



TELLING THE STORIES OF  
PURDUE UNIVERSITY,  
*TOGETHER*

2021 IMPACT REPORT



# PERSISTENTLY PURSUING THE NEXT GIANT LEAP, *TOGETHER*

One year after launching a new brand vision, we began 2021 full speed ahead — united on solid ground to position, promote and protect Purdue.



In October, Purdue joined the ranks of Nike, 3M and McDonald's on Fast Company magazine's inaugural list of Brands

That Matter. The only university to be recognized, Purdue earned its top spot among leading corporations recognized for giving people compelling reasons to care, offering inspiration for buy in and communicating their mission and ideals authentically.

In short, ours is a story the world wants to hear. And in 2021, we leaned into storytelling like never before — telling the Purdue stories that make us, us. We met our audience right where they were and invited them to join the conversation. We rallied around new challenges and persistently pursued the next giant leap — **together.**

**Chapter 1 | Telling Stories That Matter**

**Chapter 2 | Engaging Our Community**

**Chapter 3 | Protecting Purdue During COVID-19**

**Chapter 4 | Amplifying Our Voice**



## Chapter 1

# Telling Stories That Matter

Storytelling is at the center of everything we do. In 2021, Purdue strategically crafted more than 100 stories through written stories, photography and video. Our stories were memorable, impactful — and worth passing on. They stirred emotions and sparked ideas that helped us capture the hearts of our students, families, faculty, alumni and community like never before.



# INCLUSION MATTERS



## The Parker Sisters

Boilermakers everywhere need to know the story of Winifred and Frieda Parker — two sisters who fought to integrate Purdue student housing in 1946. Told through the words of their children and others impacted by their courageous efforts, our story and featured video forever preserved their legacy, garnering over 1 million impressions and national media pickup by outlets like ESPN.

1M+ SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

108,707 VIDEO  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)[Watch the Video](#)

## Divine Nine

In 1930, a handful of historically Black fraternities and sororities came together to create the National Pan-Hellenic Council — “The Divine Nine.” The NPHC offered a haven on predominantly white campuses, creating a sense of belonging and community for Black students. The story of the Divine Nine embodies the spirit of Black excellence at Purdue, and provides a foundation to tell a broader story about the Black Boilermaker experience at Purdue in the year ahead.

125,191 SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

920 STORY  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)

# ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS

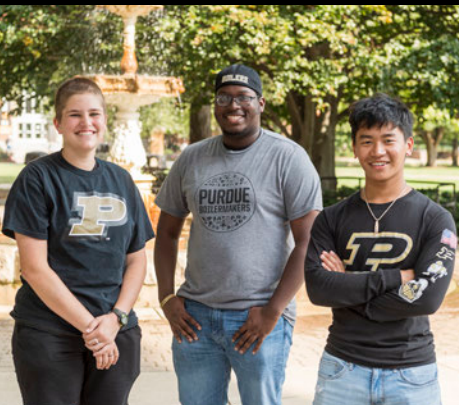


## 10 Years of Frozen Tuition

In 2021, Purdue's Board of Trustees approved plans for a record 10th straight year of frozen tuition. So far, students and their families have saved more than a billion dollars in tuition, and nearly 60% of Boilermakers graduate debt-free. Our video series added in the human context. We invited students to share what frozen tuition means for them and their families. To maximize our impact on behalf of the University, we pushed this content at the beginning of the 2021 yield season, delivering the right message at the right time to reach students and their families.

**627,194** SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS  
**1K** VIDEO  
SERIES  
VIEWS

[Watch the Series](#)



## Purdue Polytechnic High School Documentary Series

When Purdue leadership reviewed the data about how few underrepresented minority and low-income students were attending Purdue, they asked how Purdue could instigate change in the college pipeline. The result: Purdue Polytechnic High Schools. Our video series highlighted the passion of PPHS instructors — known as coaches — and the life-changing impact PPHS has had for three students who were part of the first-ever graduating class.

**686,188** SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS  
**108,787** VIDEO  
SERIES  
VIEWS

[Watch the Series](#)

# TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION MATTERS



## The Data Mine

The Data Mine is a first-of-its-kind learning community, preparing Boilermakers from across disciplines and majors to collaborate on real-world data science projects with some of the world's leading corporations — including Bayer, Beck's, Cummins, Ford and TMap. Purdue is helping grow their reach through student recruitment and attracting and expanding new corporate partnerships. As a result, The Data Mine is forecasting the number of corporate partners to double in 2022.

