

Science and Technology Innovation Center to benefit from generous alumni gift



January 19, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls has received a \$1 million challenge gift to support its new Science and Technology Innovation Center (SciTech) from UWRF alumni Jeff and Kristi Cernohous.

“Modernizing aging learning environments is an absolute must but transforming the student experience is equally important,” said Jeff Cernohous, CEO and chairman of Interfacial, Inc. “We would like to see this gift used to create an ecosystem where UWRF students, faculty and industry are engaged in meaningful scientific collaboration

year-round.”

“We are grateful not only for Jeff and Kristi’s gift, but for their long-standing support and shared vision for SciTech,” said UW-River Falls Chancellor Connie Foster. “They have helped us advocate for SciTech from the beginning and have been incubating the possibilities ever since.”

The Cernohous’ have been long time supporters of SciTech, funding a feasibility study in 2014 which identified the significant gaps science and technology education at UW-River Falls, specifically in the classroom and lab settings. They have also funded an innovative Joint Visiting Professorship where a member of the UWRF chemistry faculty splits their expertise between the UW-River Falls classroom and Interfacial, Inc.

“Technology based businesses have a tremendous need for students with STEM-field education, but at the current rate of technological change, graduates need to be ready to contribute the minute they begin their career,” Cernohous said. “We believe that SciTech can help meet this market need, significantly differentiating UWRF graduates via this unique experience.”

Full construction funding for the SciTech project is included in the \$1.2 billion UW System capital budget request put forth by President Tommy Thompson for the 2021-23 biennium. At a cost of \$116 million, SciTech is ranked highest of the handful of STEM facility construction funding requests on the list.

In an example of private-public partnership, philanthropic support for the project spearheaded by the Cernohous’ will help demonstrate the value of SciTech to the region’s STEM employers and entrepreneurs, as well as inspire other business and industry leaders to contribute.

“This is not about the building, this is about an environment that induces collaboration and blurs the lines between academia and industry,” said Jeff Cernohous. “SciTech is a unique opportunity for UW-River Falls to help students gain hands on experience and knowledge of a what a future STEM career actually looks like once they are in the workforce, very early in their tenure at UWRF.”

It is anticipated that the Cernohous gift will result in an endowment from which instrumentation, endowed faculty, student scholarships and internships may be funded.

Jeff and Kristi are UWRF grads with chemistry degrees who have gone on to become successful entrepreneurs with several companies based in the River Falls area.

For more information about SciTech, email beth.schommer@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-0662.

UWRF to end community COVID-19 testing Jan. 22

January 13, 2021 – After ten weeks of providing free COVID-19 tests for the community, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls will wrap-up its operations at the end of next week.

Since UW-River Falls opened the testing site on November 10, more than 8,500 community members from in and around Pierce County took advantage of the rapid-results screening and testing program.

Community “surge” testing took place at all UW System campuses and was a partnership between UW System and the U.S. Health and Human Services Department in an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Those interested in getting tested at the site before it closes on Friday, Jan. 22, must pre-register [here](#). If questions, email covid-19@uwrf.edu.

UWRF to reopen COVID-19 community testing site at River Falls park shelter

January 28, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin System has announced that they have extended their statewide COVID-19 surge testing effort and UW-River Falls is now teaming up with the City of River Falls to continue offering this valuable resource to the local community.

The new site will be located at the Hoffman Park Storm Shelter, 650 Hanson Drive, River Falls. Beginning February 2, testing appointments will be available on Tuesdays from 10 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Community members interested in receiving a COVID-19 test must pre-register at www.doineedacovid19test.com. Testing is free and open to the public over 5 years of age, however, appointments are required.

UWRF recently wrapped up their community testing effort at the Falcon Center where over a period of ten weeks, it provided COVID-19 tests for more than 8,500 community members. On-campus testing efforts will now focus on implementing their newly required regular testing policy for all students and employees.

"The partnership we have with the City of River Falls is truly an asset," remarked UW-River Falls Chancellor Connie Foster. "We greatly appreciate their willingness to provide off-campus support for our community testing program, allowing us to focus our efforts on increased testing on campus for our employees and students. These testing programs, along with our shared commitment to promoting good health practices like wearing face coverings and maintaining physical distancing, shows that we are doing everything we can to keep our community as safe as possible."

"We are pleased to partner with UW-River Falls to continue providing this important service to our residents," said City Administrator Scot Simpson. "The university has helped set the standard for virus mitigation in our community. We are grateful for their work and look forward to our continued partnership."

Community testing is being offered by UW campuses in a partnership between UW System and the U.S. Health and Human Services Department in an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

If questions, email covid-19@uwrf.edu

For additional COVID-19 testing locations and resources, visit:

[Pierce County Public Health](#)

[St. Croix County Public Health](#)

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Alum Michael Mader honored as 2021 AACSB Influential Leader

Sixth annual initiative recognizes 25 business school graduates for contributions to society



February 16, 2021 - University of Wisconsin-River Falls alumnus Michael Mader is one of 25 business school graduates honored by **AACSB International** (AACSB), the world's largest business education alliance, as the 2021 Class of **Influential Leaders**. The annual initiative recognizes notable alumni from AACSB-accredited business schools whose inspiring work serves as a model for the next generation of business leaders.

Mader is the owner of Minneapolis based Hippy Feet. Hippy Feet employs homeless youth, ages 16 to 24, in their packaging, screen printing and embroidery operations. Partnering with other nonprofits, Mader hosts employment sessions at its Minneapolis office. The partnerships support the young people they employ by connecting them with emergency financial services, bus passes and gas cards for transportation, interview clothing, work boots, and other related items/services that ensure there are as few barriers to income as possible.

"This alumni award represents the impact that our students have upon the most pressing issues of our day," said Marina Onken, interim dean, College of Business and Economics (CBE). "AACSB is the premiere accreditation for colleges of business worldwide and Michael Mader's success shows the commitment we make to the quality of our programs and our faculty. The CBE embodies the pillars of AACSB accreditation, innovation, impact, and engagement, in everything we do, from the creation of high-quality curriculum, to the engagement of our faculty and students, to the innovation that our students learn and apply after graduation."

"Our students leave UWRF with a passion to create change, become thought-leaders and make their communities better," said UW-River Falls Interim Chancellor Connie Foster. "Michael's recognition as one of only 25 business school graduates honored worldwide by AACSB is acknowledgment of his personal drive and commitment as well as the significance of the university's mission in preparing students for the future."

"We are inspired by the efforts of business school graduates like Michael," said Caryn L. Beck-Dudley, AACSB president and CEO. "The College of Business and Economics and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls are developing leaders prepared to change the world and AACSB is honored to recognize Michael for his positive impact on society."

Now in its sixth year, AACSB's Influential Leaders honorees include nearly 250 business school graduates who have created lasting impact in business and society. All honorees have earned an undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral degree from one of the more than 870 AACSB-accredited business schools worldwide. The unique stories of each honoree and how they are creating meaningful, lasting impact in the world, are available at aacsb.edu/influential-leaders.

Chancellor's statement on Science and Technology Innovation Center funding in Gov. Evers' capital budget

February 22, 2021 – University of Wisconsin-River Falls Chancellor Connie Foster issued the following statement on Governor Evers 2021-23 capital budget recommendations including funding for the university's Science and Technology Innovation Center:

"We are very grateful that Governor Evers has acknowledged the value of the Science and Technology Innovation Center (SciTech) to our region and state by including full construction funding for this facility in his 2021-23 capital budget recommendations. Having received the \$2 million in planning funds in the last biennium, we were confident that the state understood the impact of this new type of facility.

SciTech will not only foster education through immersive high-impact learning experiences for our students but also lead to innovative collaborations with businesses and industries here in Western Wisconsin, one of the fastest growing economic development regions of the state.

Our local entrepreneurs are on-board, as demonstrated by the recent \$1 million SciTech Challenge gift being made by our alums Jeff and Kristi Cernohous, demonstrating that this type of facility is greatly in demand in our region.

This is not just another academic STEM laboratory building. SciTech is the future of Western Wisconsin, representing possibilities for engagement and innovation, opportunities for talent and knowledge to be shared more intentionally, and ultimately supporting the economic vitality of our local communities and businesses."

For more information, email beth.schommer@uwrf.edu.



Globally groundbreaking – UW-River Falls to offer doctoral degree in Montessori studies

February 5, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents today approved a request by the University of Wisconsin-River Falls to implement a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree in its Montessori Studies Program.

This doctoral degree, which evolved under UWRF's Pathway to Distinction Strategic Plan, is the first doctoral degree program at UW-River Falls as well as one of the first Ed.D. programs in Montessori studies in the United States.

"UWRF's College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) has over 150 years of innovation in preparing teaching excellence," said CEPS Interim Dean Ogden Rogers. "Our experience in successful curriculum development to help train Montessori teachers has helped establish a foundation to prepare programming to develop leaders in Montessori education."

"The Ed.D. in Montessori Studies will make a meaningful contribution to UWRF's select mission, overall academic plan and academic degree program array," said Provost David Travis. "We are proud to offer this level of academic excellence to the teaching community."

Although the Montessori pedagogy and philosophy has been around for over 100 years, there have been very few doctoral programs in the world that have focused on the Montessori method of education.

"That the University of Wisconsin System has embraced a doctoral level program to train Montessori researchers and scholars is a testament to the Wisconsin Idea and the progressive thinking that underscores it," said Professor Michael Miller, Teacher Education Department chair.

The doctoral program will be located within the Teacher Education Department which already offers a successful Master of Science in Education (MSE) degree in Montessori Education. Students will be able to complete the doctorate's 54 credits within three years.

"UWRF's Masters Montessori Program is one of only about 10 nationally accredited Montessori master's programs that are housed within a university. UWRF is one of only two public universities that offer a master's level Montessori Teacher Education Program," said Kateri Carver, program director.

"The Montessori Studies Ed.D. is a hybrid with coursework online throughout the academic year," explains Carver. "The summer in-residency component offers in-person classes, networking events and cohort community-building – all of which are key to its sustainability and effectiveness."

