



**POINT PARK**  
UNIVERSITY

# RIPPLE EFFECT

Examining the Economic and Social Contributions  
of Point Park University to Pittsburgh's  
Renaissance III, the Region, and Beyond

MAY 2025



### **Report by Fourth Economy Consulting**

Fourth Economy is an economic development consultancy focused on creating strategic, equitable, and resilient futures for our clients.

**Learn more at [fourtheconomy.com](https://fourtheconomy.com)**



# CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>Economic Impacts</b>	<b>03</b>
Operational Impact	05
Student Spending	05
Tourism Spending	06
Growth Goal Scenarios	08
Impacts of Current and Future Construction	10
<b>Social &amp; Community Impacts</b>	<b>16</b>
Pioneers Making an Impact	17
Impacts on Culture and Place	19
Contributions to Cultural Vibrancy	23
Community Impacts	26
Impact on Local Businesses, Partnerships, and Beyond	29
Conclusion	30
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>31</b>





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Institutions of higher education within the Pittsburgh region are assets that have become recognized as central to local economic development efforts. Universities and colleges play a crucial role as employers and purchasers, as magnets for talent and tourism, as centers of arts and innovation, as well as in their core function of education. This mix of activities creates a more stable local economy, as educational institutions typically maintain a steady level of operations even during economic downturns. Additionally, the presence of well-educated graduates raises local wages and productivity, contributing to long-term regional economic growth.

Point Park University is no exception: today, Point Park's operations, students, visitors, and construction generate **\$236.9 million** in total output and **3,270 total jobs** for the Pittsburgh regional economy annually. In 2033, at the one-hundred-year anniversary of Point Park, that impact is projected to grow to **\$486.3 million** in output and **4,370 total jobs**.

This report details the economic and social impacts of Point Park University as it serves the regional community and positions the University to be a catalyst of Pittsburgh's Renaissance III. This includes financial impacts related to dollars spent on capital projects and maintenance, jobs created both inside and outside of the University, the costs associated with operating Point Park, and more. It also estimates the cultural and societal benefits Point Park University brings to the surrounding community.



## About Point Park University

Founded in 1933, Point Park University is a comprehensive doctoral/professional level university with a strong liberal arts tradition. Located in Downtown Pittsburgh, Point Park enrolls nearly 4,000 full-and part-time students in 82 undergraduate programs and 18 graduate programs offered through its Conservatory of the Performing Arts, School of Dance; Conservatory of the Performing Arts, School of Theater, Film and Animation, School of Arts and Sciences, Rowland School of Business, School of Education, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, and School of Communication. Additional information regarding the University can be found at [www.pointpark.edu](http://www.pointpark.edu) and [www.pointpark.edu/About/AdminDepts/InstitutionalResearch/Factbook](http://www.pointpark.edu/About/AdminDepts/InstitutionalResearch/Factbook).



Point Park is a community of

**3,448**

students

**1,060**

employees and

**80,000**

annual visitors,  
contributing

**22,300**

volunteer hours,  
generating

**\$236.9 M**

in economic impact  
and supporting

**3,270**

total jobs in  
the Pittsburgh  
region annually

The background image shows a large, modern lecture hall or auditorium. The seating is tiered and consists of many rows of bright yellow chairs. The walls and ceiling are made of dark wood, with the ceiling having a curved, ribbed design. Large windows are visible in the background, letting in natural light. The overall atmosphere is clean, modern, and professional.

# ECONOMIC IMPACTS



Point Park University impacts the Pittsburgh region across multiple fronts. This includes employment, not only of faculty and administrative staff, but also ancillary employment in service and support roles. Among other factors, this analysis considers the ways in which the Point Park community and its activities contribute to the regional economy, including how:

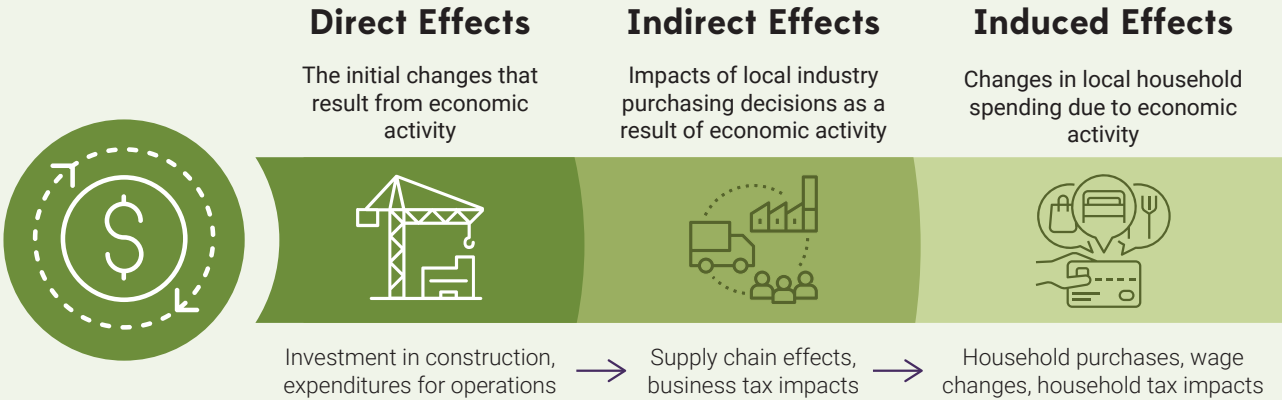
**Student, staff, and faculty spending** creates significant multiplier effects throughout the local economy, supporting restaurants, housing, retail, and entertainment businesses.

**Construction and maintenance projects** at Point Park University inject capital into the local building and real estate sectors and also create indirect and induced economic impacts.

**Cultural and sporting events** hosted by Point Park University draw visitors who contribute to tourism spending, and university procurement creates demand for local suppliers and service providers.

A Note About Direct, Indirect, and Induced Economic Impacts

Fourth Economy used Lightcast, a standard input-output model, for the economic impact analysis. This platform provides an economic model that identifies the effects of a specific stimulus, such as employment in a specific industry or investment in the construction of new facilities. An input/output model estimates the interactions between industries and households in an economy to identify how transactions impact the production and consumption of goods and services.



**Indirect effects** take account of everything that an industry needs to produce a unit of commodity. For example, the production of paper will require inputs from a variety of supplier industries (chemical suppliers, toolmakers, and more). That paper may then be used as an input for other goods and services. **Induced effects** are the impacts that result from household expenditures for goods and services as a result of earnings from the direct and indirect expenditures.

# Operational Impact

Point Park University’s operational impact, for this study, is composed of institutional spending on personnel, encompassing nearly 1,060 employees in the table below, which includes faculty, administrators, student support services, and facilities support services, as well as any related administrative expenses.

The direct economic impact of those 1,060 jobs is **\$75,100,000** including the 210 indirect jobs and 470 induced jobs created as a result of Point Park personnel employment. The resulting combined impact totals **\$130,700,000 in total output** or contribution to the regional economy.

## University Operations Impact Overview

Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
\$75,100,000	\$130,700,000	1,060	210	470	1,740

The workers who support university operations receive \$111.8 million in total earnings annually. Even though universities are exempt from some taxes, university operations generated **\$8.9 million annually in local, state, and federal taxes**.

## University Operations Worker Earnings and Taxes

	Earnings	Taxes
University Operations	\$111,800,000	\$8,900,000

# Student Spending

Spending by students at Point Park University creates substantial ripple effects throughout the local economy. Students inject money into the local economy through housing rentals, transportation costs, food purchases, entertainment and recreation spending, and retail shopping, with much of this representing “new money” drawn from outside the region. Spending by faculty and staff is included in the model as induced effects.

Point Park University houses approximately 900 students. Their spending includes books and other academic supplies, food and entertainment, and both on and off-campus housing.