892,478 SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

145,637 VIDEO  
SERIES  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)[Watch the Video](#)

## Miri Niedrauer

Purdue alumna Miri Niedrauer has a message for young girls and women everywhere: There is a place for you in STEM. "Every single day you have to look yourself in the mirror and ask, how bad (do) you want this?" Her story is a testament to overcoming obstacles and persistently pursuing dreams — and proof that no matter how you get here, there's a place for you on Purdue's campus.

IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS  
101,091 SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

25,563 VIDEO  
VIEWS

[Watch the Video](#)

# PERSISTENCE MATTERS



## Heather Penney: Hero, Patriot, Boilermaker

On Sept. 11, 2001, fighter pilot and Purdue alumna Heather Penney was prepared to sacrifice her life to prevent United Flight 93 from hitting targets in the nation's capital. To commemorate the 20-year anniversary, Purdue provided a timely highlight of Penney's heroism — and brought the story to a new generation of Boilermakers.

698,596 SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

34,679 STORY  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)



## Commencement, Reimagined

Learning to adapt was the theme of the 2020-21 school year. It was only fitting that Purdue continued with the theme to honor the Class of 2021 in another first: an outdoor commencement in Ross-Ade Stadium. Purdue quickly pivoted, helping create a unique commencement program that included a showstopping video lead-in for President Mitch Daniels' iconic arrival on the Couch Cart! As Daniels said, "It was such a Purdue thing to do." Our commencement weekend media efforts resulted in placements in The Wall Street Journal, ESPN, CNBC, USA Today and NBC, among others.

453,018 SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

42,534 VIDEO  
VIEWS

4,004 STORY  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)

[Watch the Video](#)

# COMMUNITY MATTERS



## Purdue Helps Launch Greater Lafayette Into National Spotlight

Accessible, affordable, vibrant — our hometown is a place like no other. So, we weren't surprised when in 2021 The Wall Street Journal and Realtor.com ranked Greater Lafayette sixth among the nation's top 300 emerging housing markets, citing its low housing costs, high employment rate, amenities and more. Our team connected with Boilermakers across our community to talk about why Greater Lafayette, with Purdue as its anchor, is such a great place to call home.

**394,062** SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

**106,561** VIDEO  
SERIES  
VIEWS

[Read the Story](#)[Watch the Series](#)

## The Best Memories Are Made Together

The world around us may change — but the passion, tradition and love that unite us remain the same. After two years of COVID-19 restrictions, we wanted to celebrate our remarkable Boilermaker family coming together to celebrate the Thanksgiving season — and cheer on the Boilermakers against IU. This video celebrates the resilience of the Purdue community while sending an invitation to our friends and alumni to let them know that our campus is open and ready to welcome them back.

**252,107** SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

**41,649** VIDEO  
VIEWS

[Watch the Video](#)

## Chapter 2

# Engaging Our Community

We doubled down on our social media efforts in 2021 — meeting current and future Boilermakers right where they are, on the channels where they spend their time. In 2021, that meant sustained investment in traditional social media platforms, plus expanding our reach through TikTok and YouTube and upping our podcast game with programming updates to “This Is Purdue.”

9.8M VIDEO VIEWS  
ACROSS  
SOCIAL MEDIA ↑ 41%  
over 2020

5.2M ENGAGEMENTS  
ACROSS  
POSTS ↑ 24%  
over 2020

984,384 TOTAL  
FOLLOWERS ↑ 13.8%  
over 2020



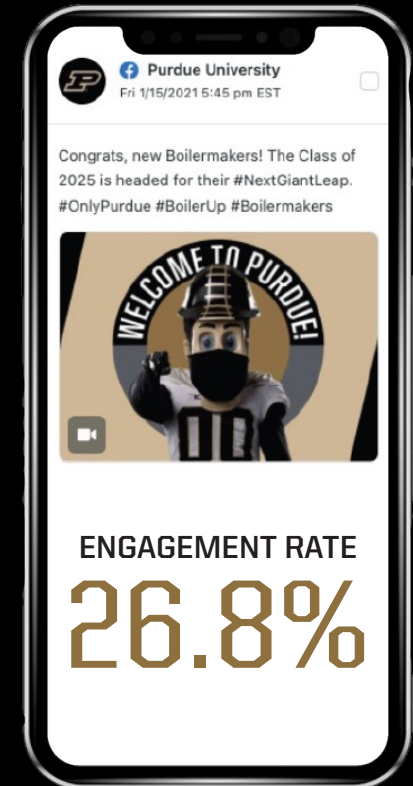


# Purdue Enrollment Management Partnership

In 2021, Purdue Marketing and Communications partnered with the Purdue Enrollment Management team to overhaul how we communicate with prospective students. We folded the Purdue Admissions social media channels into the University's main social accounts, creating a single go-to destination for our audience. The broader reach and focused content paid off with our top engaging post of the year ... **and our largest-ever incoming freshman class!**