UW-River Falls anticipates the new doctorate program will attract students with strong education potential and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds from Wisconsin, the Upper Midwest, across the country, and internationally. The launch of the Montessori Studies Ed.D. is slated for June 2022.

For more information about the new degree, email kateri.carver@uwrf.edu

Joint statement from chancellors at UW-River Falls, UW-Stout and UW-Eau Claire about plans for fall

February 18, 2021 - Nothing is more important to our three universities in Western Wisconsin than ensuring our students have the opportunity to succeed and thrive. We know that we all do that best through a more traditional college experience, where students, faculty and staff interact and engage in person. That is why we are joining with UW System President Tommy Thompson today in pledging that each of our institutions will plan for a traditional full college experience for the fall semester with in-person classes and rich co-curricular and extra-curricular offerings.

Our campuses have done a tremendous job since March 2020 in providing our students with quality education through a mix of online, in-person and hybrid classes as we adopted health and safety practices to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus in our communities. Our extensive testing protocols for our students and employees have been a success. President Thompson said, "We now see COVID infection rates below one percent," which is a testament to the dedication and commitment to health and safety demonstrated by our students and employees.

With the prospect of mass vaccinations for employees this spring and hopefully even our students sometime in summer, it is time to turn our efforts to the fall. In a column in today's *Wisconsin State Journal*, President Thompson said: "... it is time for us to plan to resume as much of an in-person campus experience as possible this fall."

UW-River Falls Chancellor Connie Foster said, "UW-River Falls is feeling very hopeful about our intended return to a more traditional fall semester. We know that this is what we do best: supporting our Falcons' success by interacting with them in person in a multitude of ways, inside the classroom and beyond."

"As Wisconsin's Polytechnic University, this means students can enjoy a return to lab and studio spaces, thriving residence hall communities, and the chance to enjoy the vibrant Menomonie community with its many outdoor amenities," stated Katherine Frank, Chancellor at UW-Stout.

"The opportunity to engage with their fellow students and our amazing faculty and staff is such a critical part of the Blugold experience, and our community benefits as well as we bring back our students for the fall semester," stated James Schmidt, Chancellor at UW-Eau Claire.

These are goals that we are confident that we can achieve. We know how important it is for students to participate fully in the campus experience. As President Thompson said, "This sort of engagement – in and out of the classroom – builds sharper thinking, contributes to social development, and enriches communities."

We know there will be several factors to consider as we bring more students into our classrooms, studios, and laboratories. As we have done throughout the pandemic, we will continue to address these factors creatively, while continuing to prioritize the health and safety of our communities.

We also would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our communities, our employees, and our students for their enduring commitment to education.

Go Falcons, Blugolds, Blue Devils!



From left: Senior neuroscience and psychology major Madisyn Morrow; Jennifer Willis-Rivera, Communication and Media Studies chair; Interim Chancellor Connie Foster; and sophomore elementary education major Natalie Stewart. Morrow and Stewart are part of the UWRF Random Acts student organization.

Student org donation drive to help homeless

Update: Interim Chancellor Connie Foster thanked campus organizers February 19 for their recent campus donation drive to help the Twin Cities homeless population. Organizers included Allan Law, a UWRF alumnus and creator of homeless outreach group [Love One Another](#); sophomore elementary education major Natalie Stewart, vice president of the [UWRF Random Acts Student Organization](#); and org adviser Jennifer Willis-Rivera. The drive netted 257 masks, 226 pairs of socks, 295 snack packages and 40 mylar blankets, among other items and contributions. Thank you to all who donated and helped out!

February 2, 2021 - The [UWRF Random Acts Student Organization](#) is partnering with [Love One Another](#) and [Random Acts](#) for an on-campus donation drive now through Feb. 14 to help the Twin Cities homeless population. Donation boxes are located across campus, including at the front desk in the University Center, the Admissions Office in Rodli Hall, Davee Library Circulation Desk, all the dean's offices and the Chancellor's Office in North Hall. Everyone is invited to donate new socks, personal protective equipment (PPE), mylar survival blankets and nutrition packs. A typical nutrition pack includes three to five single-serve non-perishable food items in zip-locked plastic bags. All donated items will be distributed to homeless residents who have suffered even greater hardship because of COVID-19. Random Acts also will match all donations up to \$1,000 worth of items.

Those unable to donate items on campus may send packages to the Chancellor's Office. Others wishing to make monetary donations can do so [here](#). Include "UWRF" in the message area and proceeds will be directed to the UWRF project.

For more information, email jennifer.willis-rivera@uwrf.edu.

UW-River Falls implementing new COVID-19 testing this spring, hopeful for traditional fall semester

February 8, 2021 - Just two weeks into spring semester, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls is simultaneously implementing intensive new COVID-19 testing protocols, while also looking toward fall and how things might be different for students.

"We are hopeful and cautiously optimistic that we'll return to a more traditional semester," Chancellor Connie Foster said in a recent message to students and employees. "Our positivity rates remain impressively low and students have demonstrated a sincere commitment to adhering to health and safety protocols. That has made a tremendous difference."

COVID-19 testing became mandatory for all students and employees coming to campus this semester. Students living on campus are tested weekly, while off-campus students and employees get tested every other week.

The university has also canceled Spring Break this year as a precautionary measure to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The spring semester will now end April 30, one week earlier than normal. Most campuses in the UW System and many across the country have also taken this step.

Looking ahead to the end of the semester and beyond, UWRF is hopeful to hold some form of in-person commencement in May, if it could be done safely. Much will depend on how well the spread of the virus is controlled in the coming weeks. The university opted for a virtual ceremony last spring as well as in December in an effort to reduce the risk of spreading the virus during such a large event.

In the meantime, UWRF is expanding opportunities for students to connect with one another – virtually and safely in person. Those close to event and involvement planning say there is a new energy returning to campus.

Finally, to continue supporting community health and safety beyond campus this spring, UW-River Falls has partnered with the City of River Falls on continuation of their free [community COVID-19 testing site](http://www.doineedacovid19test.com/), now located at Hoffman Park. The effort is an extension of the UW System's commitment to enabling UW campuses to take a proactive role in helping stop the spread of COVID-19 in their surrounding communities. Tests are free for anyone over age 5, and pre-registration is required with same-day appointments usually available at <http://www.doineedacovid19test.com/>.

"I am very proud of our Falcon family and the great effort I am seeing for safe in-person instruction, recreation, athletics and social engagement," Foster added. "However, we know COVID remains a threat so we must remain diligent in our precautions."

Email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu if questions.



2021 Summer Concert Series cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns

March 4, 2021 - The annual Summer Concert Series held at the Wall Amphitheatre at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls has been cancelled for summer 2021 due to COVID-19 concerns.

"We are very sad to have to cancel the series again, knowing the fondness our community has for this longstanding tradition which dates back to 1973," said Elise Peters, UWRF events and activities coordinator. "The safety of our campus and community is our number one priority and given the uncertainty of the vaccination rollout and COVID-19 in general and the large crowd the concert series draws, the cancellation was necessary."

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 at UW-River Falls, visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/Falcons-Forward/Index.cfm>

"Thank you for your continued support of the Summer Concert Series," Peters added.

If questions, email studentinvolvement@uwrf.edu.

BFA exhibition in Gallery 101

March 10, 2021 - University of Wisconsin-River Falls BFA candidates will present their Bachelor of Fine Arts degree exhibitions in Gallery 101 in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building March 29-April 28.

On display will be ceramics, design, illustration, mixed media arts, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculptural work.

River Breda, of Eagan, Minn., with emphases in ceramics and printmaking, will exhibit utilitarian pottery that seeks to fill a specific function and to form a physical dialogue with its user through repetitive use.

Brooklyn Jenness, of Owen-Withee, with emphases in photography and printmaking, will display a series of images hung and projected as well as a hand bound book demonstrating her journey with abandonment and dissociative identity disorder.

Victoria Kosel, of Cambridge, Minn., with emphases in photography and art history, will display hand-woven photographic work exploring childhood memory and its connection to the landscape in her hometown.

Haley Macklem, of Roseville Minn., with emphases in ceramics and painting, will display mixed media installations exploring reincarnation and the human body in nature through ceramic sculpture and painting.

Gabriella Mumo, of St. Paul, Minn., with emphases in graphic design and drawing, will showcase illustrated and designed movie posters based on global events that occurred in the year 2020.

Brittany Rutzen, of Minong, emphases in ceramics and painting, will be displaying her collection of works titled "Coloring Emotions," a group of 12 oil paintings on broken ceramic tablets. The paintings show how an emotion can be altered through changing the colors and textures of the piece.

Isaiah Shipp, of River Falls, with emphases in drawing and graphic design, will display work from his self-authored comic Killer Cactus. His work focusses on the contrast between original art and the printed page.

Kallie Spooner, of Owatonna, Minn., with emphases in photography and graphic design, will exhibit a collection of portraits and detail photos that act as windows into her life, showing the people that are most important to her.

Due to COVID-19 precautions, no reception will be held for the artists, but interested viewers may schedule individual meetings for gallery art viewings with the artists during regular building hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-8 p.m. and Saturdays 11 a.m.-5 p.m.) with no more than six people at a time. Please email the students directly to schedule a viewing and adhere to UWRF's policies regarding social distancing and face coverings. Student emails are their first and last name separated by a dot then followed by @my.uwrf.edu. For example: river.breda@my.uwrf.edu

For more information, email art.department@uwrf.edu

Breakthrough discovery supported by UW-River Falls physics researchers featured in international science journal

March 10, 2021 – Headlines in the international journal of science, *Nature*, are of keen interest to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and its physics faculty.

Researchers from the UWRF Physics Department, including Associate Professor Suruj Seunarine and Professor Glenn Spiczak, contributed to a significant, albeit complicated, astrophysics discovery published today in *Nature* as a result of their work with the **IceCube Collaboration**. UWRF Professor Rellen Hardtke is a former member of IceCube.

The IceCube Collaboration currently includes 300 people from 53 institutions in 12 countries, a group of scientists, researchers, students and others who've worked together to build and operate the world's largest neutrino detector which recently played a significant role in confirming a 60-year-old particle physics theory.

