



WAUBONSEE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ALUMNI

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS NEWSLETTER

Waubonsee is proud to be your alma mater!

This month, we highlight the Christoffel brothers. As Featured Alumni, the Christoffel brothers offer valuable perspectives on the importance of earning a degree from Waubonsee, the ease of transitioning to a four-year university, and the advantages of a successful career path.

Be sure to read the Waubonsee Alum Story about Britney Daniels, a nursing alumna, and her recently published book, "Journal of a Black Queer Nurse." Learn more about Britney's journey and how to purchase a copy of her book.

Be sure to check out the "Faces and Places" section where we highlight the Waubonsee Hall of Fame Inductees and 2022-23 Student-Athletes.

Also, Waubonsee creates the Waubonsee Community Garden at all four campuses and celebrates PRIDE 2023.

Where Are They Now?



Christoffel Brothers Reflect on Career Success Since Graduating from Waubonsee's Automotive Technology Program

Waubonsee alumni Joe and Dan Christoffel, of Oswego, have a unique bond that sets them apart from typical siblings. Despite being ten years apart in age and in their academic journeys, they have followed almost identical paths leading to successful careers. Both brothers have excelled in their professional careers at Navistar Inc., working in separate cubicles rows apart. They attribute their success in the industry to their experiences at Waubonsee, recognizing the college's significant role in shaping their careers.

"I wasn't originally thinking about earning a bachelor's degree. I think about how Guy pushed me to transfer to SIU after Waubonsee, and I'm so grateful he did," said Joe. "Looking back, I

was able to make the decision to go to SIU and influence Dan to have a successful full-time career at Navistar."

"As a recent graduate at SIU, what has stood out to me from Waubonsee is the true family environment the Automotive Technology Program offers," said Dan. "When I got to SIU, I realized I had taken that dynamic for granted. The instructors at Waubonsee truly go above and beyond for their students."

Read the [inspiring story](#).



Nursing Alumnus Britney Daniels

All books begin with Chapter One, and in Britney Daniels' book, the first chapter starts at Waubonsee Community College.

"Today, we make a promise, a promise to practice compassion and respect," Daniels writes. "A promise to be good nurses, not great nurses, but incomparable and unstoppable nurses."

The passage comes from Daniels' new book, "Journal of a Black Queer Nurse", an achievement that adds published author to an already-impressive resume for the 2017 graduate of Waubonsee's nursing program. The words she opens her first chapter with are drawn from her speech at her Waubonsee pinning ceremony.

"I just felt like I belonged, I felt like we as a collective group were struggling with the complexities of the undergrad nursing program and all that comes with that. It made us feel like a community," Daniels said.

Read the [inspiring story](#).



Waubonsee honors HOF inductees and 2022-23 Student-Athletes

Waubonsee Community College held its Annual Athletic Banquet and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on May 18. Haley (Kilbride) Jochim, a women's soccer All-American for Waubonsee in 2014; John Sjudges, a standout Chiefs' baseball player and fastpitch softball National Champion; and Perry Clark, the winningest softball coach in Waubonsee history, were all formally enshrined into the college's Hall of Fame.

In addition, Waubonsee student-athletes from the 2022-2023 school year were recognized during the evening for their accomplishments. All-American basketball player Joey Niesman was honored as Sophomore Male Athlete of the Year, with record-setting basketball player Brooke Heiman was named the Sophomore Female Athlete of the Year. Baseball player Matt Bivens was selected the Freshman Male Athlete of the Year, while two-sport athlete Emily Hurst was unanimously chosen the Freshman Female Athlete of the Year. Softball player Taylor Warren was chosen the Vermillion and Gold Award winner, and baseball player Chazz Crook was the S.T.A.R. Award recipient.

Learn more about the [2022-23 HOF inductees and the student-athletes](#).

Did You Know?



Waubonsee Announces 2023 Outstanding Faculty Member

Waubonsee Community College has announced its 2023 Outstanding Faculty Member, Dr. Sheela Vemu, Associate Professor of Biology. Dr. Vemu has served Waubonsee as a full-time Biology instructor since 2013.

"I feel it is very important to create an environment where my students feel safe and secure enough to engage with their peers in asking scientific questions," said Dr. Vemu.

Learn more about [Vemu](#).

Waubonsee Announces 2023 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Member

Waubonsee Community College has announced its 2023 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty member, Evelyn Cassano, Adjunct Faculty in Adult Education. Cassano, a Waubonsee alumnus and lifelong Aurora resident, has been a member of the Adult Education Program since 2019.

"Receiving this award is an honor and the culmination of years of hard work, grading papers, preparing lessons, attending conferences, triumphing, and growing personally and professionally," said Cassano, with tears in her eyes. "It's still hard to believe I'm being recognized when I work alongside so many dedicated educators at Waubonsee."

Learn more about [Cassano](#).



Waubonsee Appoints Dean for Health Professions and Public Service

Waubonsee Community College has appointed Bob Cofield, of Aurora, to the position of Dean for Health Professions and Public Service.

"I'm looking forward to leading the continued growth and development of the programs in this division and also excited to be working with such an exceptional group of faculty members," Cofield said.

Learn more about [Cofield](#).