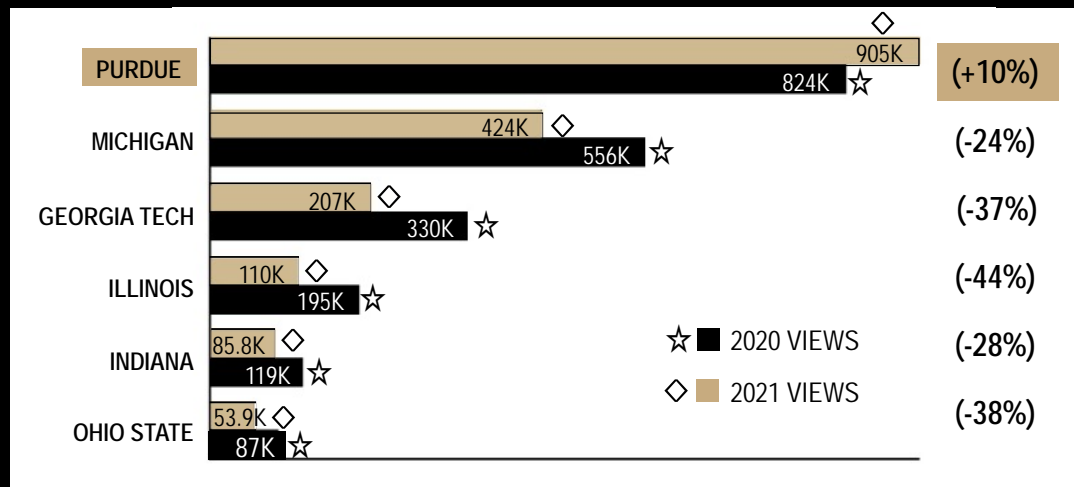
Read the yield  
campaign overview





## Leading the Way on YouTube

YouTube is one of the world's largest and most resilient social media platforms — but it has been underutilized by our peers. Recognizing the platform's storytelling capabilities and its popularity among prospective students, we committed to big content and engagement goals in 2021. The results speak for themselves.



SOURCE: RIVAL IQ, 2022

**905,000**  
**VIDEO VIEWS** ↑ **10%**  
over 2020

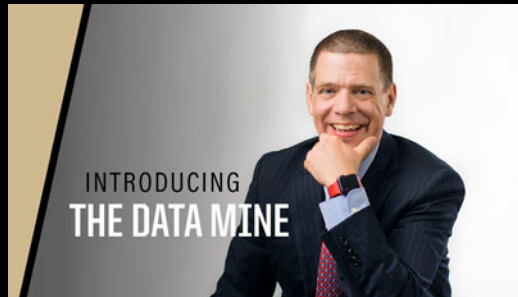
In 2021, Purdue University's content on YouTube grew over 10% and generated more views than five targeted competitors combined.

# Most Successful YouTube Videos of 2021

Among Purdue's top-viewed videos ever, we created five in the past year — and the view totals keep adding up.



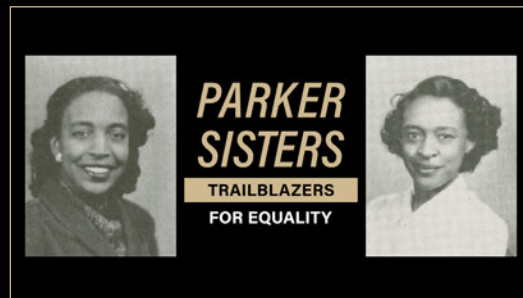
123,224 views



116,132 views



101,020 views



55,551 views



52,911 views



## A Boilermaker Carol

This one all started with a student's post on the Purdue subreddit. Purdue's 2021 holiday spot was the first of its kind for the University. To celebrate the spirit of the season at Purdue, our team collaborated with several campus partners — PMO, the theatre department, operations, facilities, maintenance and others — enabling us to authentically feature Purdue's campus and students.

The spot debuted during the Dec. 9 men's basketball game against Rutgers. Following that, we launched a wildly popular social media engagement. Boilermakers and related audiences were entertained and appreciated this nostalgia-inducing side of Purdue.