## Estimated Student Spending

Student Spending	FY 2022 Per Student	Current	2033
Books and supplies	\$1,200	\$4,012,800	\$5,216,640
On-campus room and board	\$12,980	\$11,474,320	\$14,916,616
Off-campus room and board	\$12,240	\$30,110,400	\$39,143,520
Food and Entertainment	\$6,000	\$17,484,000	\$22,729,200
Other Personal Expenditures	\$3,000	\$10,032,000	\$13,041,600

Sources: Spending assumptions by Fourth Economy.

Currently, student spending generates an impact of **\$61.4 million and 890 total jobs**. In 2033 that number is projected to increase to **\$147.6 million and 1,320 jobs**, based on the planned 30 percent student enrollment increase and related university expansion.

## Impacts from Student Spending

Direct Output	Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
2024 Impacts	\$31,100,000	\$69,400,000	1,010	540	210	260
Projected 2033 Impacts	\$72,200,000	\$147,600,000	1,320	710	280	330

## Tourism Spending

Campus visitors, including prospective students and their families, as well as those attending cultural, sporting, and other events, contribute to the local economy through hotel stays, restaurant visits, and other tourism-related spending. At Point Park, this includes NCAA DII – Mountain East Conference athletics, performances through the Conservatory and Pittsburgh Playhouse, Advancement Events for alumni and donors, parking revenue generated for city-owned garages and parking taxes, special events (e.g., National High School Dance Festival, Springboard Danse, Summer Camps, Parents/Family visits, Alumni events), and other events hosted on campus and/or in collaboration with the University (e.g., Picklesburgh, Saint Patrick’s Day Parade, Pittsburgh Marathon).

**Current annual visitation** numbers are estimated at **80,000 visitors** per year, according to an analysis of Point Park event data and Pittsburgh regional tourism reports. Of these 80,000 total visits, 65.5 percent, or 52,414, represent day trips, while 34.5 percent, or 27,586, are overnight stays. Roughly 29,875 of the total visits are sporting event-related. In total, visitors currently generate about **\$22.4 million in local spending**.

## Tourism Spending Assumptions

University Visitor Spending - Tourism Report	Per Visitor	Current Estimated Spending	2033 Projected Spending
Lodging	\$92	\$2,537,931	\$6,750,106
Food & Beverage	\$62	\$4,951,724	\$9,545,181
Miscellaneous Retail	\$45	\$3,602,759	\$8,490,040
Entertainment and Recreation	\$60	\$4,811,034	\$2,934,828
Transportation	\$81	\$6,510,345	\$7,641,036
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$280</b>	<b>\$22,413,793</b>	<b>\$35,361,193</b>

Sources: Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism in Pennsylvania. 2002. Prepared for the Pennsylvania Office of Tourism by Tourism Economics. Pennsylvania Travel USA Visitor Profile. 2022. Prepared for the Pennsylvania Office of Tourism by Compass Longwoods International.

**Future annual visitation** is expected to increase, partly due to the 30 percent projected increase in student enrollment and the new NCAA Division II athletic program. Moving to NCAA Division II and joining the Mountain East Conference significantly raises the university's athletic profile, which is likely to attract more prospective students, athletes, and fans to the campus and the City of Pittsburgh. Sporting event attendance could increase out-of-town visitors from 30 percent of total visits to 35 percent, and these fans may also spend more. Overall, a 175 percent increase in visitation is estimated, increasing the current 80,000 visits to **139,754 annual visitors** to Point Park University.

## Current and Future Tourist Visits

	2024 Visitors			2033 Visitors			Change 2025-2033
	Local	Out of Town	Total	Local	Out of Town	Total	
Sports Visitors	20,913	8,963	29,875	46,855	25,230	72,085	<b>+42,210</b>
Other Visitors	35,088	15,038	50,125	43,985	23,684	67,669	<b>+17,544</b>
Total Visitors	56,000	24,000	80,000	90,840	48,914	139,754	<b>+59,754</b>

This 53 percent increase in visitation will result in an equal increase in visit expenditures, bumping the total visitor spending from \$22 million to **\$35.4 million**, and the total output from visitors will grow from \$22.3 million to **\$48.1 million**. The multiplier effect on the 2030 visitor spending will increase significantly due to the increase in overnight visits from outside the region, which represents a net gain to the region versus local visitors, whose university-related spending may substitute for other local spending.



## Impacts from Current and Future Tourism

	Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
2024 Impacts	\$11,400,000	\$22,300,000	380	260	50	80
Projected 2033 Impacts	\$24,800,000	\$48,100,000	560	370	70	120

## Growth Goal Scenarios

### Current and 2033 Operations

Point Park University's **current annual economic output is \$236,900,000**, inclusive of direct jobs, indirect jobs, and induced jobs supported as a result of university operations, visitor spending, student spending, and annual construction averages.

### Current Impacts Overview

2024 Impacts	Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
University Operations	\$75,100,000	\$130,700,000	1,740	1,060	210	470
Visitor Spending	\$11,400,000	\$22,300,000	380	260	50	80
Student Spending	\$31,100,000	\$69,400,000	1,010	540	210	260
<b>Total University Operations</b>	<b>\$117,600,000</b>	<b>\$222,400,000</b>	<b>3,130</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>810</b>
Construction Average 2016-2023	\$8,000,000	\$14,500,000	140	70	20	50
<b>Total Annual Impact</b>	<b>\$125,600,000</b>	<b>\$236,900,000</b>	<b>3,270</b>	<b>1,930</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>860</b>

Projected 2033 numbers are based on the planned 30 percent increase in student enrollment and current ratios. The total **2033 economic output is projected to rise to \$486,300,000**, inclusive of direct, indirect, and induced impacts.

## 2033 Impacts Overview

2033 Impacts	Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
University Operations	\$159,300,000	\$130,700,000	1,740	1,060	210	470
Visitor Spending	\$26,300,000	\$22,300,000	380	260	50	80
Student Spending	\$72,200,000	\$69,400,000	1,010	540	210	260
<b>Total University Operations</b>	<b>\$257,800,000</b>	<b>\$222,400,000</b>	<b>3,130</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>810</b>
Construction Average 2025-2033	\$17,800,000	\$14,500,000	140	70	20	50
<b>Total Annual Impact</b>	<b>\$275,600,000</b>	<b>\$236,900,000</b>	<b>3,270</b>	<b>1,930</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>860</b>

The estimated 2033 increases are based on the 30 percent increase in student and current ratios for a total employment of 1,370. Increased visitor spending reflects this increased level of operations as well as Point Park's move to the NCAA Division II, which is expected to increase the number of overnight visitors for sporting events.

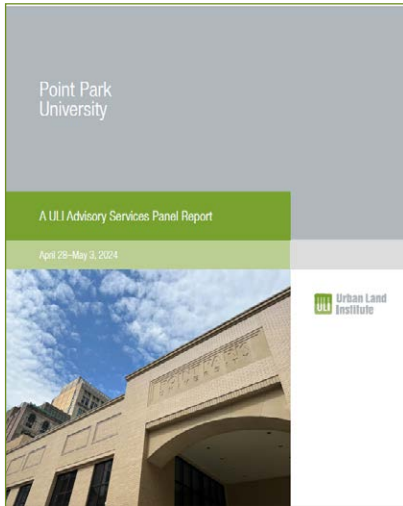
## 2033 Earnings and Taxes

	Earnings	Taxes
University Operations	\$159,800,000	\$12,800,000
Visitor Spending	\$26,900,000	\$4,900,000
Student Spending	\$78,100,000	\$9,800,000
<b>Total University Operations</b>	<b>\$264,800,000</b>	<b>\$27,500,000</b>
Construction Annual	\$15,600,000	\$1,080,000
<b>Total Annual Impact</b>	<b>\$280,400,000</b>	<b>\$28,580,000</b>

In addition, projected 2033 impacts include **\$280.5 million in annual earnings** and **\$28.6 million in taxes**.



