GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Pioneer Update

Glenville State University Newsletter for Alumni & Friends | September 2026

Alumni SPOTLIGHT





Dr. Christine “Chris” (Jamison) Schimmel ‘91 is currently serving as the Associate Provost at West Virginia Wesleyan College. She is in her third year at WVWC where she is also a professor in the graduate counseling program. This fall will mark her 29th year in higher education.

The Buckhannon, West Virginia native graduated from Glenville State with a bachelor’s degree in English Education. During her time as a Pioneer, she was a member of the Student Government Association, was part of the Delta Zeta sorority, and served as a cheerleader for three years.

In addition to her degree from Glenville State, she also holds a master’s degree in School Counseling from West Virginia University, an Education Specialist degree in Curriculum & Instruction from Marshall University, and a Doctor of Education in Curriculum & Instruction (with a cognate in School Counseling), also from Marshall University.

Prior to the summer of 2024, Chris was at West Virginia University for 15 years. There, she earned full professor rank and served as head of the

A group of new Glenville State students at the welcome festival held in the campus amphitheater during Welcome Week.

Welcome Week Greets New Glenville State University Students

New Glenville State University students spent a week on campus just prior to the start of the academic year to acclimate to college. Welcome Week for new students took place Monday, August 10 through Sunday, August 16; fall semester classes kicked off on Monday, August 17.

New Pioneer Welcome Week is designed to help new students create meaningful connections, become familiar with policies and procedures at Glenville State, connect with the caring and dedicated professionals across campus, and become informed of the services GSU provides.

The week began on August 10 with new students arriving and moving into campus housing. Throughout the week they also had opportunities to meet with their fellow students, attended a community and organization fair to find ways to get involved, and took part in several student activity events. The students also attended their first GSU 100 course sessions. That course, also known as “The First-Year Experience,” is taken by all degree seeking students during their first semester at Glenville State University. It is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to make a smooth transition to the diverse academic, intellectual, and social culture of college life.

“Glenville State University is excited for this incoming Class of 2030! I believe that they will find the tools and skills here to take their next steps to success,” said Glenville State University President, Dr. Mark A. Manchin. “Glenville State University is a special institution made a bit more special by each new Pioneer we welcome to campus, and I thank the students and their families for choosing to attend Glenville State.”

As part of Welcome Week, Glenville State welcomes new students to campus with a formal ceremony known as Convocation. The ceremony took place on August 14 and included welcome messages from faculty, staff, the University’s Board of Governors, and the City of Glenville. Students also committed themselves to the Glenville State University Oath of Academic Excellence as part of the ceremony. Consistent with its mission, the University expects all members of the campus community to conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and lawful manner. As such, new students pledge to abide by the principles contained in the Oath of Excellence which include Freedom of Speech, Civil and Human Rights, Cultivation of

counseling program, Associate Department Chair, and Ombudsperson for the entire WVU system. Before her time at WVU, she was an instructor at Marshall University in the counseling program for 10 years. She also worked at Glenville State for a year, coordinating off campus programs such as dual credit programs in local high schools.

Chris has been quite successful in securing grant funding over the years, including more than $5.2 million in federal grants during her time at WVU and a recent $1.2 million grant from the WV First Foundation obtained with her WVWC colleagues. With these funds, they are providing statewide professional development for WV Court Appointed Special Advocates. Chris adds that she is particularly proud of the grant work because it has served to increase the mental health workforce in schools in the Mountain State and has provided Youth Mental Health First Aid Training to public school employees around the state.

Dr. Schimmel has also authored a new counseling text book, *Assessment for Counselors in School Settings*, that will be released by Cognella Academic Publishing this fall. She is also the co-author on two of the most popular selling counseling textbooks on the market: *Group Counseling: Strategies & Skills* and *Counseling Children & Adolescents*. These are just two of multiple texts that Chris says she has been privileged to co-author or contribute to.

Character, Academic Integrity, Diversity, Social Responsibility, and Consideration of Others.

The fall 2026 semester runs through Thursday, December 10.



David O'Dell speaking at the Vandalia Award presentation ceremony on May 22. | Photo by Steve Brightwell

O'Dell Honored with Vandalia Award

Dr. David O'Dell is the recipient of the 2026 Vandalia Award. O'Dell is a tenured Professor of Chemistry and the Chair of the Department of Science and Mathematics at Glenville State.

The Vandalia Award is West Virginia's highest folklife honor that is presented annually during the Vandalia Gathering. The award is designed to honor individuals who embody the spirit of the state's folk heritage and to recognize contributions to West Virginia and its traditional culture.

O'Dell's Vandalia Award reads:

Whereas David O'Dell is a native of Roane County and learned to play music at a young age and is a prize-winning multi-instrumentalist on banjo, fiddle, guitar, bass, mandolin, and dulcimer; and

Whereas he learned the rhythms of traditional dance music from his father who was a flatfoot dancer, square dancer, and dance caller, and at an early age learned to sing harmony on old songs and hymns from his mother; and

Chris is a member of PEO, an international women's group whose main mission is to provide support and opportunities for young women to pursue their educational goals. She and her husband Steve '92 love to travel, usually doing so on Steve's motorcycle. Chris also enjoys working out, taking walks with the their 4-year-old Boxer, Gunner, and reading, especially when she can do so sitting by a beach.

Chris's uncle Rodney Jamison '68 and her mother-in-law Marie (Hoyman) Schimmel '81 are both also Glenville State graduates.