Watch  
the video



48 cross-channel social posts earned over

**1.5M** IMPRESSIONS  
AND OVER  
**35M** REACTIONS

## TOP-PERFORMING VIDEO OF 2021



**123,224** VIDEO  
VIEWS



## Surpassing Podcast Goals

In 2021, "This Is Purdue" elevated its content with a regular cadence of top-tier guests. Big names like President Mitch Daniels, men's basketball coach Matt Painter and former U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams, now executive director of health equity initiatives at Purdue, garnered a devoted audience — particularly among alumni.

**116,004** TOTAL LISTENS **↑ 387%**  
over 2020

And 55% Higher Than Our Goal of 75,000!

**20,828** LISTENS

For Our Most-Listened-To Episode  
with President Mitch Daniels

**10,603,434** SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

TOP  
**20%** MOST LISTENED-TO  
PODCASTS GLOBALLY



**MITCH DANIELS**

*Most Listened-to Episode*

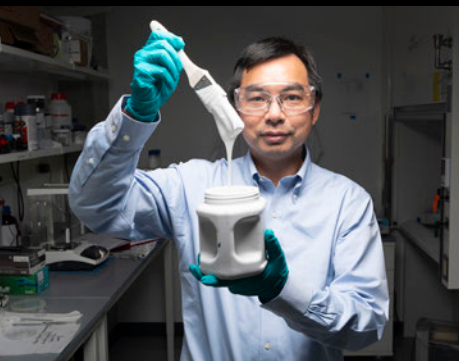


# Earning Media Placements Around the World

Purdue University earned its place on the global stage in 2021 with hundreds of headline-making stories. Through focused pitching and outreach, the stories of Purdue earned 45,500 placements and 34.5 billion impressions nationally and 12,600 placements and 25.1 billion impressions internationally.

**173 MAJOR BROADCAST NEWS STORIES**

↑ nearly **24%** over 2020    ↑ more than **82%** over 2019



## Whitest white paint

This innovative paint could help fight climate change. In an effort to curb global warming, Purdue engineers have created the whitest paint. Coating buildings with this paint may one day cool them off enough to reduce the need for air conditioning. As Purdue researchers work tirelessly on solutions to the world's most pressing issues, our team translates and champions their work for the widest possible audience.

[Read the Story](#)



## 100 years with the World's Largest Drum

For the first time since 1979, Purdue's band performed a halftime show without the World's Largest Drum. And all because the visitors' tunnel at Notre Dame wasn't big enough. The controversy happened to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the drum. Purdue was ready to make the most of the timing, pivoting to speed up production on the podcast to seize the moment to tell the world about the drum's legendary history.

[Read the Story](#)

## AP Associated Press

In Q4, Purdue embarked on a pilot program with The Associated Press to provide news media with video content from our top researchers. In just a few short months, our content rose to the very top slot in number of downloads and placements.

**300+** EARNED MEDIA BROADCAST PLACEMENTS IN Q4  
ACCOUNTING FOR 18.5% OF TOTAL PLACEMENTS

## Chapter 3

# Protecting Purdue During COVID-19

The spring of 2021 marked the second semester Purdue would be back for in-person instruction amid COVID-19. Vaccines were on the horizon and encouraging campuswide adoption became a central focus to support a safer community. Purdue created a robust vaccine content package for campus partners containing a variety of impactful videos, social and digital graphics, operational signage and more.

Faculty shared why they were getting vaccinated — and what it meant to them. Sharing personal stories underscored the game-changing magnitude of the vaccine and provided an additional avenue to engage campus.

817  
PROTECT PURDUE  
POSTS ON SOCIAL

OVER 17M  
SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS





## Old Golden Ticket Campaign

In an effort to encourage the student body to get vaccinated before the fall semester, Purdue assembled a campaign that took our community by surprise. A Willy Wonka-inspired COVID-19 vaccination promotion put \$9,992 — the equivalent of a year's worth of in-state tuition — into the hands of 10 students ahead of the fall semester. The Old Golden Ticket Campaign created additional urgency among the student body by incentivizing the choice to get vaccinated. The campaign resulted in significant earned media coverage across regional markets and a unique buzz on social media.

News about the surprised winners grabbed strong local, state and national media attention.

Watch the  
Episode



**'This Is Purdue' behind-the-scenes episode:** Our journey to find and award the 10 Boilermakers who entered the Old Golden Ticket Vaccination Drawing.



With over 88% of both students and the overall campus community vaccinated against COVID-19, we were one of the safest places anywhere."