# Impacts of Current and Future Construction



## An Assessment from the Urban Land Institute

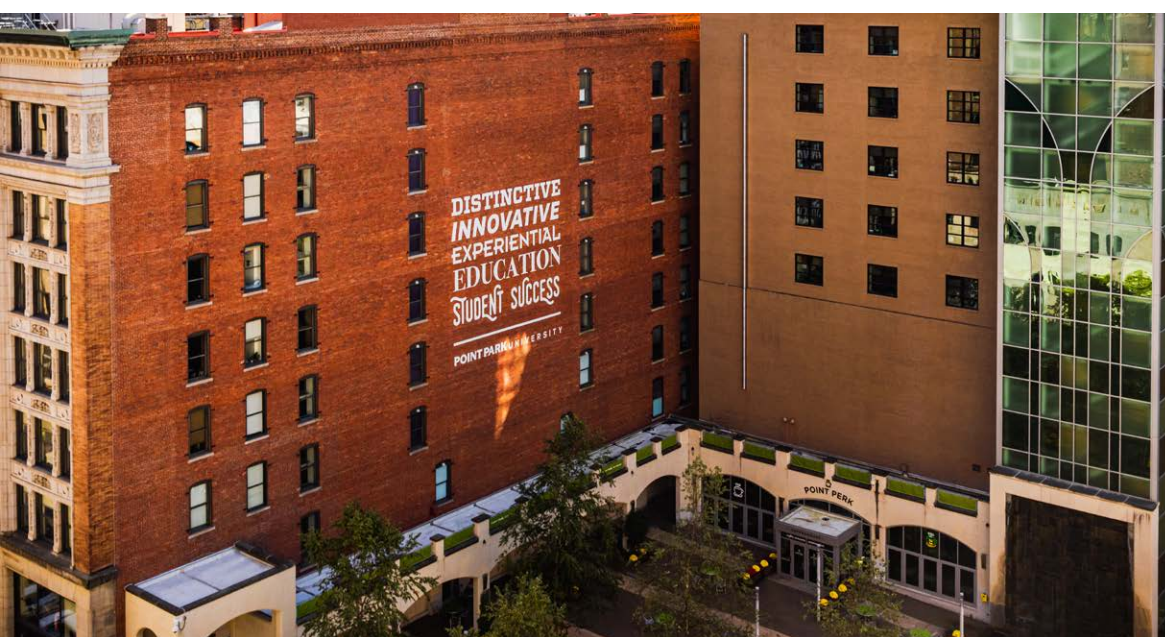
In 2023, Point Park engaged the Urban Land Institute to convene an advisory panel to provide recommendations for future development and land use strategies that Point Park could pursue to further benefit the Golden Triangle. The panel's work produced comprehensive recommendations for the Downtown Pittsburgh neighborhood and the Point Park University community.

The report provided recommendations for neighborhood revitalization, connectivity and public space enhancements, and the development of a Downtown Events Center. The vision builds

from Point Park's catalytic efforts to date and offers a vision for a campus that is seamlessly integrated with community assets, serving as the gathering place for the region and further stimulating downtown growth.

## Historic Construction: Academic Village and New Pittsburgh Playhouse

From 2016 to 2023, Point Park University has engaged in a significant makeover of a once-neglected corner of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle. Point Park's \$129 million in development has transformed the Downtown campus and surrounding areas to complement the transformations in the Cultural District, Market Square, and along the riverfront. More details are provided here: [Preserving and Revitalizing the Golden Triangle](#).



## Future Construction: New Community Events Center

Point Park University announced in October 2024 its plans for the development of a new Downtown events center that would host both athletic competitions and community programming like concerts and other events. This new building will serve as a contributor to the fabric of Downtown Pittsburgh and contribute to its “Renaissance III.” Similar to how the Pittsburgh Playhouse functions, the new Community Events Center will also serve as a training ground for students to learn hands-on live entertainment industry skills like rigging and stage management, lighting and sound design, and hospitality and venue operations.

The total cost of the new Community Events Center, including site acquisition, demolition, site preparation, soft costs and construction costs are estimated to be between \$85 million and \$105 million (in 2024 dollars). This venue is anticipated to be able to accommodate/draw approximately four events per week, for a total of 208 use days per year. With a conservative estimate of ticket sales that equal about 50 percent of the total seat capacity, this could yield **208,000 tickets sold each year**. With some moderately priced events and others that are more costly, this equals an annual estimated ticket revenue of about **\$4.2 to \$6.2 million** (rounded to \$5 million as an input for the operations impact).



Rendering by  
Ewing Cole



## Event Center Operations Assumptions

	Inputs/ Assumptions
Weeks	52
Events per Week	4
Total Use Days	208
Avg. Occupancy	1,000
Annual Seats Sold	208,000
<b>Avg Ticket Price</b>	
@ \$20	<b>\$4,160,000</b>
@ \$30	<b>\$6,240,000</b>

Sources: Spending and visitor assumptions by Fourth Economy.

In addition, the new Community Events Center will contribute to the total visitor spending discussed above. This includes spending at hotels and other lodging, food and beverage, retail, recreation, and transportation spending by the 208,000 estimated visitors. Combined, the resulting impacts of the new Community Events Center are estimated to be the following:

## Economic Impacts of Future Event Center

	Direct Output	Total Output	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Induced Jobs	Total Jobs Supported
Operations	\$4,800,000	\$8,700,000	30	20	30	80
Visitor Spend	\$11,000,000	\$20,100,000	120	20	50	190
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>\$15,800,000</b>	<b>\$28,800,000</b>	150	40	80	<b>270</b>

## Future Event Center Earnings and Taxes

	Earnings	Taxes
Operations	\$6,700,000	\$600,000
Visitors	\$9,900,000	\$1,800,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,600,000</b>	<b>\$2,400,000</b>

## New Downtown Expansion

Point Park University is considering taking on several new projects near campus including the revitalization of an iconic Downtown landmark. Plans for this space will activate, secure, and transform two high-profile city blocks in Pittsburgh. Plans currently include space for technology labs, event and community outreach space, a business accelerator. Details include:



### Technology Labs and Facilities

The University will support and develop innovation in live entertainment, digital media, and high-tech theater spaces by fostering cutting-edge research, hands-on learning opportunities, and industry collaborations that push the boundaries of performance, storytelling, and immersive experiences.

Facilities will support the **Center for Experiential Narrative Technologies** to explore emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, generative artificial intelligence, and immersive media. By integrating these advancements into innovative storytelling techniques, the Center prepares students for dynamic careers at the intersection of technology, media, and storytelling through research, hands-on projects, and industry partnerships.

### Event and Community Engagement Space

Point Park University will dedicate a floor to **conference and event space** to provide meeting and event space for University events, as well as corporate and community meetings and events.

The **Institute of Community Engagement** will create a storefront to facilitate collaboration with community partners. It will integrate curricular and extracurricular activities to address local needs and position Point Park as a key regional partner.

### Residential Housing

With its growing enrollment, Point Park University will need additional residential housing in its footprint. The University is consistently sought after by private developers to consider joint ventures and master lease agreement approaches to develop campus housing complemented with student service facilities and amenities. Future plans include the addition of 400 to 600 beds in apartment-style student housing.

# Entrepreneurship Accelerator Potential Impacts

## Business Accelerator

Point Park University will transform one floor into a **business accelerator, focused on live entertainment, content creation, and experiential technology**. It aims to support workforce development, job creation, and attract investments.

While the Accelerator is still in preliminary stages of planning, it is possible to project the impacts it will have. Accelerators provide critical support to startups that include pitch coaching, business development, marketing, media support, mentoring, and legal counsel.

The Global Accelerator Network (GAN) 2022 Data Report contains program data through 2021 from 74 GAN accelerators, representing 1,443 startups that graduated in 2021, and is based on a survey conducted from December 2021 through January 2022. Data from this report informs the types of long-term impacts this facility could generate.