When asked what Glenville State means to her, Chris said, "I was born and raised in Glenville. My parents, John and Wilma Jamison, owned and operated the Glenville Pizza Shop from 1968 until 1991. I was raised attending Glenville State sporting events and walking amidst GSU students my whole life. I attended every kind of camp at Glenville growing up: science, basketball, any camp I could! I also learned to swim in the GSU pool having been taught by GSU basketball players! I tell everyone I speak with that the educational experiences I had at Glenville State shaped the person and the professional I am today. Without the quality faculty and experiences I had at Glenville, I am not sure I would be the hard-working professional I am. And I also tell folks, 'There is always a Glenville connection' – Glenville sent so many terrific educators out into the world, up and down the east coast, you are bound to run into some if you travel! Glenville is a special place that

Whereas he began recording and filming West Virginia old-time musicians when he received an 8mm film camera for high school graduation, documenting many who are now gone, but not forgotten; and

Whereas he learned directly from and was influenced by West Virginia's traditional music masters such as Frank George, Wilson Douglas, Glen Smith, Ernie Carpenter, Melvin Wine, Ray Epler, and others; and

Whereas he has taught banjo and performed at many festivals for many years, including the Vandalia Gathering, the West Virginia State Folk Festival, the Appalachian String Band Festival, Allegheny Echoes, the Augusta Heritage Center, and others; and

Whereas he has been a volunteer in several capacities for the West Virginia State Folk Festival since the mid-1990s and became president of that organization in 2014, working to ensure the continuation of our living traditions; and

Whereas he has toured internationally on a number of occasions and brought the distinct regional style of West Virginia old-time music to Australia and Ireland; and

Whereas he started his own record label, Roane Records, and used it to release recordings by traditional West Virginia musicians; and

Whereas he is actively involved in the preservation and continuation of the traditional music of West Virginia.

The award was presented at a ceremony on Friday, May 22 at the West Virginia Culture Center. As part of the ceremony, there were performances by the MacAbre Brothers (which consists of O'Dell and Pete Kosky), the Long Point String Band, Slow Train, Doris "Lady D" Fields accompanied by Andrew Caldwell, Ron and Rory Mullenex, and First Day in Town. O'Dell joined the Long Point String Band and First Day in Town on bass for their performances due to their regular bass players being unavailable. He also played banjo with the Mack Samples Band at the Saturday evening concert.

O'Dell joins other notable Pioneers who have also received the Vandalia Award, including Mack Samples '64 (2003), Buddy Griffin '71 (2011), and Ginny Hawker '91 (2024).

will always hold a dear spot in my heart."

We are pleased to feature Chris in this month's Alumni Spotlight and are proud to call her an alumna.





Curtis Elam Athletic Hall of Fame's 2026 Induction Class Announced

Glenville State University Athletics has announced the names of the four newest members who will be inducted into the Curtis Elam Athletic Hall of Fame. The 2026 class will include: Jerald Brown '03, Larry Loughner '85, Paris McLeod '18, and Tony Gibson '97.

"This class has four different eras represented and includes individuals that made some definitive marks in Pioneer history," said Director of Athletics, Jesse Skiles '87.

Brown played football at Glenville State, becoming a two-time All-WVIAC First Team selection, the school's all-time leader in kick return touchdowns, and he helped lead GSC to a 2001 WVIAC Championship. Brown also played 13 years professionally in the AFL and CFL.

Loughner was a three-year starter on the Pioneer football team at center, becoming an All-WVIAC First Team selection during his time in the blue and white.

McLeod became one of the most decorated Lady Pioneers in program history in her three years, scoring over 1,600 points. She added multiple accolades while at Glenville, earning All-American twice, First Team All-Region in back-to-back seasons, and was the MEC Player of the Year twice. She also helped lead Glenville State to multiple conference championships.

Gibson started all four years for the Pioneers at defensive back, playing a key part in the program's 1993 National Championship game appearance. Since departing Glenville, Gibson has enjoyed 20+ years of Division I coaching experience, including in his current role as the Head Coach of the Marshall Thundering Herd.

"We are very excited about getting these All-Time Pioneer greats into our Hall of Fame," Skiles added.

A banquet and induction ceremony to honor the 2026 inductees will take place in the Mollohan Campus Community Center Ballroom at 6:00 PM on Saturday, October 10. A social reception will precede the event at 5:00 PM. Tickets for the event are $25 and can be purchased online here. Please RSVP by Friday, October 2.

Glenville State University's Athletic Hall of Fame was established in 2001 through the generosity of the late Curtis Elam.



Need New Glenville Swag?
The Pioneer Spirit Shop has you covered!



Shop Now: glenville.spirit.bncollege.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 3 - Pioneer Football vs Millersville University
6:00 PM - Morris Stadium
Join us as we reopen Morris Stadium for the 2026 football season!

Wednesday, September 30 - GSU Honor Choir
All Day - Fine Arts Center

Thursday, October 1 - GSU Honor Choir Concert
7:00 PM - Fine Arts Center Auditorium

Saturday, October 10 - Curtis Elam Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet & Induction Ceremony
5:00 PM - Social Reception; 6:00 PM - Banquet & Ceremony

Tickets $25 (order here)

Saturday, October 24 - Homecoming
Save the Date!

   

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Glenville State University
200 High St., Glenville, WV 26351