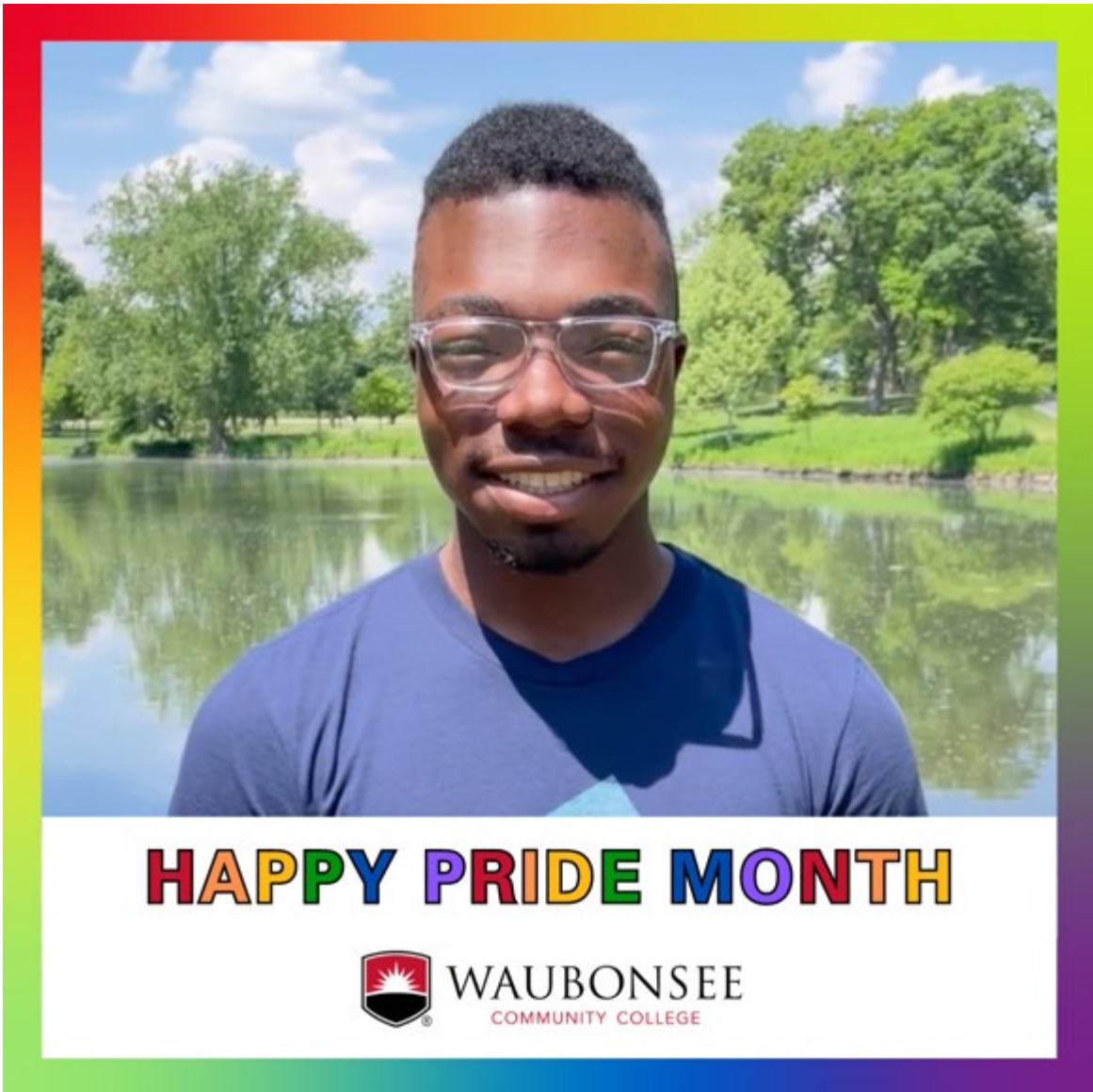
Just For Fun



Waubonsee has a Community Garden

As part of Earth Day Celebrations this past April, Waubonsee Community College created a Community Garden for interested employees and departments. Each department that participated received space in a 2' x 4' raised garden bed, with a variety of vegetable and flower plants to select from. The Sugar Grove Campus Community Garden is located near the South entrance and the S-5 Parking Lot. Our Alumni Relations team has peppers, lettuce, and tomatoes!





Waubonsee celebrates PRIDE 2023

Here are many ways in which Waubonsee celebrates PRIDE 2023 by providing various events in the month of June.

Pride Flag Raising - Dickson Flag Pole, Sugar Grove Campus and Campus Lobbies

As part of our commitment to being an inclusive, equitable, and compassionate community, the Pride Flag will fly all month June 1-30.

Pride Party at Plano! - Thursday, June 29 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Plano Lobby

Join us for free food, music, and fun! Pizza will be provided.

Banned Books & Regulatory Action Traveling Display at all Campuses

View resources highlighting book banning in schools and libraries, as well as state legislative efforts to limit LGBTQ+ rights nationwide. The display will be on exhibit at the different campuses each week in June.

2023 Pride Video

Follow @waubonsee on Instagram for the exclusive release of our 2023 Pride video! Celebrate with us as we showcase the LGBTQ+ community at Waubonsee in a short yet [powerful video](#) highlighting the importance of belongingness, acceptance, allyship, and diversity. **#WaubonseePride**

We love learning more about our alumni and sharing their inspiring stories with you. If you or someone you know should be highlighted in our next Alumni Newsletter, please email us at alumni@waubonsee.edu.

We value you and your experience! We hope you take a moment to share a story of your time at Waubonsee. You can do so by submitting it [online](#), giving us a call, or scheduling a visit to allow us to treat you to coffee or lunch in the [Waubonsee Café](#) and a tour of the [Sugar Grove Campus](#).

Best regards!



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