- The average accelerator operating budget in 2021 was **\$674,769**.
- Space is provided by 65 percent of GAN accelerators for their startups, and 63 percent use their space for community events. The average amount of space designated for an accelerator is **13,824 SF**. Current plans call for the Point Park University accelerator to have 17,718 SF.
- The average accelerator in 2021 had **9.4 positions** in addition to the Managing Director and Program Manager.
- Follow-on funds are present at 31 percent of accelerators, with an average fund size of **\$3,628,889**. These funds are used to invest in startups after they complete the accelerator program.
- Accelerators graduate a median of **10 firms per year**.
- The annual average employment at the startups located in the accelerator is **2 employees**.
- The all-time average jobs created per startup is **6.8 jobs**.

Based on this data, the new accelerator could **support 90 employees** when it becomes operational, a conservative estimate based on occupancy and space capacity. Assuming two employees per firm that serve as many as 45 firms, but it may take a year or more for the accelerator to graduate any firms.



Given the planned focus on live entertainment, content creation, and experiential narrative technology, employment is likely to be a mix of management (45 jobs) and technology positions (45 jobs). This results in an initial impact of **\$6.5 million** to the regional economy from 50 direct jobs and **151 total jobs**. These jobs will provide \$10.6 million in earnings in the region and generate \$500,000 in annual business taxes.

### Accelerator Assumptions

	75% Occupancy	90% Occupancy
SF	17,718	17,718
SF per employee	150	175
<b>Employment Capacity</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>91</b>

### Projected Accelerator Impacts

	75% Occupancy
Direct output	\$6,800,000
<b>Total output</b>	<b>\$11,700,000</b>
Total jobs supported	151
Direct jobs supported	90
Indirect jobs supported	16
Induced jobs supported	44
Earnings	\$10,600,000
Taxes	\$500,000

Note: These impacts are not included in the overall 2033 impacts.

If fully implemented as currently planned, the new Downtown Event Center and Entrepreneurship Accelerator would generate a combined **\$40.5 million** in total output and **421 jobs**.



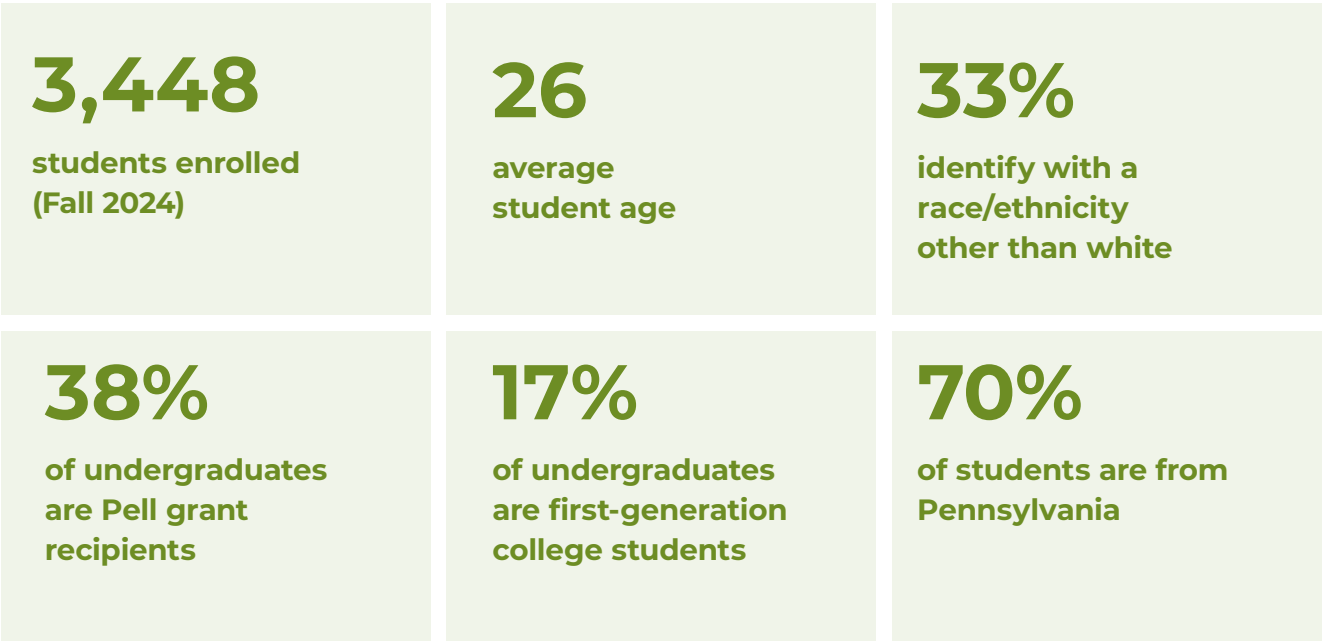
# SOCIAL & COMMUNITY IMPACTS

# SOCIAL IMPACT FINDINGS

Point Park University plays a vital role in shaping the social and cultural fabric of the greater Pittsburgh region. As an urban institution rooted in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh, the University extends its influence as the only Downtown university, far beyond the classroom, fostering economic mobility, civic engagement, and community development. Through its commitment to accessible education, workforce preparation, and partnerships with local organizations, Point Park enriches the region by equipping students with the skills to succeed while also driving positive change in surrounding neighborhoods. This section explores the university’s contributions to social, cultural, and community impacts, highlighting Point Park’s role as a catalyst for meaningful impact in Pittsburgh and beyond.

## Pioneers Making an Impact

Point Park’s emphasis on diversity and accessibility helps create educational opportunities for first-generation college students and working adults from the Pittsburgh region, through generous financial aid, scholarships, mentorship, and other supportive services. Through its academic programs in fields like education, criminal justice, and community development, Point Park graduates often go on to serve in public service roles that directly benefit Pittsburgh’s communities.