"To be recognized among the world's leading scientists and researchers is a distinction we're proud of at UW-River Falls," said Dean Yohnk, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "Our faculty have achieved groundbreaking research with their commitment to excellence and discovery and our students have benefited greatly as a result."

UWRF's involvement with IceCube has been impactful for students and faculty. Well over 100 UWRF students have participated in IceCube research activities, several of them making the trip to Earth's geographic south pole where the telescope is situated, embedded in a cubic kilometer of the icecap, the largest most transparent medium on the planet.

"We are able to engage UWRF students in research at the frontier of the field of neutrino astrophysics including having them collaborate with some of the world's experts on neutrinos," said Seunarine. "Students work on a wide range of research projects, from pure theory to hands-on builds and even work at the South Pole."

"UWRF students learn valuable lessons in how to work independently as well as work within a large multi-national collaboration," said Spiczak. "These experiences find students sharing expertise, acquiring and analyzing data and presenting results."

Each year UW-River Falls hosts a National Science Foundation (NSF) funded research experience for undergraduates in which students are provided paid internships in a summer astrophysics research program, including a road trip to Madison for a week-long astrophysics bootcamp where they learn firsthand from the experts.

For more information about the IceCube Collaboration and the Wisconsin IceCube Particle Astrophysics Center, visit <https://wipac.wisc.edu>



Chancellor message to students regarding fall 2021

March 24, 2021- This past year you've adapted to changes at school and home in a way that most students never experience. You've figured out remote learning, how to stay connected with friends and family, and continued your involvement with activities that are important to you. This resiliency will serve you well into the future.

As you prepare to take your next steps as a Falcon, we think it's important to keep you informed about our plans for the upcoming year.

I'm excited to share that we're preparing for a return to a traditional fall semester. We'll offer more in-person learning and plenty of opportunities to connect with faculty, staff, and students.

You can look forward to all the experiences that our Falcons have come to know and love. We will, of course, continue to make informed decisions that keep our community safe and will also continue offering virtual options for those who prefer or need them.

As we learn more in the months to come, we promise to keep you updated via email.

New fund, renamed lab to honor long-time professor, leader Michael Harris

Ellsworth native dedicated 40 years of service to alma mater



March 30, 2021 – Michael Harris, Ph.D., a UW-River Falls alumnus who went on to dedicate more than four decades to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls as an admired and respected professor, researcher, department chair and dean, will soon be recognized in two significant ways: a new fund and a renamed lab in his honor.

UW-River Falls Interim Chancellor Connie Foster has announced the launch of a fundraising campaign for the Dr. Michael Harris Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) Opportunity Fund which will provide critical resources for a variety of CSD priorities and needs. The campaign will also result in the renaming of one of the CSD's research areas as the Dr. Mike Harris Augmentative and Alternative Communication Lab.

"I am delighted to announce this special recognition for Mike, along with UWRF's sincere appreciation for all he has done for his alma mater over the course of one of the longest and most successful tenures in the nearly 150-year history of our great institution," Foster said. "Mike has left a lasting imprint at UWRF, and his decades of unselfish service and leadership will not be forgotten."

Harris, who arrived at River Falls as an undergraduate in 1974, earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from UWRF. He earned his doctoral degree in educational psychology-special education from the University of Minnesota. During his UWRF career, Harris became a respected and recognized leader in the field of communication disorders as he served as professor, chair of CSD, and dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies. He retired Dec. 30, 2020.

Harris's new UWRF honor was met with accolades from his former colleagues.

"During his 40-plus years at UWRF, from undergraduate, to part-time instructor, to professor, to department chair, to Dean, Mike has been a quiet leader on campus," said UWRF Professor and Administration Emerita Faye Perkins, who is leading the Harris campaign's fundraising effort. "Day in and day out, Mike put the needs of his students, faculty, staff and the university above his own needs. He humbly exemplifies the meaning of 'servant leader' and his integrity is beyond reproach. I am grateful that Mike and I were colleagues at UWRF and will forever be thankful for his friendship."

"It's impossible to capture the impact that Mike's service, skills and leadership have had on so many," said UWRF CSD Clinical Professor Sarah Smits. "In his work as a speech pathologist specializing in augmentative and alternative communication, he has literally given voices to those who had none. As a colleague and mentor, he taught me advocacy—for myself, our clients, our students, and our program. Our program and college were fortunate to have had his guidance for 40 years."

To support the Harris fund, donors may submit tax deductible contributions to the UWRF Foundation at <https://www.uwrf.edu/give/csdfund.cfm>. Donors should specify the donation is for the Michael Harris CSD Fund. Checks should be made payable

to the UWRF Foundation with Michael Harris CSD Fund indicated in the memo line. Mail to UW-River Falls Foundation, 118 North Hall, 410 S. 3rd Street, River Falls, WI 54022.

For more information, call University Advancement Officer Kellie Burrows at 715-425-4427 or email kellene.burrows@uwrf.edu.

Nilsestuen legacy event addresses climate change impact and adaptation in rural communities

March 11, 2021 - The University of Wisconsin-River Falls will host the ninth annual Rod Nilsestuen Legacy Event on Wednesday, March 31, featuring a keynote address by Steven Boss, professor of environmental dynamics and sustainability in the Department of Geosciences at the University of Arkansas. The program will begin online at 4:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Boss' talk, "Far Field Effects of Sea Level Rise: We Are All Coastal," will focus on the societal impacts of climate change on wealth transfer in the Heartland. Following the keynote, a panel of discussants will share their perspectives: Randy Romanski, secretary-designee of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP); Paul Dietmann, senior lending specialist with Compeer Financial; and Rachel Bouressa, a Waupaca County farmer who serves on the National Farmers Union Climate Change Policy Advisory Panel.

Boss holds a B.S. in geology from Bemidji State University, an M.S. in geology from Utah State University, and a Ph.D. in marine sciences from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. From 2002-15, he served as director of the interdisciplinary doctoral program in Environmental Dynamics at the University of Arkansas. Boss was the architect of sustainability curricula at the University of Arkansas and from 2010-15 also served as director of Sustainability Academic Programs. He considers himself an interdisciplinary scientist and has ongoing research interests in natural resource dynamics, global agriculture, global fisheries, and equity and inclusion in the geosciences.

Earth's climate is warming, and sea level worldwide is rising. As the Earth warms, so too does the ocean, causing the ocean volume to expand and raise sea level. A warming Earth melts mountain glaciers and polar ice caps, raising sea level. Rising sea level has immediate and obvious impacts to the coastal United States; however, sea level and its impacts reach deep into the United States Heartland remote from the coasts. The rising sea level induces population displacement and migration from coastal areas to the continental interior. Capital flows from the continental interior to the coastal zone represent a large transfer of public wealth from largely impoverished counties of interior states to generally more affluent counties of the coasts. This talk examines the societal impacts of that wealth transfer on continental interior communities.

Nilsestuen, who earned his undergraduate degree at UW-River Falls, was the Wisconsin secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at the time of his death in July 2010. He is remembered as a proud steward of sustainable agriculture and a leader in the national cooperative movement who strove to balance the needs of sustainable land use with the maximization of agricultural production. Nilsestuen worked to find common ground on topics like the power of cooperatives, farmland conservation, the future of rural America and the increased pressure on agriculture to feed the world. The inaugural Rod Nilsestuen Legacy Event, "Feeding the World, Sustaining the Land, Inspiring Cooperative Action," was held in March 2012.

The Rod Nilsestuen Fund was established by friends, family, and colleagues, and several land conservation and cooperative organizations, and is part of the Ralph K. Morris Foundation, an organization that shares Nilsestuen's dedication to cooperatives and leadership development.

Register for the event online at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GhU1MuvmRweomOb73m2xgA.

For more information, email Agricultural Economics Assistant Professor Albert Boaitey at albert.boaitey@uwrf.edu.



River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau Executive Director Russ Korpela (left) presented UW-River Falls Interim Chancellor Connie Foster with the Large Business of the Year Award in a virtual awards event Thursday.

UW-River Falls named Large Business of the Year

March 12, 2021 – The River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau shined a much-appreciated light on the University of Wisconsin-River Falls last night in recognizing the institution as its Large Business of the Year.

The annual awards event is an opportunity for the Chamber to recognize businesses and individuals who make a difference in the community. Guided by this year's theme, The Future is Bright, Chamber members were encouraged to focus their nominations on those that went above and beyond to support the community in trying times of the past year.

"The challenges of 2020 certainly impacted UWRF in ways we couldn't have imagined," said Interim Chancellor Connie Foster. "The pandemic did allow us to reaffirm our role of service to the community and we acknowledge that our success is the result of a collective commitment from our local partners on the Chamber and throughout the City of River Falls. I am incredibly proud of UW-River Falls and our positive partnership with this wonderful community."

During the pandemic, the university not only implemented proactive health and safety measures on campus but added community testing operations to help limit the spread of the virus. Additionally, UW-River Falls helped raise community awareness by as part of the collective "Let's Do Our Part" communications campaign.

Meanwhile, UW-River Falls continued to serve its students, whether in person, online or hybrid, fulfilling its educational mission in innovative ways. The university also remained committed to supporting the local business talent pipeline with virtual programs like Career Treks and career fairs which saw record numbers of participation from students eager to look

towards their future beyond the pandemic.

Finalists in the various award categories were featured in short videos shown during the virtual event, demonstrating the impact they've had in the community over the past year.

The video presentation will be available to view on the [Chamber website](#) beginning March 18.



Virtual Horse Judging Youth Clinic offered at UW-River Falls

March 3, 2021 - The University of Wisconsin-River Falls is offering a virtual Horse Judging Youth Clinic on Saturday, March 27.

This virtual clinic is intended for participants of all experiences interested in learning how to evaluate horse balance, conformation, in-hand classes, as well as performance classes. Interested individuals may include students from 4-H, FFA youth members, horse owners, agricultural education coaches, as well as anyone wanting to prepare or improve their horse judging skills. Participants of all judging abilities and levels are welcome.