- PRESIDENT MITCH DANIELS, DECEMBER 2021

**48,858+** BOILERMAKERS  
VACCINATED

**88%** OF CAMPUS FULLY VACCINATED  
AS OF DECEMBER 2021

**2+** MILLION IMPRESSIONS  
(JULY 23 - AUG. 2)

**13.8%** **↑ 100%**  
ENGAGEMENT month over month

**20+** EARNED  
MEDIA  
PLACEMENTS



## Boiler Ambassadors

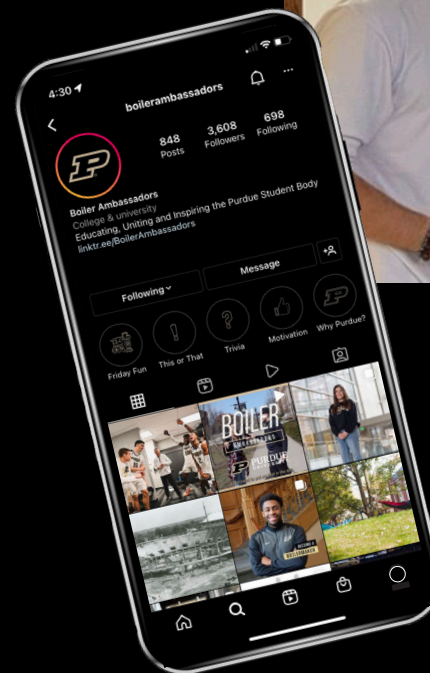
After the initial success of the peer-to-peer Boiler Ambassador program, the program continued in 2021 with more than 70 student ambassadors representing nearly all class years and colleges. Ambassadors continue assisting with Protect Purdue efforts, but also share key insight to a balanced view of the Purdue student experience.

**5,000+** HOURS OF  
SERVICE

IN SUPPORT OF PROTECT PURDUE PLEDGE

**300+** PROJECTS &  
EVENTS

TO HELP STUDENTS NAVIGATE  
PANDEMIC LIFE ON CAMPUS



@boilerambassadors

**3,500+**  
FOLLOWERS  
ON INSTAGRAM

## Chapter 4

# Amplifying Our Voice

As Boilermakers, we know we can do more together. In 2021, Purdue Marketing and Communications packaged content in a way that ensured ease of access, clear applicability and localized relevance. We encouraged regular communication, expanded our toolbox and trained teammates across campus. Our goal? To equip and inspire our teammates to share our world-class vision with their constituencies in a unified voice that's unmistakably Purdue.



# Tools and Resources

## 60 CONTENT PACKAGES

Our most downloaded content packages of 2021 were centered on yield season. With over 10 yield-focused content packages — complete with long-form stories, social assets and imagery — shared across campus partners, we were able to help the University welcome its largest first-year class ever!

**“Content packages are a tremendous time-saver for our college MarCom team. These packages provide an easy way for us to stay on-brand and on-message as we support key initiatives and important stories.”**

— Melissa Templeton, Purdue Polytechnic Institute

Bringing Campus to Life, Encouraging a Consistent Brand Across Campus Units

135  
DESIGN  
TEMPLATES

207  
LUCIDPRESS  
TEMPLATES

6,228  
IMAGES & VIDEOS  
Shared in PhotoShelter



# Strengthening our Marketing Community

## Purdue Communicators Council

PCC meetings are our monthly place to connect and inspire our network of 550+ campus marketers. In 2021, we overhauled meetings, cutting down the duration to 60 minutes and added interactive breakout sessions on topics like social media best practices, co-brand and logo usage, how to effectively use strategic briefs, brand attributes and yield content.

## Marketing and Communications Forums

In 2021, we expanded online communication forums to include specialty channels in Microsoft Teams — Brand, Video and Design — inviting marketing users to share work, ask questions and help each other problem-solve. Between monthly PCC meetings, follow-up communications are sent via email newsletter to roll out content and underscore guidance on best practices.

**64% OPEN RATE**  
PCC Email Newsletters in 2021

**MONTHLY ATTENDANCE**  
**↑ 20%**  
Over 2020

## Purdue 101

This document provides an overview of Purdue's roots, as well as the University's vision, impact, network, innovative research, student-centered academics and campus culture. Purdue 101 is now the go-to place for campus partners to share an overview of the University with their constituents, new hires and more.



# Where to Next?

In the spirit of Boilermaker persistence, we're already pursuing the next giant leap in positioning, promoting and protecting Purdue. Follow along as we write the next chapter — **together.**



Marketing and Communications