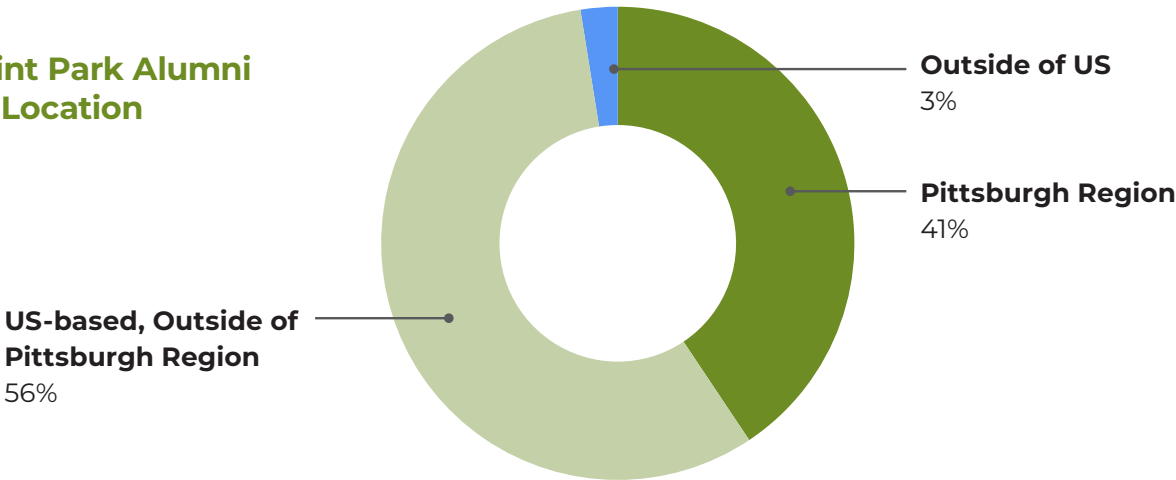




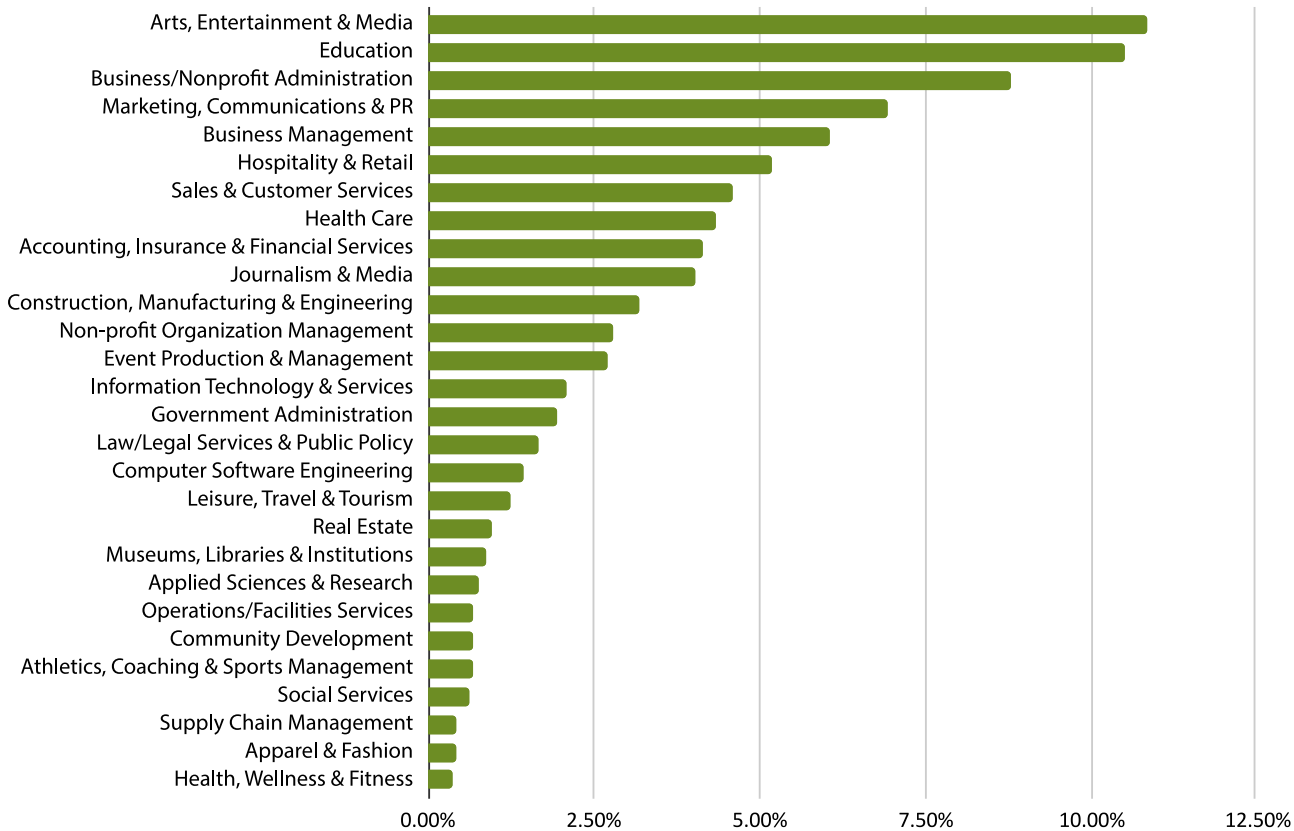
Making an Impact Near and Far

According to an analysis of more than 2,400 LinkedIn profiles of Point Park alumni, **41 percent continue to live and work in the greater Pittsburgh area upon graduation.** Point Park graduates are most represented in fields such as **Arts, Entertainment & Media, Education, Business/Nonprofit Administration, Marketing, Communications & Public Relations, and Business Management.**

Point Park Alumni  
by Location



Point Park Alumni Employment by Industry



## Impacts on Culture and Place

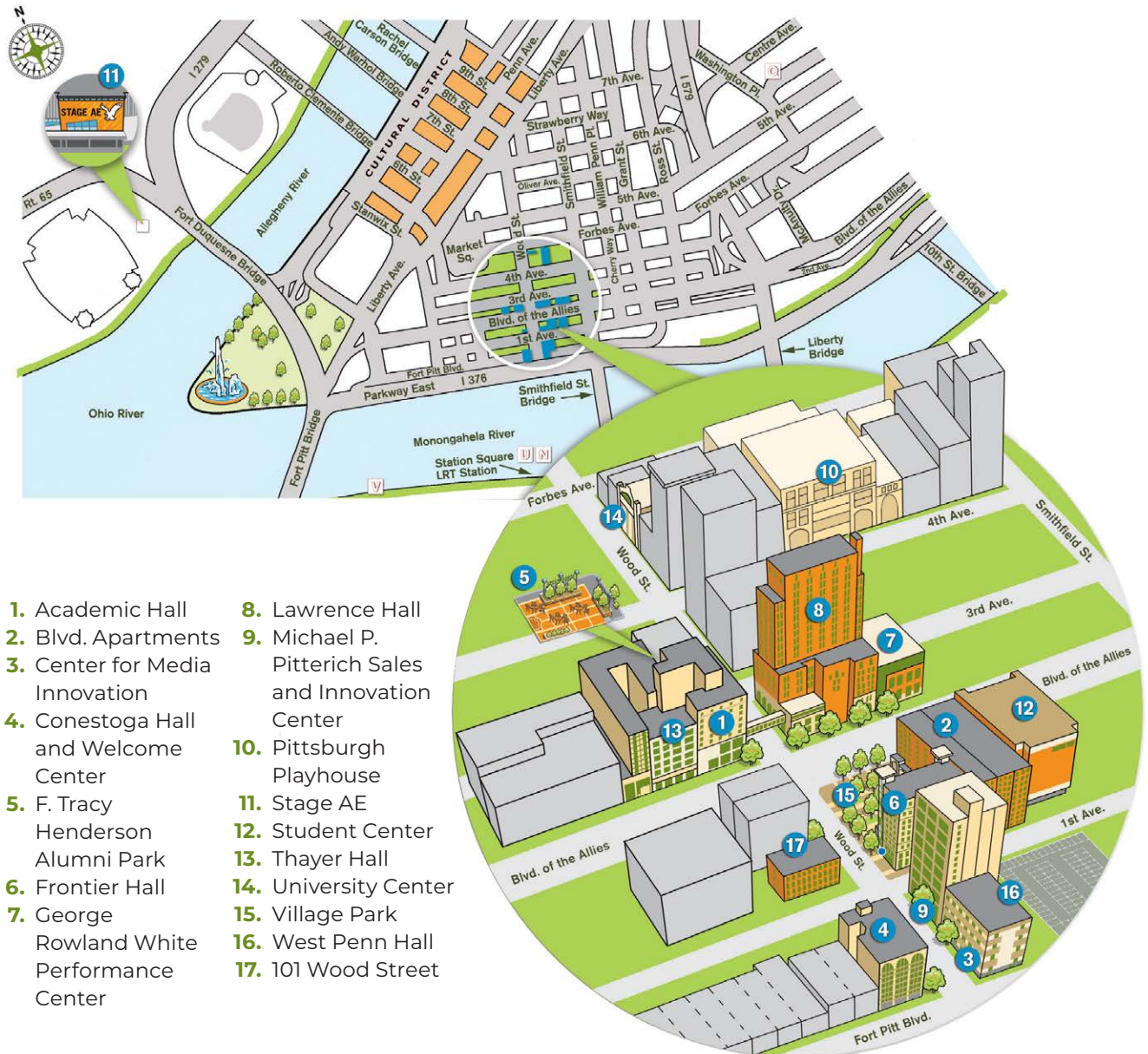
Point Park University plays a vital role as both a cultural beacon and a cornerstone of the community. This contribution is most visible in the University's development of the Pittsburgh Playhouse, which showcases a dynamic lineup of performances that attract diverse audiences and foster budding talent. The Playhouse serves as a hub for artistic creativity while also offering hands-on learning experiences such as apprenticeships and journeyman programs, helping to cultivate the next generation of theater professionals.