The clinic instructor is Casie Bass, associate professor of animal science at UW-River Falls. Bass coaches the UWRF Equine Judging Team and directs the equine breeding program.

Topics during this half-day (9 a.m.-1 p.m.) virtual program will focus on, but not be limited to, horse balance and conformation, muscling and overall quality, Western pleasure, Western riding, ranch riding, trail, hunter under saddle, hunter hack, Western horsemanship, and hunt seat equitation. Participants will also gain substantial knowledge in providing good sets of oral reasons for judging competitions.

Bass will use a judging manual with detailed descriptions, as well as photos and videos of both halter and performance classes. The manual will be emailed to registered participants as a pdf file prior to March 27.

To register, visit www.uwrf.edu/ANFS/EquineClinics.cfm.

If questions, email Bass at casie.bass@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4769.

Ackerman receives Lydecker Student Research Award



April 5, 2021 – Senior Sophie Ackerman has been named the recipient of the 2021 Drs. Ann and William Lydecker Student Research Award at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Each year since 2011, the Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity (URSCA) Office has recognized an outstanding undergraduate's research efforts coupled with service to and/or involvement in UW-River Falls.

Ackerman, of Marshfield, will graduate in May with majors in neuroscience and biology. She has been very active in research, joining a neuroscience research project in a supporting role as a freshman and continuing her own studies since then. Her research projects focused on studying depression and anxiety, using rat models to investigate the various aspects of the brain-gut connection and the role of the medial prefrontal cortex

in symptoms of mental illness. She has presented results from her research at conferences in California, Georgia and Chicago.

Ackerman has worked in the URSCA Office for two years where she played a critical role in supporting the office during a transition in leadership and staffing. She also led SURSCA, the student URSCA group, serving as president or co-president for two years. SURSCA reviews and scores travel grant proposals submitted by students hoping to obtain funding to travel to present, compete or attend conferences and events related to their academic studies.

Outside of URSCA, Ackerman served on the Dean's Council for the College of Arts and Sciences during her junior and senior years. She served with distinction as a student member of the River Falls SciTech Partners and Advocates Council helping to promote support for the proposed SciTech Innovation Center. She was nominated for the Chancellor's Award for Students in both her junior and senior years and was recently named a recipient of the 2020 award.

Following graduation, Ackerman will take a week off before starting a job with BrainXell, a small startup company in Madison that cultures neurons from induced pluripotent stem cells for research purposes. This job allows her to utilize research skills she developed in her time as an undergraduate researcher and gives her the opportunity to begin a career path in the field of neuroscience.

For more information about the award, email earl.d.blodgett@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-3902.

Community COVID-19 testing moves back to UWRF campus, no testing May 3-7

April 29, 2021 – The community COVID-19 testing site at Hoffman Park in River Falls has closed but will re-open soon on the UW-River Falls campus. To accommodate a smooth transition, there will be no testing the week of May 3-7.

COVID-19 testing for the community has been taking place at Hoffman Park since February, with an estimated 1,900 River Falls individuals being tested since then.

Beginning Monday, May 10, community COVID-19 testing will take place on the UW-River Falls campus in Hagestad Hall, 262 E. Cascade Avenue, River Falls. Directional signage will indicate available parking.

Testing appointments will be available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-noon. Testing is free and open to the public over 5 years of age, however, appointments are required. Community members interested in receiving a COVID-19 test must register at www.doineedacovid19test.com.

Community testing is being offered by UW campuses in a partnership between UW System and the U.S. Health and Human Services Department in an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

If questions, please email covid19@uwrf.edu

For additional COVID-19 testing locations and resources, visit: [Pierce County Public Health](#) [St. Croix County Public Health](#)

Recipients of the 2021 Chancellor's Award for Students



Sophie Ackerman



Morgan Leigh Anderson



Magdala Diersen



Dannie Esterline



Marie-Ange Kivi



Adam Leseman



Ezekiel Olakunle



Violet Penman

Eight students honored with Chancellor's Award

April 27, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls recently bestowed its highest non-academic honor on eight students. The Chancellor's Award for Students recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, excellence and service, both on campus and in the community. Recipients must also have shown a commitment to UWRF's core values, as well as positive and inspiring personal traits and contributions in areas such as undergraduate research, inclusivity and global education.

"Selection for this prestigious award is an acknowledgment of your exceptional contributions to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and beyond," wrote Chancellor Connie Foster in notifying students of the award. "You are among a very select group of students."

Recipients must be juniors, seniors or graduate students and can receive nominations and letters of support from UWRF faculty or advisers, UWRF staff, external organization leaders, fellow students or be self-nominated. A selection committee comprised of appointees from the chancellor's staff, academic colleges, student support staff and the Student Government Association (SGA) considers every nominee and selects finalists for interviews. After the interviews, the committee submits its recommendations to the chancellor, who makes the final decisions.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year all selection committee meetings and interviews of finalists with their nominators were performed online. The university was also not able to celebrate the students with a formal ceremony on campus at which the recipients receive a medallion to wear with their commencement garb in recognition of the prestigious award. The medallions were instead mailed to students along with a certificate of achievement and personal note from the chancellor.

The 2021 student recipients are Sophie Ackerman, Morgan Leigh Anderson, Magdala Diersen, Dannie Esterline, Marie-Ange Kivi, Adam Leseman, Ezekiel Olakunle and Violet Penman.

Sophie Ackerman is a senior neuroscience/biology-biomedical science major from Marshfield.

When Ackerman enrolled in UW-River Falls she knew she wanted to pursue a degree in science. What she couldn't have known then was that she would become one of the university's most highly respected and talented undergraduate researchers.

"When I have spoken to Sophie about her research interests, I am always impressed with the interdisciplinary nature of her work as well as her interest in pursuing research opportunities that will lead to very positive changes in people's lives," wrote a nominator. "She clearly connects science with humanity, and she does this authentically and with sincerity."

Ackerman's leadership outside the lab and classroom is demonstrated by the roles she holds on campus. She is president of the UWRF Society for Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity [SURSCA] where she coordinates student research on campus, provides training to students on research skills.

Described as an exceptional service-oriented leader and role model, Ackerman is also an honors student and Chancellor's Scholar as well as an active member of the UWRF Psi Chi chapter and Psychology Club and is serving on the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Student Advisory Council.

As a teaching assistant in the Introduction to neuroscience course, Ackerman demonstrated a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring every student was comfortable with lab activity and had all the assistance they needed.

She has presented her research at the annual WiSys Symposium, Research in the Rotunda, the National Conferences on Undergraduate Research and the annual Society for Neuroscience meeting – a prestigious international conference. Ackerman serves as an ambassador to WiSys and was recently awarded a WiSys grant to study the effects of isolation during quarantine.

Ackerman is a member of the Science and Technology Innovation Center Partners and Advocates Council, a group created to advocate for a new science building on campus. As part of her advocacy, Sophie has made numerous public presentations, including to the Wisconsin Legislature's Joint Committee on Finance.

Ackerman's nominators acknowledge her character and advocacy skills.

"Whether Sophie is leading students, working closely with faculty, or assisting our campus and System administration with projects, she always demonstrates positivity and inspires others to embrace science and enjoy life," a nominator wrote.

Graduating May 1, Ackerman has already accepted a job with BrainXell, a biomedical research company in Madison that cultures neurons from induced pluripotent stem cells for research.

Morgan Leigh Anderson is a senior social work major from Madison. Described by UWRF faculty as a transformational leader, Anderson has gone beyond expectations in pursuit of her social work degree. Having demonstrated resilience, courage and integrity to overcome personal obstacles, Anderson has now brought her unique perspective and skillsets to benefit campus in tangible ways.

An active participant in the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) Social Justice Committee, Anderson was

invited to serve as a student researcher on an interdisciplinary project regarding inclusivity on campus. Not only did she participate in the research process, but she also actively engaged in the presentations of findings to the larger UW-River Falls community, through Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity initiatives and speaking to groups such as the Chancellor's Cabinet, the Chancellor's Task Force on Inclusivity and Anti-Racism and other leadership teams.

"As a student on campus committed to issues of social justice, interested in research, and who exemplifies the very issue we were seeking to investigate, Morgan was the perfect candidate with whom to partner," wrote her nominator.

Anderson is even listed as a co-author on the soon-to-be published article, "Student perspectives on campus climate and inclusivity," in the Journal of Diversity in Higher Education.

Anderson is currently doing her field placement work at NorthWest Passage, a treatment program for adolescents with significant emotional and behavioral challenges. She also serves as a Shelter Advocate at TurningPoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, providing crisis counseling and conducting victim advocacy, as well as a Volunteer Community Advocate at St. Croix Valley Restorative Services, as a community advocate in discussions of crime focused on preventing recidivism.

"Morgan has appropriately used her personal experiences to motivate herself to be an excellent student, peer, and leader. She has also used what she learned from her own experiences to provide informal support to other students who may be facing their own challenges," a nominator wrote. "Morgan has been an inspiration to the students and staff at UWRF and has accomplished more than most in her time at UWRF."

After graduation Anderson plans to begin the master of social work advanced standing program at the University of Minnesota with a focus in clinical mental health.

Magdala Diersen is a junior communication sciences and disorders and communication studies major from New Ulm, Minn.

Diersen is an engaged and involved UW-River Falls student who is making the most of her academic pursuits while never losing sight of her desire to create an inclusive environment on campus.

"Magdala effortlessly makes connections and gives everyone she encounters a reason to smile," wrote a nominator. "Across generations, cultures, and social groups, Magdala's kindness knows no bounds and perfectly matches the Chancellor's Award criterion of inclusivity."

As president of the UWRF chapter of the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA), Diersen is committed to serving the needs of individuals with disabilities and educating her fellow UWRF students in areas related to inclusion of individuals of all ability levels.

She has facilitated numerous online presentations, panel discussions, social gatherings and volunteer opportunities. Presentations have featured topics to help foster inclusivity and increase understanding and awareness of individuals with significant communication difficulties.

"Magdala holds herself to high expectations and has a very strong sense of integrity. I have seen her advocate for others time

and time again, to make them feel welcome and safe within the community here at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls,” a nominator wrote. “She is the type of student that makes UWRF a great university.”

