliet Slammers**, Joliet's minor league baseball team!



ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to Lewis University alumnus, **Jordan Kaiser, Ph.D., '14**, who has joined Cantor Colburn LLP as a Technical Advisor, where he supports patent matters involving complex chemical and materials technologies. Prior to joining the firm, Jordan worked at Rawlings Sporting Goods, where he managed research and development for leather technology and supported production for baseballs used by Major League Baseball. Cantor Colburn is one of the largest full-service intellectual property law firms in the United States, serving clients worldwide.

Congratulations to **Dominick Bartels '23**, who recently graduated from Creighton Law School.

Congratulations to **Alexandria Wilson '23**, who recently graduated from the University of Illinois College of Law.

Michael Emaya '24 recently participated in the UIC Law 1L Bradley Cosgrove Trial Advocacy and Alternative Dispute Resolution Competition at University of Illinois Chicago School of Law. "It was a rewarding experience that strengthened my advocacy, negotiation, and courtroom skills while closing out my 1L year on a meaningful note."

Recently, two of our former Graduate Assistants in the Lewis Alumni Office returned to say, "Hello!" Pictured below, **Carrieana Larry '21 '25** (left) is a Digital Media Coordinator for Smokie Norful Ministries in the Chicago area, and **Tiana Dockery '23 '24** (right) is a Marketing and Communications Coordinator at the Institute of Real Estate Management in Chicago. We are so proud of these young women and how they have taken their Lewis degrees and GA experience to the next level!



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.



Don't miss the exciting lineup of our Arts & Ideas program. To learn more and discover the full schedule of Arts & Ideas offerings, please [CLICK HERE](#).

FLYER ATHLETICS

Men's Lacrosse

Men's Lacrosse finished in the **top 8 in the country** in the NCAA Division II Men's Lacrosse Championship, losing to eventual champion, University of Tampa. A program record five members of the Lewis University men's lacrosse team earned United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association (USILA) All-American honors. **Carter Korzenski** was named a Second Team All-American while **Tyler Davis and Paul Ruskosi** were tabbed to the third team. **Caden Donahue and Kohl Wesner** rounded out the Flyers accolades by landing honorable mention accolades.

Congratulations on an amazing season!

Track and Field

Lewis Track and Field recently competed at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Track and Field Championships where 11 points were scored on the women's side with four athletes competing. On the men's side, four athletes competed and scored 4.33 points. **Mary Edwards** finished fourth in the 3000 meter steeplechase final to land All-American honors. **Abraham Christian** picked-up NCAA Outdoor All-American status for the first time in his career as he placed eighth in the high jump. **Denise Hernandez** earned her second Outdoor All-American honors, placing third in the long jump. **Levi Graham** earned All-American accolades as he placed fifth with a personal-best throw of 66.85 meters.

Congratulations to Lewis Track and Field!

Athletic Camps

We are excited to announce that Women's Lacrosse and Women's Basketball will be hosting camps this summer. These camps are a great way to receive instruction from our fantastic coaches at Lewis University and help support our programs, while helping athletes get better! Information can be found above in the "Events" section of this *Jet-setter* issue.

Peace of Mind Begins with a Plan—Learn More with FreeWill



With **FreeWill**, you can create your will in just minutes—at no cost—and gain peace of mind knowing your wishes are clearly in place. It's simple, secure, and one more way to care for the people and causes you love, like Lewis University.

This summer, take a moment to plan ahead and cross this "to do" off the list. Because a little planning today can provide a lot of peace tomorrow. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.

Through your annual gift of \$1,000 or more, you can become a member of Lewis University's President's Circle. PC members are invited to exclusive events like the President's Circle Dinner in December and receive invitations to engage with University leadership throughout the year. Together and by association, our President's Circle members continue to fuel our thriving Lasallian Mission.

Would you like to speak to someone about becoming a President's Circle member? Contact Krysten McGee at 815-836-5966 or at kmcgee2@lewisu.edu.



Together, we are creating hope, one Lewis University, Lasallian-educated leader at a time.
THANK YOU!

Support Lewis University

Questions about anything you read in this month's ***Jet-setter?***
Please email alumni@lewisu.edu.

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