Beyond the arts, students from its seven schools actively engage with and support the community. Programs like the Sports, Arts, Entertainment, and Music Business major, Center for Media Innovation, Institute of Community Engagement, and the newly launched Center for Experiential Narrative Technologies (CENT) extend the knowledge and enthusiasm of the classroom to real-world opportunities that enhance the region. This integrated approach provides students with opportunities to move from learning to application while deepening the university's connection to the community.





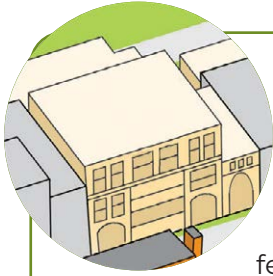
## Campus Map and Key Sites



### Lawrence, Thayer, and Conestoga Halls

Point Park University offers four distinct residence halls. Thayer Hall, at 270 Third Avenue, provides air-conditioned single, double, and triple rooms with community bathrooms and an Honors Program Residential Floor. Lawrence Hall, a historic building at 212 Wood Street, features single, double, and triple rooms, but lacks air conditioning; it also houses classrooms, a ballroom, bookstore, and cafeteria. Conestoga Hall, at 249 Fort Pitt Boulevard, offers suite-style living for 90 students, each suite including two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, and a kitchenette. Boulevard Apartments is a five-story apartment building is home to 270 students with four apartments on each floor. All halls provide free laundry facilities and unique amenities to support a vibrant campus life.



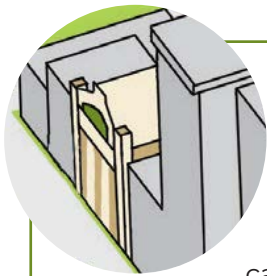


### Pittsburgh Playhouse

The Pittsburgh Playhouse, located at 305 Forbes Avenue in Downtown Pittsburgh, is a 90,411-square-foot theater complex that opened on October 11, 2018. The facility features 91 rooms, including a three-story lobby with natural light, a grand staircase, and areas for student gatherings.

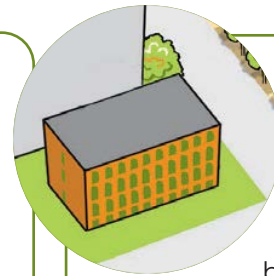
Its main venue, the PNC Theatre, seats 550 and has backstage areas visible from the street, offering passersby a glimpse into performing arts classes. Additionally, the Playhouse includes a 2,738-square-foot soundstage with 24-foot-high ceilings and a 15-foot-high catwalk, providing professional-level learning opportunities for students in cinematography, audio work, lighting, and aesthetics. Designed as a learning laboratory for all Point Park University students, not just those in the Conservatory of Performing Arts, the Playhouse offers experiential learning opportunities in producing, marketing, management, ticketing, and programming.

Through its dedication to academic excellence, cultural initiatives, and urban development, Point Park University exemplifies the positive impact an anchor institution can have on its city, fostering growth and transformation for generations to come. As the sole Downtown university in Pittsburgh, Point Park plays a crucial role in shaping the City's future and revitalizing its urban core.



### University Center

The University Center at Point Park University, located at 414 Wood Street in Downtown Pittsburgh, serves as a central hub for student activities, events, and services, fostering a vibrant campus environment. This facility houses the Point Park University Library, providing students with access to a wide range of academic resources. Additionally, the University Center offers free Wi-Fi, enhancing connectivity for both study and leisure. Its strategic location and comprehensive amenities make the University Center an integral part of student life at Point Park.



### 101 Wood St.

The 101 Wood Street building, also known as "The Green Building," houses several university departments and offices. Additionally, the building features dance studio spaces on the first floor, which have been utilized for events such as ballroom dance classes. The Green Building's central location on Wood Street makes it a convenient hub for various academic and administrative functions within the university.



### George Rowland White Performance Center

The George Rowland White Performance Center, opened in 2008, is a 44,000-square-foot, Gold LEED-certified dance facility at Point Park University. It features eight studios equipped with state-of-the-art systems, including the convertible 188-seat George Rowland White Performance Studio, providing students with professional-grade spaces for rehearsals and performances.

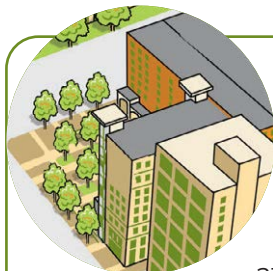
## Center for Media Innovation

The Center for Media Innovation (CMI) at Point Park University, located in West Penn Hall on Wood Street, serves as a cutting-edge learning lab and collaborative space for students, media professionals, and the Pittsburgh community. Established in 2016 and relocated to its current location in 2022, the CMI offers state-of-the-art facilities, including television and radio broadcast studios, a photo studio, a multimedia newsroom, and a versatile presentation and gallery space. Designed with floor-to-ceiling glass walls, flat-screen televisions, and a digital ticker, the center provides a dynamic, New York City-style media hub where passersby can observe and engage with the evolving media landscape. Beyond its physical resources, the CMI fosters innovation and collaboration through initiatives like the Pittsburgh Media Partnership and the Pittsburgh Downtown Media Hub, supporting local journalism and community storytelling.



*“Physically, Point Park serves as a vital connector and activity generator, with Wood Street acting as a central spine linking the campus to the Cultural District and surrounding neighborhoods. The university’s presence along this street injects much-needed energy into areas that have suffered from disinvestment, revitalizing the streetscape with greenery and fostering a sense of vibrancy and renewal.”*

- Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel Report, 2024



## Frontier Hall and Village Park

Frontier Hall, located at 100 Wood Street, is a central administrative building at Point Park University, housing key departments such as Business Affairs, Human Resources, Physical Plant, and Public Safety. Its strategic position in the heart of the campus ensures efficient access for students and staff to essential services.

Adjacent to Frontier Hall is Village Park, a revitalized urban green space that transformed a former parking lot into a vibrant gathering area. Situated at the corner of Wood Street and Boulevard of the Allies, the park features tables, chairs, and a distinctive waterfall, creating a welcoming environment for relaxation and social interaction. It also serves as a venue for various university events, enhancing campus life and community engagement.

## Preserving and Revitalizing the Golden Triangle

Point Park University embraces its role as a key stakeholder and driver of neighborhood revitalization in Downtown Pittsburgh, carefully preserving and revitalizing historic structures that contribute to the city's unique character. In addition to its existing landmarks, such as the Pittsburgh Playhouse, Village Park, and the Center for Media Innovation, Point Park is actively planning new developments to elevate the Downtown experience, positioning itself as a catalyst for Pittsburgh's next renaissance. The University's Pioneer Vision 2030 strategic plan includes proposals for mixed-generational housing, a Downtown Events Center, and a dedicated student union. These initiatives aim to further integrate the University with the surrounding community and drive regional economic development.

The nature of downtowns across the United States has been shifting for several decades, with downtown vacancy rates climbing to record levels in many communities. Successful downtowns have been shifting from a single 9 to 5 reality with only one type of user in mind to places that are vibrant both day and night, offering a variety of activities and destinations to suit a wide range of uses. With this in mind, Point Park University is an essential anchor that contributes not only to the vibrancy of the Golden Triangle but also serves to activate and connect other key locations throughout the City. The University aims to enhance key corridors like the Boulevard of the Allies and Wood Street, which connect the City's cultural hub to the campus. This effort contributes to the overall vitality of Downtown Pittsburgh.



## Contributions to Cultural Vibrancy

One of Point Park University's most significant contributions to the Pittsburgh community are the numerous public events and performances held throughout the year, including dance performances, cultural festivals, film festivals, awards ceremonies, musical performances, and more. These events attract more than 80,000 visitors annually.

Point Park University demonstrates its commitment to community engagement through robust partnerships with the Allegheny Conference and the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. The University's collaboration with these entities extends beyond traditional academic boundaries, fostering a symbiotic relationship that benefits both the institution and the broader Pittsburgh community.