As an orientation and transition leader and peer mentor, Diersen worked to create an inclusive environment for students during the university’s annual Week of Welcome. She also advocated for more inclusive practices on campus such as initiatives to have more gender-neutral bathrooms.

As a nominator summarized, “I nominate Magdala for this honor not because she is able to accomplish so much, but because what she has taken from these accomplishments has made her a true member and example of the best of our students at UWRF.”

Diersen holds a minor in Spanish and has participated in Spanish Club. She attended many programs held through the Latinx student organization and student involvement. While in her role as a Chancellor’s Student Ambassador, she also was able to attend the International Thanksgiving Dinner and took part in the Summit on International Education and Engagement.

Still only a junior, Diersen plans to pursue a career as a speech-language pathologist.

Dannie Esterline is a senior art major from Wausau. Not even a pandemic could stop Esterline from advocating for inclusivity, diversity and belonging on campus.

Through undergraduate research and campus leadership roles, Esterline has served in numerous capacities to influence equality rights issues in the LGBTQ community as well as in support of the community’s diverse populations.

“I am consistently inspired by Dannie’s embodiment of creativity, care, and community—Dannie is compassion personified,” wrote a nominator.

Esterline is employed on campus as one of two Resident Assistants supporting the university’s gender inclusive housing community through educational interventions, mental health advocacy and community engagement.

Esterline serves UWRF in a governance role as Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Senator for the Student Governance Association to provide a voice for underrepresented and historically marginalized populations. As well, Esterline is a member of the Chancellor’s Taskforce on Inclusivity and Anti-Racism.

In addition, Esterline engages and interacts with many different student groups on campus, including serving on Society for Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities (SURSCA), Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Student Feminist Organization, and as an art ambassador (peer mentor), vice president of the Photography Club, and as president of the Art Therapy Club. Through the Art Ambassadors and the Art Therapy Club, Esterline organized events specifically designed forge connections between students on campus in order to encourage a sense of belonging.

As an art ambassador, Esterline helped organize events hosting 200 high school guests and coordinated volunteers to install exhibitions and manage a variety of events for students. Even during the pandemic, Esterline continues to coordinate social

medial activities, publicize art events and promote mental health and social justice initiatives.

As an Honors Program student and a Falcon Scholar, Esterline has earned high regards from faculty and advisers who admire and respect their intellectual and emotional drive. Supporters of Esterline's nomination agreed they have helped UWRF become a more dynamic and inclusive institution and community.

"Dannie's spirit is amazing. It's time to recognize a student who is a beautiful example of what can be done out of the spotlight yet providing important personal service to the university," a nominator wrote.

Esterline has been accepted to the Art Therapy Graduate Program at Mount Mary University in Milwaukee for fall 2021.

Marie-Ange Kivi is a senior marketing communications and communication studies major from St. Paul, Minn.

Kivi is someone who greatly values human connection, learning from others, and engaging in service work so it is not a surprise that her resume reads as it does. She is a Chancellor's Student Ambassador which finds her in high profile communications roles for the university. She has been acknowledged several times by faculty members for leading educational efforts on campus, from launching the Anti-Covid Covid Club, helping UWRF to promote safe behaviors through social media, to serving as a storytelling intern to promote the success of the College of Arts and Sciences.

A non-traditional transfer student originally from Senegal and who commutes to campus, Kivi has demonstrated unwavering commitment to UWRF core values and engaged service to the community. Through her participation in the Honors Program, Kivi has volunteered in several local and Twin Cities non-profits. On campus, she has taken part in the International Friendship program, supporting three international students from China – helping them transition to life at UWRF and promoting cross cultural understanding through a variety of multicultural exchanges and social activities.

Even in her academics, Kivi has gone above and beyond.

"I believe her advancement in digital marketing communications, during a pandemic, nonetheless, exemplifies Marie-Ange's dedication and commitment to her academic success and career," wrote a nominator.

Kivi has already completed one digital marketing communications internship where she earned industry-recognized digital marketing certifications that later helped her secure an internship with a Boulder, Colo., marketing company.

Kivi is described as an inclusive leader who embodies the UWRF commitment to global education. Her positive attitude, passion for service and work ethic are deemed as indicative of maturity beyond her years.

In the words of one of her nominators, "[Marie-Ange] genuinely shares her love for UWRF, appreciation for the opportunity to be a student at UWRF, and passion for her studies and this campus with anyone who will listen. She is someone who instantly connects with others and makes others feel good about the space they are in and the person they are."

After graduation, Kivi will work as a marketing coordinator for Vomela Companies, a national network of graphic design and large format printing specialists based in St. Paul. Vomela creates graphics for retail companies such as Target, TJ Maxx, UGC and Kate Spade.

Adam Leseman is a senior finance and economics major from Champlin, Minn.

Leseman turned internship opportunities into leadership roles early in his UWRF journey. As a freshman, he joined the Finance Club and then the Student Government Association (SGA) where he was elected to the Finance Committee and the Oversight and Rules Committee.

To ensure that UWRF was acting as a good steward of student dollars, Leseman studied UW Administrative Policy and Wisconsin state statutes. Through SGA, he has been actively engaged with student segregated fee oversight and implementing a student perspective into the university strategic planning process.

“Adam welcomes any opportunity to ensure that UWRF remains a student-centered institution and maintains a commitment to protecting and enhancing the student experience,” remarked one nominator.

Leseman was elected as Student Body president during his senior year at UWRF. As president, he spent countless hours participating in meetings and working towards achieving UWRF's maximum potential. Recently, he proposed a Green Fee, a small tuition contribution, in order to make UWRF a more sustainable campus.

Leseman is known for embracing his leadership role as SGA president from a place of humility and truly strives to represent all students and perspectives. He also serves on the Chancellor's Task Force for Inclusivity and Anti-Racism and was a student representative on the Falcons Forward Implementation Team, preparing for a fall return to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a letter of recommendation, Leseman was recognized for demonstrating innovation and creativity through his work with supporting student organizations and creating community at the Student Involvement front desk.

“The Student Involvement desk serves as an ‘involvement hub’ for students and Adam worked hard to create a welcoming, inclusive, and helpful environment,” a nominator wrote.

Leseman's participation and involvement in different student organizations spans from being a peer mentor for the College of Business and Economics, to being a part of National Residence Hall Honorary leadership.

“Adam's dedication to creating an inclusive environment is one that will not be forgotten, but instead will be replicated for many years to come,” wrote a nominator.

Following graduation, Leseman plans to pursue a career in auditing preferably in the government setting, working on behalf of the community and common good.

Ezekiel Olakunle is a junior biomedical sciences major from Oakdale, Minn.

Determined to bring out the best in himself and others, Olakunle took the initiative to become involved in leadership roles on

campus because he saw the need for change.

During his freshman year, Olakunle joined the Black Student Union, taking on responsibilities and showing his leadership almost immediately. Olakunle was instrumental in organizing some of the biggest events held on campus, including African Night and the Soul Food dinner which saw record turnouts from both students and the River Falls community.

First as vice president, then later as president of UWRF Black Student Union, Olakunle has advocated on behalf of the Black student body to ensure voices are heard and students feel empowered to create positive change on campus and in the community.

In submitting his name for the award, a nominator wrote, "Ezekiel is living proof that doing good and doing right by those in your community is fundamental to being a true leader."

Olakunle also serves as an Aspire mentor and resident hall assistant roles which allow him to support students, provide resources and nurture a sense of inclusivity for those new to campus.

"From Aspire Mentor, to the president of BSU, to RA, Ezekiel has helped many students adjust to college," wrote a nominator. "It is clear to me that he is using his talents to raise up our community."

As a biomedical science major, Olakunle was awarded and participated in the WiscAMP (Wisconsin Alliance for Minority Participation) Scholar program in 2019, where he spent a summer in Madison learning and interacting with others from minoritized backgrounds in his field of study. The experience provided him the opportunity to conduct research to further enhance his knowledge in the biomedical field. He and his collaborating research partner presented their work at the WiscAMP Student Leadership Symposium and Annual Meeting.

"Ezekiel showed me through this WiscAMP experience how he not only contributes to the scientific community, but also how he contributes as a member of our UWRF community and our society at large," wrote a nominator.

Olakunle hopes to pursue medical school after graduation in pursuit of achieving his goal of becoming a pediatrician.

Violet Penman is a senior conservation and environmental planning major from Hudson.

Penman's passion for sustainability led to a leadership role with the Office of Sustainability. In her role as a student sustainability representative, she helps to promote sustainable practices, as well as environmental consciousness, both on campus and throughout the community.

"Violet was always a source of positive energy and interaction with her fellow students – she knew how to make others feel at ease and helped foster a more positive learning environment," wrote a nominator.

Penman's undergraduate research included land use project involving the rezoning of River Falls development which culminated in a paper and presentation. She also researched the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and developed public education pieces on them, resulting in a presentation made through the River Falls Public Library as part of the Climate Change Series co-hosted

by multiple organizations in and around the city.

Penman has engaged and conducted extensive amounts of research during her time as a volunteer, and later in a paid position, through the Office of Sustainability. As a Falcon Scholar and member of the UWRF Honors Program, Penman has also completed over 135 hours of community service, many working towards sustainability goals on campus. She has also worked as a note-taker with Ability Services.

Penman volunteers with the UW Divestment Coalition (UWDC)—a coalition among 10 of the 13 UW schools working with the UW System to divest from the fossil fuel industry and reinvest in a sustainable future, a group that she has helped to shape and catalyze.

Even in per position with Textbook Services, Penman is recognized for bringing sustainability improvements.

“I appreciate the changes she helped initiate here with sustainability issues, in particular our recycling practices,” wrote nominators. “Violet will undoubtedly go on to accomplish amazing things in this world and will be a great ambassador for UW-River Falls.”

Penman’s post-graduation plans may include moving into the workforce as a designer of sustainable spaces or the Peace Corp.

Student newspaper receives eight awards in statewide contest; student wins broadcasting award

April 14, 2021 - The Student Voice student newspaper at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls has received eight awards in the 2020 Collegiate Better Newspaper Contest, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation announced April 13.

