

No Such Thing as a Snow Day for Essential Employees

Josh Braid got behind the wheel of a John Deere 310SK backhoe at 9 p.m. on Jan. 22 and, except for periodic catnaps in a makeshift “dormitory” at WCU’s Facilities Building, didn’t get out of that backhoe until almost midnight on Jan. 25. Braid was one of two dozen-plus WCU employees who were part of the *Snow Crew*. They worked round-the-clock during Winter Storm Jonas to clear the campus of snow.

“These employees did an extraordinary job,” said Jim Lewis, associate vice president for Facilities. “The Borough received 22.5 inches of snow; this was a storm of historic proportions. Thanks to the hard work of the *Snow Crew*, the University was able to resume normal operations on Wednesday, Jan. 27.”

“The *Snow Crew* made it to campus despite the difficulties in getting here, and toiled throughout the storm,” said President Greg R. Weisenstein. “Of course, they weren’t the only heroes of the blizzard. Our campus police officers, residence hall security workers, food service workers, and other essential employees should be commended for their hard work, as well.”

The *Snow Crew* consisted of almost 20 Grounds employees as well as employees from other departments, including Custodial Services and Plant Operations, who had the necessary skills to operate backhoes and other heavy machinery. Braid’s regular position at WCU is a safety inspector in the department of environmental health and safety.