A prime example of this partnership in action was the hosting of Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership's Picklesburgh event on Point Park's campus in 2023 and 2024. This vibrant celebration of all things pickled attracted over 250,000 visitors to Downtown Pittsburgh in July 2024, showcasing the University's ability to leverage its urban location and facilities to support major community events. By participating in such initiatives, Point Park not only contributes to the cultural vibrancy of the City but also provides unique experiential learning opportunities for its students, reinforcing its role as an active and engaged member of the Pittsburgh community.

The Pittsburgh Playhouse, the \$64 million venue opened by the University in 2018, includes three stages, prop and costume shops, a sound stage, and other facilities that not only attract residents and visitors by offering a unique theater experience, but also facilitate opportunities for students to engage in practical experience.

Additionally, the Playhouse features amenities such as a grand staircase, box office, bar, cafe, and terrace/plaza that are open to the public, enhancing the cultural offerings in the area. The existing terrace and plaza at the Pittsburgh Playhouse feature outdoor seating and restored historic facades from various Downtown buildings, enhancing the character of the surrounding area.

**The Playhouse has been central to many events that have an impact far beyond Downtown Pittsburgh such as Point Park University's International Summer Dance program which has welcomed talented dancers, teachers and musicians from across the country and around the globe.**



**During the 2023/24 season, the Pittsburgh Playhouse hosted 324 events, including 19 ticketed performances, generating more than \$224K in ticket sales – an average of \$11,791 per show.**



Point Park’s presence in Downtown Pittsburgh enhances the vibrancy of the region through important cultural, educational, and entertainment events such as....



The **EQT Children’s Theater Festival** fosters imagination through high-quality professional theater performances from around the world. This three-day celebration of professional theater performances and free activities for children and families in Pittsburgh’s Cultural District has featured incredible international performances featuring traditional dance and garb from around the world.



**Lunar New Year** is the most important holiday celebrated by many international communities all over the world. Hosted by the Pittsburgh Chinese Cultural Center, the Greater Pittsburgh Lunar New Year Gala was successfully held at the Pittsburgh Playhouse PNC Theater in Downtown Pittsburgh in February 2023 and 2024. The events have presented a splendid audiovisual feast to nearly six hundred attendees each year!



Both **Film Pittsburgh** and the **Three Rivers Film Festival** have held their opening events at the Playhouse, celebrating local and independent filmmaking. The venue has also hosted screenings from **ReelAbilities**, exclusively showcasing films by and about people with disabilities. Point Park is a regular sponsor of the Reel Abilities, 3 Rivers, and Pittsburgh Shorts Festivals.

---

**“I always enjoy so much seeing all of the performances. They’re always so beautiful.”**

Lindsay Williams, PA State Senator on the 2023 Lunar New Year Gala

---

**“I love this event because it really brings multiple generations together.”**

Rich Fitzgerald , Allegheny County Executive on the 2023 Lunar New Year Gala

# Community Impacts

Point Park University impacts Pittsburgh and surrounding communities through multiple channels of engagement and service.

- The University's **commitment to community development** is evident through student volunteering, faculty and staff dedication to advancing local journalistic integrity, and partnerships with Downtown development organizations.
- **Support for those in need** manifests through comprehensive financial aid programs, services for first-generation and non-traditional students, and emergency assistance initiatives like the student food pantry.
- The University **advances regional journalism** through the student-run Point Park News Service, the Center for Media Innovation, Media Hub, and various internship programs that provide valuable coverage of local issues while training the next generation of media professionals.
- **Local businesses and organizations benefit** from student internships, faculty-led research partnerships, and consulting projects through business programs. Professional development and continuing education programs help develop the local workforce.

Students and Staff contribute an average of 22,300 volunteer hours annually, representing an economic contribution of **\$660,080 in hourly wage equivalent.**

Through these varied initiatives, Point Park creates a web of support that strengthens both the immediate Downtown community and the broader Pittsburgh region, fulfilling its role as an engaged urban institution committed to public service and community advancement.

The following are examples of the many ways the Point Park community serves the greater Pittsburgh Region.

## Volunteering and Community Engagement

The **Bonner Leaders Program** is a national program that seeks to improve the lives of individuals and communities. This four-year service-based program pairs real-life work experiences using federal work-study dollars in Pittsburgh nonprofit organizations with powerful leadership development training and education that helps students transition from volunteers to leaders in their community. Bonner Leaders are paid for 10 hours/week to work with a nonprofit community partner and complete leadership training. Leaders typically join as freshmen and continue through their senior year. 23 students have participated in the program since 2022/23, representing **6,900 hours devoted to community development through the program.**



Point Park University's **Department of Community Engagement & Leadership** is dedicated to preparing students and professionals to become agents of change in diverse community settings. It offers a variety of programs and initiatives that focus on community-based learning, research, and partnerships.



Among its goals, Point Park University's Department of Community Engagement & Leadership seeks to prepare leaders for outreach and partnership work in civic, business, and community organizations. Student projects have embodied this mission while working towards a more vibrant and inclusive City. While community engagement may often be perceived as moving primarily within the non-profit sector, Point Park offers opportunities to work with different departments and community partners, which allows students to experience avenues to support, reimagine, engage with, and build community.

### Supporting Those in Need

Point Park University is dedicated to serving vulnerable populations within its own community of students, faculty, and staff, as well as in the Downtown Pittsburgh neighborhood. Listed are examples of this care and service.

To move from surviving to thriving as a critical social experience and change is the mission of the **Mobile Thriving Respite**, which began in 2019 by playing films for the street community and unhoused populations at various locations around the City. The thriving respite is staffed by Point Park University undergraduate and graduate students trained in community psychology. The respite regularly offers opportunities to relax and de-stress, enjoy culture and education, play games, and access one's creativity and dignity.

**Pioneer Pantry** strives to alleviate food insecurity by providing supplemental food free to those in need within the Point Park University community. The organization strives to change the perception of hunger on campus and provide resources to educate the community about nutrition and healthy eating. Students currently enrolled at Point Park University are eligible to receive up to 10 items, twice a month, by filling out the order form at [pioneerpantry.org](http://pioneerpantry.org). This helps fill a critical need on campus: About 31 percent of students interviewed for a campus-wide survey report being forced to choose between paying for food or their education. A recent survey of more than 325 Point Park students found that about 38 percent of them have faced times during the school year when they did not have enough food for themselves or their households.

The Department of Community Engagement hosts monthly volunteer and service opportunities for the campus community. In September, the Department sponsored **Pioneer Community Week**, showcasing a different service project every day on campus. Pioneer Partners regularly hosts "PB&J Days" in partnership with Second Avenue Commons Homeless Shelter to make 100-200 sandwiches for their residents.