The winning stories, all published last year, were:

Senior Brooke Shepherd, a journalism and animal science major from Stillwater, Minn., received two awards for public affairs reporting: second place for a May 25 story, "Respecting pronouns part of gender awareness," and third place for an August 14 story, "Reaction to Floyd's death will shape class discussions, professors say."

Shepherd previously served as editor of the campus newspaper and is currently the general manager. She also received awards for arts and entertainment coverage: third place for a March 13 story, "Gay Straight Alliance hosts drag show," and honorable mention for a December 3 story, "UW-River Falls Stage and Screen Arts produces film instead of live show this semester."

Junior Isabella Forliti, a communication studies major and this year's assistant editor, received second place for her March 11 feature story, "Greenhouse offers multiple learning opportunities." Forliti is from White Bear Lake, Minn.

Senior Melissa Thorud, a journalism major and this year's editor, earned third place for a March 12 breaking news story, "Coronavirus leads to class suspensions and alternative classroom methods." Thorud is from White Bear Lake, Minn.

Reagan Hoverman, a 2020 graduate, earned honorable mention for his March 11 sports story, "UWRF men's baseball works to become official team." Hoverman recently joined the weekly Inter-County Leader in Frederic.

Finally, the Student Voice staff earned honorable mention in editorial writing for a March 11 piece, "UWRF policies may be infringing on free speech of students."

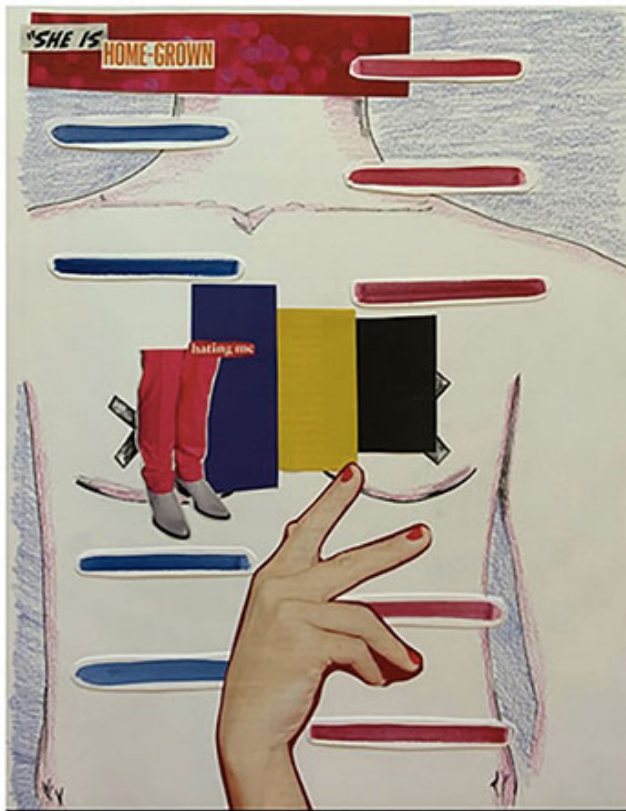
The student produced newspaper, published mostly online last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is financially supported by segregated fees and advertising.

An audio story by a University of Wisconsin-River Falls student about attending college under pandemic restrictions has won a first-place award from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association (WBA).

Ryan Huling, a staff member of the Student Voice campus newspaper, won first place for long form production (non-news) in the 2020 WBA Student Awards for Excellence. Huling, of Farmington, Minn., is a double major in broad area English education and in stage and screen arts.

Huling's 24-minute production, "The Spread and Stipulations," examined how students at various colleges were experiencing the pandemic in November 2020. The story is available online at <http://bit.ly/sv-spread>.

Winners of the annual contest were announced March 6 during the WBA's Student Seminar, which this year was held online. The WBA is a trade association that represents radio and television stations around the state.



Student selected to present research at national symposium



April 13, 2021 – University of Wisconsin-River Falls senior Dannie Esterline has been selected to present their research, Utilizing Art Therapy as a Tool for Queer and Transgender Youth Identity Exploration, at the 2021 Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium at Johns Hopkins University April 24-25.

The Macksey Symposium is the first conference of its kind, a national platform for undergraduates in the humanities to share their work. This is the second year of the Macksey Symposium, both held virtually due to the pandemic.

Esterline's heuristic research study investigated the use of art therapy in conjunction with gender therapy when working with LGBTQ+, specifically transgender youth to assist the understanding of their gender identity.

Esterline, **of Wausau**, will graduate in May with an art major and psychology minor.

Esterline was recently recognized with a UWRF Chancellor's Award for Students and has been accepted into the Art Therapy Graduate Program at Mount Mary University in Milwaukee starting in fall 2021.

For more information, email earl.d.blodgett@uwrf.edu.

Support to those impacted by latest Twin Cities police shooting and protests

April 14, 2021- We acknowledge that the fatal shooting of Daunte Wright on April 11 by a member of a police force has felt traumatic for some in our Falcon community, pain that is of course magnified by its having occurred during the trial of Derek Chauvin. We would like to call on our UWRF community to be compassionate and offer support to those who might be struggling with yet another tragic event so close to our campus home. Our campus-wide commitment to racial justice remains unwavering and we all have a role to play in building a more equitable, safe and welcoming community. UW-River Falls is here to support all members of our community through these trying times.

Students: Student Health and Counseling, 715-425-3884, or counseling.services@uwrf.edu, or Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging, 715-425-3300 or inclusion@uwrf.edu

Employees: Employee Assistance Program, 833-539-7285, or create an account to access the EAP resources online at sowi.mylifeexpert.com (code SOWI).

Chancellor Finalists Named



Constance Foster
Interim Chancellor,
University of Wisconsin-
River Falls
River Falls, WI



Maria Gallo
President, Delaware
Valley University
Doylestown, PA



Satasha Green-Stephen
Associate Vice
Chancellor for
Academic Affairs,
Minnesota State College
and University System
St. Paul, MN



Michael Laliberte
President,
State University of New
York, Delhi
Delhi, NY



Al S. Thompson, Jr.
Vice Chancellor for
Student Affairs,
University of Wisconsin-
Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI

UW-River Falls chancellor finalists named

April 19, 2021-- University of Wisconsin System President Tommy Thompson today announced five finalists for the position of chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, a university with approximately 6,000 students and more than 70 areas of study in four distinct colleges.

An 11-member Search and Screen Committee, led by Regent Scott Beightol, chair, and UWRF Dairy Science Professor Sylvia Kehoe, vice chair, recommended a list of finalists. The Special Regent Committee determined that the following finalists will continue in the selection process.

The finalists, listed in alphabetical order, are:

Constance Foster

Interim Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Maria Gallo

President, Delaware Valley University
Doylestown, Pa.

Satasha Green-Stephen

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Minnesota State College and University System
St. Paul, Minn.

Michael Laliberte

President, State University of New York, Delhi
Delhi, N.Y.

Al S. Thompson, Jr.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Next week, the candidates will participate in separate public forums, offering opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community members to interact directly with them.

After a review of campus feedback, the Special Regent Committee comprised of Regents Scott Beightol, Amy Blumenfeld Bogost, Becky Levzow, Corey Saffold, and Kyle Weatherly, and President Thompson will interview finalists and select a candidate to forward to the full Board of Regents, which must approve the appointment.

The person selected through this process will be the 20th chancellor at UW-River Falls.

For more information about the five candidates, the public conversations, and the search process, see the UW-River Falls chancellor search page at <https://www.uwrf.edu/Chancellor-Search/>. For more information about UW-River Falls, go to its homepage at <https://www.uwrf.edu/>.

Source: UW System news release

UW-River Falls to hold limited in-person commencement May 1

April 15, 2021 – In a sign that traditional college experiences are slowly returning to campus, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls is planning a limited in-person commencement for its spring graduates on Saturday, May 1.

The event will honor 756 associates, bachelor's and master's degree graduates. To manage capacity limitations, graduates will be divided into two small ceremonies. Only the registered, graduating students; a minimal number of university employees; and the chancellor and campus leadership participating on stage in the ceremony will be allowed to attend.

To ensure COVID-19 health and safety guidelines are followed, spectator restrictions are being enforced. Those not authorized to participate in the ceremony are asked to refrain from going to the Falcon Center.

Friends and family members wishing to help the graduates celebrate are encouraged to find other locations to safely do so. Students and their families are welcome to meet up in small groups outdoors on the main campus for photographs. Campus rules regarding face coverings and physical distancing between those who are not members of the same household remain in force.

UWRF's 2021 Distinguished Alum Carole Mottaz will also be recognized during the ceremony.

The ceremonies will be livestreamed at <https://livestream.com/uwrf>

Williams is 2021 Commissioned Composer at virtual concert April 21



April 12, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Music Department will present its 55th Annual Commissioned Composer Program featuring Composer Evan Williams April 19-21. The public is invited via Zoom.

This year's work by Williams is titled "Sound an Alarm" in which Williams inscribed in the score "Dedicated to the memory of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many others..."

Each year, UW-River Falls commissions a composer to write a piece of music for the student body and arranges for that composer to come to the campus in the spring to interact with the students and take part in the premier performance of that work.

The UWRF Commissioned Composer Program was founded by Professor Emeritus Conrad DeJong in 1967 and is the longest running program of its kind in the U.S., putting a national spotlight on the UW-River Falls Music Department.

In light of COVID-19 restrictions, the events will be held virtually:

Evan Williams Composition Seminar with UWRF composition students

Monday, April 19, at 1 p.m.

Zoom Link: <https://uwrf-edu.zoom.us/j/84855730237>

Meeting ID: 848 5573 0237

Evan Williams "Sound an Alarm" Convocation

Wednesday, April 21, at 11 a.m.

Zoom Link: <https://uwrf-edu.zoom.us/j/82217163693>

Meeting ID: 822 1716 3693

For more information, call the UWRF Music Department at 715-425-3183.

Amos named WI Distinguished Agriculturalist



May 24, 2021 -- Ron Amos, owner and president of Evergreen Nursery Company, Inc. in Sturgeon Bay, has been named the 2021 Wisconsin Distinguished Agriculturalist by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Amos has taken one of the oldest businesses in Wisconsin and has kept it relevant, innovative and thriving. Evergreen Nursery, established in 1864 by George Pinney, remained in the Pinney family until 2001, when Amos, who had advanced from propagator to vice-president at Evergreen Nursery, purchased the business. Today, Amos oversees more than 30 employees who annually produce three million liners of evergreens, shrubs and birch, and up to two million liners of cranberries that are shipped across the U.S. and Canada. Evergreen Nursery is the largest wholesale nursery in the state.

Amos, a native of Madison, has a strong background in plant propagation having earned a master's degree from UW-Madison under Brent McCown, Ph.D. Amos started a tissue culture lab at Evergreen Nursery where he optimized the techniques to propagate unique birches and other woody plants which are notoriously difficult to work with, making them commercially viable. He partners with other woody plant breeders to make new and valuable varieties of northern hardy shrubs available.

Amos also works closely with the cranberry industry. The cranberry plant is native to Wisconsin and more than 60% of the cranberries produced in the U.S. come from Wisconsin. With his strong plant propagation skills and deep understanding of plant development, he has helped cranberry breeders increase their number of plants of advanced selections for trials and mass produce the most promising cultivars. His efforts have helped make new, high-yielding cultivars available to growers.

A leader in the International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS), Amos has made significant contributions to their educational programming, has served on numerous committees and served as president in 2014. In 2019, he was honored with the Award of Merit from the IPPS Eastern Region, the highest honor that can be awarded to a member.

His innovations extend beyond plant propagation and breeding. Amos designed unique containers that foster better root systems in young evergreens. He adapted a technique used by perennial growers and began freezing bare root evergreen plugs which has allowed them to ship plants, at the right stage of development, to customers any time of year.

Amos is also an environmentalist, working to preserve the mycorrhizal fungi naturally present in the soil and which promote strong multi-branched root systems. He also served in a leadership role to help Wisconsin develop ecological sound policies to combat invasive plants coming in through horticulture.

Amos' contributions in the area of plant production have helped support multiple sectors of Wisconsin's \$2.7 billion horticultural green industry, from landscape and garden center sales, to fruit production. In 2017, he was inducted into the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation Hall of Fame.

“For more than 50 years, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences has been recognizing individuals who have made significant contributions to agriculture and natural resource management in Wisconsin and beyond, as well as supported UWRF and its programs,” said CAFES Dean Dale Gallenberg. “Ron’s place among these individuals is well deserved and we’re pleased to add him to the group. We appreciate his support of our college and what he has done for the nursery industry.”

The Wisconsin Distinguished Agriculturalist Award was established in 1970 to recognize individuals in the agricultural or natural resources fields that have made outstanding contributions to Wisconsin agriculture, to the state and to their communities. It is jointly administered by UW-River Falls, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, and the student organizations within the college. The Wisconsin Distinguished Agriculturalists are honored with a sketch of their likeness on the Agricultural Hall of Fame wall in the Agricultural Science Hall atrium.

For more information, email laura.walsh@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-3535.

CAFES outstanding seniors honored

May 11, 2021 - The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls presented two outstanding senior awards at their 38th Annual Senior Supper on April 21.

The annual event, sponsored by the CAFES Alumni Association, celebrates the accomplishments of the graduating seniors and welcomes them into the alumni family. The event was held in-person in the large machine shed at UWRF's Mann Valley Farm to allow for physically distant seating and a safer, nearly outdoor environment.



Abigail Solum, a food science and technology major from **Rice Lake**, received the Rochelle Junkman Seymour Award for 2020-21. The award recognizes the graduating senior with the highest GPA in the college.

Solum was described by faculty as an excellent student who really wanted to learn all she could. Her academic adviser said she was great to have in class, definitely a high achiever, but always willing to help other students and she gained their respect for that. Another faculty member said Solum would absorb information in class and when she spoke, it was worth listening to her. She added that Solum was very good at connecting her experience and knowledge to new and different situations.

Brooke Brantner, an animal science major from **Menomonie**, was presented the Dr. Earl Hildebrand Memorial Award which honors a graduating senior who best exemplifies a combination of scholastic achievement, extracurricular involvement and leaderships roles in CAFES. Students are nominated by faculty and the recipient is selected by the CAFES Scholarship Committee.

Six faculty from two departments nominated Brantner. They described her as an AgVocate with a real passion for agriculture that extended beyond her engagement in various clubs on campus to efforts across the state. Brantner took the passion she developed early on through 4-H, FFA and her own family beef operation, and, over the past five years, led 30 beef fitting clinics for youth, judged numerous FFA contests and served as the beef superintendent for the Dunn County Fair. In addition, she was involved with a number of community philanthropic events including the Special Olympics and the Polar Plunge.



Brantner is an accomplished competitor having received the Top Individual Award at the International Dairy Judging Contest in Scotland in 2016. She freely shared what she learned through that experience by joining the Dairy Judging Team at UWRF and taking on the role as coach for the Dunn County dairy judging youth teams.

The faculty concluded their nomination letter by writing, "Brooke is sincere, compassionate, driven, smart and enthusiastic. She clearly wants to make the world a better place and for those reasons we believe she is an excellent candidate for the 2020-21 CAFES Outstanding Senior."

This annual event featured the traditional series of speakers. Representing the alumni was Sam Tauchen, '15, who shared his insights of life after graduation. Agricultural Engineering Professor Joel Peterson represented the faculty and offered advice to the graduates. Coincidentally, the speaker representing the graduating seniors was Brantner.

The students graduating with Laude honors, those who maintained a minimum 3.7 GPA for their entire college career, were also recognized and presented with the red and white cords they are entitled to wear at the commencement ceremony. CAFES Dean Dale Gallenberg also took a few moments to thank the many students who took on leadership roles in the college this past year, particularly those who served as an officer for one of the 20 student organizations in the college.

"I know many of you had great plans for your clubs and were certainly looking forward to some of the traditional activities," Gallenberg said. "Instead, I know many of you struggled this past year to engage students and to come up with activities that could be done safely, but you were up to the challenge."

Gallenberg went on to note that club meetings took place at corn mazes and in faculty backyards, and he described some new activities that were created. The Crops and Soils Club brought meals to farmers bringing in their harvest at a local cooperative last fall, and the Collegiate Farm Bureau created a scavenger hunt for Ag Day 2021.

The evening concluded with attendees picking up their catered boxed dinners and gathering with their friends in small groups at various locations on the farm where tables and chairs had been arranged.

For more information, email laura.walsh@uwrf.edu.

First Rasmussen Journalism Fellow at UW-River Falls to pursue story about obesity



May 25, 2021 -- A University of Wisconsin-River Falls senior studying journalism and animal science has been named the first recipient of the Donovan E. Rasmussen Broadcast Journalism Fellowship.

Through the fellowship, Brooke Shepherd of Stillwater, Minn., will spend six weeks this summer reporting on the issue of obesity in Western Wisconsin. Her work will be featured in a broadcast documentary.

Shepherd is a former editor of the campus newspaper, the Student Voice, and will return in the fall as the assistant editor.

The fellowship is named in honor of Donovan E. Rasmussen (1922-2009), who in 2006, funded an endowment with the UW-River Falls Foundation to be used by the journalism program.



Maria Gallo named next chancellor of UW-River Falls

Appointment takes effect July 15, 2021

May 11, 2021 - Maria Gallo, Ph.D., president of Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pa., has been named the 20th chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents today unanimously approved Gallo's appointment following a recommendation made by a selection committee. Gallo will assume the leadership post on July 15.

Gallo, a Fulbright Scholar and a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America, has been president of Delaware Valley University since July 1, 2016. Under her leadership, the university has announced its first endowed professorship, increased student retention, and grown its hydroponics and aquaponics education program.

Prior to that, she was dean and director of Research and Cooperative Extension of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. A plant molecular biologist, Gallo was professor and chair of the agronomy department at the University of Florida where she specialized in crop improvement. She earned her B.S. in agronomy from Cornell University and both her M.S. in crop science and Ph.D. in genetics from North Carolina State University.

"Dr. Gallo will be a terrific asset to UW-River Falls," said UW System President Tommy Thompson. "She has an extensive academic background as a scholar with expertise in agronomy and genetics. She will take UW-River Falls to new heights."

"I would like to thank the Board of Regents, President Thompson, the Search Committee, and the UW-River Falls community for the honor of serving as chancellor," Gallo said. "I am inspired by the university's commitment to academic excellence,

student success, and affordability. I look forward to partnering with the 12 chancellors in the UW System along with UW-River Falls faculty, staff, alumni, and friends to bring innovation and opportunity to the state and the St. Croix Valley."

"Dr. Gallo is a dynamic leader who we believe will be a great fit as the next UW-River Falls chancellor," said Regent Scott Beightol, chair of the Search and Screen Committee. "Her experience is exemplary, and we look forward to her leading the next generation of students. She was extraordinarily impressive to the search committee. We were impressed with her energy, her enthusiasm for the opportunity to lead UW-River Falls, her strong ties to agriculture and outstanding credentials, her sense of urgency in addressing enrollment and financial challenges, and her desire to make UW-River Falls an outstanding comprehensive university in the UW System."

"Dr. Gallo has a multitude of strengths which complement and further add to our wonderful university," said Sylvia Kehoe, committee vice chair and professor of dairy science at UW-River Falls. "She will have a lot of eager staff, faculty, and students to rely on who are ready to take us to the next level and into the future."

The Special Regent Committee for the UW-River Falls Chancellor Search that recommended Gallo to the full Board of Regents includes Regents Beightol, Amy Blumenfeld Bogost, Becky Levzow, Corey Saffold, and Kyle Weatherly. President Thompson concurred in the recommendation.

The Search and Screen Committee includes members of the Special Regent Committee; Kehoe; Neil Kraus, professor of politics, geography, and international studies; Sarah Nelson, executive director of admissions; Dan McGinty, alumnus and former employee; Madeleine Olson, student; and Carlos Alderete, student (ex-officio).