## Advancing Regional Journalism

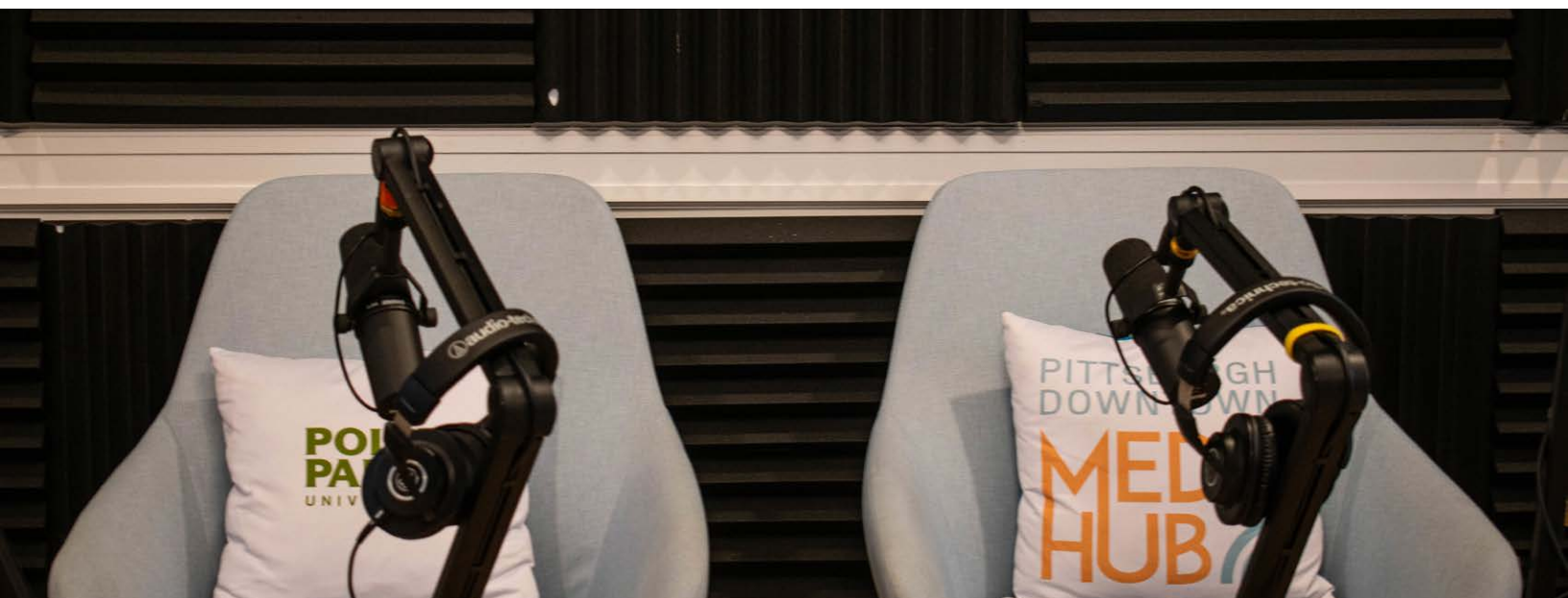
Point Park University's journalism and media programs contribute to local news coverage and civic dialogue through student-produced content and reporting, including through the following programs and initiatives:

**Press Forward Southwestern Pennsylvania** convenes five local foundations in support of local journalism initiatives, as part of a larger national movement committed to investing \$500 million over five years. The local foundations are The Benter Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, Henry L. Hillman Foundation, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and one anonymous funder.

**Citizen Reporting Academy** provides basic journalism training for individuals who want to identify, report, and disseminate information about their local communities.

Through **Point Park's Center for Media Innovation**, the **Pittsburgh Media Partnership** (PMP) supports and promotes local journalism across the region, filling a much-needed gap in local news coverage. The PMP — which comprises 31 media outlets in the Greater Pittsburgh area — accomplishes this by encouraging collaboration between and among partner outlets, developing and distributing resources, building capabilities, and advocating for local journalism. The PMP oversees a year-round internship program in which area university students are either placed with partner news outlets or work out of the **Pittsburgh Downtown Media Hub**. During the 2023 summer session, 11 interns produced more than 150 bylined stories and photos for their respective outlets during eight weeks extending from early June through early August.

The Media Hub is home to six news outlets and serves as a drop-in space for journalists and creatives. Point Park students can use it as a creative space to work on projects, connect with industry professionals, and gain media experience. The hub features a lounge for studying and collaboration, plus a podcast studio with professional audio and video equipment.



# Impact on Local Businesses, Partnerships, and Beyond

Point Park University's relationships with local employers, non-profit partners, and other community leaders help provide local businesses and organizations with student interns, while students benefit from experiential learning. Students and faculty collaborate with community partners, including local schools and neighborhood groups, on projects that address specific societal needs and challenges. Some of these efforts are detailed here:

## Pioneering Partnerships

The **Paraprofessional-to-Teachers Pipeline** initiative has the potential to bridge the gap between higher education and K-12 schools by creating new pathways for aspiring teachers already working within the state's school districts. PTP programs leading to teacher certification for the commonwealth's more than 80 career and technical educational centers

**Rising Brothers and Sisters**, a mentorship program of Point Park University's Rowland School of Business, provides students with small group support systems and programming focused on academic preparedness, career readiness, and character development.

Point Park offers **tuition discount programs** to employees of various local organizations, including Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh employees, emergency services personnel, members and employees of various credit unions, and other local organizations and businesses. This makes higher education more accessible to residents and workers, contributing to the development of the region's workforce.

Point Park's **co-op program** provides students with real-world, full-time, paid work experience while earning credits towards their degree. With connections to more than 40 companies, Point Park's co-op model aims to enhance students' career readiness and provide them with a competitive advantage in the job market upon graduation.

The **Office of Pre-College Programs** commits to shaping innovative educational experiences for youth and high school students in the areas of **Summer Camps and Intensives, and Dual Enrollment**. For Summer 2023, there were a total of 322 unique enrollees across all camps. For Summer 2024, there were a total of 379 enrollees.



The Bonner Program is a national organization that gives a unique opportunity to college students: financial aid in the form of either a scholarship or a work-study job held at a local nonprofit. This March, Zane Atkins was placed with the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership as part of the program, further enhancing Point Park's connection with the local business community.



# CONCLUSION

As a dynamic institution embedded in the heart of Pittsburgh, Point Park University is a key contributor to the region's economic resilience and social vitality. Through its role as an employer, purchaser, educator, and cultural hub, Point Park generates **\$236.9 million in total output and 3,270 total jobs** for the Pittsburgh regional economy annually.

The University enriches the community by fostering innovation, workforce development, and civic engagement. Point Park's continued growth ensures that its contributions will expand in the coming years; by 2033, that impact is projected to grow to **\$486.3 million in output and 4,370 total jobs**. This growth will further strengthen Pittsburgh's economic foundation and enhance the quality of life for residents.

As Point Park looks to the future, its commitment to education, industry partnerships, and community engagement will remain central to its mission—helping to shape a thriving, prosperous region for generations to come.

# APPENDIX

## Methodology

Fourth Economy used Lightcast, a standard input-output model, for the economic impact analysis. This platform provides an input/output model of economic activity that is used to identify the effects of a specific stimulus, such as employment in a specific industry or investment in the construction of new facilities or even the impact of the expenditures from a firm or industry. An input/output model estimates the interactions between industries and households in an economy to identify how transactions impact the production and consumption of goods and services in an economy (see figure on page 4).

Indirect effects take account of everything that an industry needs to produce a unit of commodity. For example, the production of \$100 worth of paper will require inputs from a variety of supplier industries such as chemicals, toolmakers, trucking companies and more. Furthermore, that \$100 worth of paper may then be an input for other goods and services in schools, hospitals, architects, manufacturing plants and so on. Induced effects are the impacts that result from household expenditures for goods as services as a result of earnings from the direct and indirect expenditures.

We used a Lightcast model for the Pittsburgh metropolitan region. This model estimates the direct, indirect, and induced effects based on the Social Account Matrix (SAM) that includes industries, institutions and households. SAM models account for social security and income tax leakage, institution savings, commuting and inter-institutional transfers.

Some of the inputs for this analysis are based on reported numbers, such as the construction spending or the number of university employees and students. Other inputs, such as student spending, the number of visitors and visitor spending are based on estimates and assumptions from various sources. We have documented those assumptions throughout this report.

Caution is required in interpreting the estimates of input-output models. These models estimate the resources required to produce given quantities of different kinds of output. In other words, what amount of concrete and other supplies does it take to produce \$1 million worth of new roads? For these new roads to have a net impact on the economy, we have to assume that the businesses providing those goods and services are at capacity and cannot produce them without additional workers and resources. If there is slack capacity, then the \$1 million helps to retain existing jobs. The input-output model is therefore more like an accounting tool that describes the allocation of resource requirements, but it does not tell us if they are new resources or substitutions.

**POINT PARK**  
UNIVERSITY

[pointpark.edu](http://pointpark.edu)