Gallo will earn \$268,200 as chancellor.

UW-River Falls, UW-Eau Claire, UW-Eau Claire–Barron County and UW-Stout relax requirements for vaccinated individuals

May 27, 2021 - Starting June 1, University of Wisconsin System schools in River Falls, Eau Claire and Menomonie will relax their face covering and physical distancing requirements on campus for people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

The updates to campus health and safety guidelines at UW-River Falls, UW-Eau Claire, UW-Eau Claire–Barron County and UW-Stout reflect recent COVID-19 guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wisconsin Department of Health Services and local public health agencies.

“On behalf of UW-River Falls, I am deeply grateful for the work of our campus community to help mitigate the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic,” said UW-River Falls Interim Chancellor Connie Foster. “This commitment to following our campus health and safety guidance is now paying off and we are finally able to begin returning to what we know to be our most effective ways of educating and interacting with our students and of collaborating with each other.”

“Through our actions, UW-Eau Claire and other Western Wisconsin universities have shown we care deeply about the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, but also about the communities where we live and work every day,” said UW-Eau Claire Chancellor James Schmidt. “Our campus communities understood that the only way to combat COVID-19 was together by wearing masks, physical distancing, getting tested and now being vaccinated. We now enthusiastically look forward to the return to a normal campus environment this fall.”

“The health and safety of our employees and the community have been at the forefront of our planning efforts, and we are pleased to have reached this milestone,” said UW-Stout Chancellor Katherine Frank. “As Wisconsin’s Polytechnic University, it is especially important that we are able to resume regular operations this fall to support our students’ success through access to laboratories, studios, and facilities. Our faculty, staff, and students have responded tremendously in support of the health and safety measures, and I am confident that they will continue their efforts for a successful fall return by continuing the necessary precautions, including vaccinations.”

The chancellors strongly encourage all students, faculty and staff to receive the vaccine. People who are not fully vaccinated will be required to continue to be tested and follow masking and physical distancing requirements.

For more information regarding each university’s guidelines, visit the following links:

UW-River Falls: <https://www.uwrf.edu/Falcons-Forward>

UW-Eau Claire: <https://www.uwec.edu/coronavirus-updates/>

UW-Stout: <https://www.uwstout.edu/covid-19-coronavirus-planning-and-preparedness>

Chancellor Foster issues statement on funding of UWRF SciTech project

June 8, 2021 - On behalf of UW-River Falls, I am pleased to express my gratitude for the outcome of today's vote by the **Joint Committee on Finance** to include \$111.73M in state funding towards the \$116.73M UW-River Falls Science and Technology Innovation Center (SciTech) project in the state's 2021-23 capital budget.

Today's commitment will allow UWRF to move forward with plans to replace its terribly outdated science facilities and offer a unique university/business collaboration hub that will benefit our students and local employers alike. We will actively be exploring options regarding the additional \$5M in gifts and grants required for the project, having already benefited from a \$1M challenge gift from UWRF alumni entrepreneurs Jeff and Kristi Cernohous.

We thank in particular Representative Shannon Zimmerman from River Falls who has been an important advocate for this project in the legislature and in his role on the Joint Finance Committee. We know that he understands the value of the project to our campus and to Western Wisconsin and he has once again upheld his commitment to communicating to his colleagues the important role that our thriving region plays in the state.

We are also thankful for the commitment of the Joint Committee on Finance to invest in several UW System projects especially which address the renovation, remodeling and replacement of outdated and unsafe facilities.

This investment in UW-River Falls and in the UW System is an expression of confidence in the role our university plays in the future of the state. We look forward to continuing to work with our legislators and the Governor's Office as the biennial budget makes its way forward in the state process. --Interim Chancellor Connie Foster

About the Science and Technology Innovation Center

The proposed SciTech project will house the departments of biology, chemistry, physics, and psychological sciences, providing modern laboratory spaces for instruction and undergraduate research to meet industry demands in STEM fields. SciTech will also include a university-business collaboration hub to support internships and incubation of joint research projects. The facility will play a vital role in supporting economic growth in Western Wisconsin by fostering collaboration between faculty, students and regional businesses.

SciTech is as essential to our students' future success as it is to our region's economy. Business and industry leaders as well as economic development and chamber of commerce leaders have all expressed their overwhelming support for this project, as have our students, faculty and staff. SciTech will allow UW-River Falls to increase undergraduate research opportunities, hands-on learning and development of critical career opportunities for our students while meeting industry demand in Wisconsin's high growth industries.

Marnell named St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center director

Sheri Marnell officially takes the helm on leading small business incubation for the St. Croix Valley economic region



June 8, 2021 - The College of Business and Economics (CBE) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, in partnership with the City of River Falls, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and the River Falls Economic Development Corporation, welcomes Sheri Marnell, Ph.D., as the new director of the St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center (SCVBIC).

Marnell, of Hudson, was initially brought in to lead the center in February 2020 on an interim basis. She has previous higher education and corporate experience, including at UW-Stout and Target Corporate.

As director, Marnell is responsible for the continued operation of the innovation center and its mission of fostering entrepreneurship and economic development that results in a more vibrant regional economy. Her appointment started June 1 and she will report to CBE Interim Dean Marina Onken.

"Entrepreneurs wear many hats in their business," Marnell said. "Leading a business incubator allows our members to be connected to resources and advising that they would not have outside our building. In the 15 months that I have been interim director, the growth that all our members had during a global pandemic is a testament to the value we bring to the St. Croix Valley's economic growth."

"As interim director, Dr. Marnell was also able to drive growth in our business incubator program," said Onken. "We are excited to officially have Dr. Marnell on our team where she can continue this growth and success."

The SCVBIC is a collaborative effort between four founding partners within the local community: CBE, Chippewa Valley Technical College, the City of River Falls and the River Falls Economic Development Corporation. It was founded with the mission to provide incubation space, training and support to foster entrepreneurship and enhance success of businesses resulting in regional economic growth, new job opportunities, and a vibrant St. Croix Valley.

"I chose to come to the SCVBIC because I loved the idea of working alongside other entrepreneurs in a very positive atmosphere. The director of the Innovation Center has been incredibly approachable and accommodating. Couldn't ask for a better situation than what I have now, and I couldn't be happier with my decision," said Ed Rosheim, owner of Workplace Language and current tenant of the SCVBIC.

Marnell holds a Ph.D. in business management - innovation and leadership from Capella University and an MBA from UW-River Falls. Prior to her role at the innovation center, Marnell was a lecturer for UW-River Falls as well as a program director at UW-Stout. She also comes with extensive leadership and collaborative skills from her tenure with Target Corp. She is heavily involved in the local community through her work with the Hudson Community Foundation and other educational,

sports, and civic organizations.

For more information on the St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center, the services offered, or to schedule a tour, visit www.stcroixinnovation.org or contact Marnell at sheri.marnell@uwrf.edu or 715-425-4288.

New fund to honor late philosophy professor



June 25, 2021 – Efforts are underway to establish a memorial endowment in honor of University of Wisconsin-River Falls Professor Imtiaz Moosa who taught at the university from 1989 until his unexpected passing in December 2020.

In tribute to the long-time philosophy professor, the Dr. Imtiaz Moosa Philosophy and Ethics Speaker Series Fund will provide financial resources for an annual contemporary philosophy and ethics symposium.

“Professor Moosa is dearly missed by our entire Falcon family,” said Dean Yohnk, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. “Imtiaz demonstrated a vibrant spirit, a love of teaching, a steadfast dedication to our students and a true zest for life. We believe this new symposium will be a meaningful and lasting tribute to a memorable educator and remarkable person.”

Yohnk said the goal is to endow the new fund, which requires contributions totaling a minimum of \$25,000, to provide the ongoing financial resources for the speaker series. The sessions will feature leading experts and thought leaders on a variety of pressing philosophical, social justice and contemporary ethical issues.

“Our campus community and the entire country needs rational, informed debate on important topics now more than ever,” explains Neil Kraus, chair of the History and Philosophy Department. “Our hope is that we can use the Dr. Imtiaz Moosa Philosophy and Ethics Symposium Series to bring in speakers to address many of the most important issues we face, including the precarious state of democracy itself.”

Moosa earned his bachelors, masters and Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. Over the course of his 30-plus year teaching career at UWRF, he impacted a multitude of students through a wide variety of philosophy courses.

To support the Dr. Imtiaz Moosa Philosophy and Ethics Symposium Series Fund, a secure online contribution can be made by visiting <https://www.uwrf.edu/give/MoosaMemorial.cfm>. Checks should be made payable to the UWRF Foundation with Imtiaz Moosa Symposium Fund indicated in the memo line. Contributions may be mailed to: UWRF Foundation, 118 North Hall, 410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022.

For more information, contact University Advancement Director of Operations Kimberly Gould Speckman at 715-425-4212 or kimberly.gould-speckman@uwrf.edu.

SciTech project supported by Western Wisconsin businesses, industry

June 7, 2021 – Business and industry leaders across the St. Croix Valley are reaching out and speaking up in support of the future of students and the region's economy as the University of Wisconsin-River Falls vies for state budget funds.

UW-River Falls is seeking funding for its Science and Technology Innovation Center, an investment that will address outdated science facilities and meet industry demand in Wisconsin's high growth industries.

In a demonstration of the value of this facility to employers as well as to students, UWRF alumni **Jeff and Kristi Cernohous** recently announced a \$1M challenge gift to help garner private funds that will complement the state investment in the Science and Technology Innovation Center.

"We believe that it will create a more efficient strategy to help students determine what they really want to do with their life in a collegiate setting. We believe that this will be extremely impactful to them and to the future competitiveness of Wisconsin businesses," said Jeff Cernohous.

"The value that the Science and Technology Innovation Center brings during this crucial time is the ability to train and hire talent within the fields of biology, chemistry and biotechnology," said **Jennifer Theisen, director, Human Resources, DiaSorin, Inc.** "UWRF provides the foundation and elements for us to provide the critical training for today's workforce to be competitive in the market and remain in the region."

The facility will have an impact on the entire campus, serving students from a wide range of majors and has been endorsed by the **UWRF Student Government Association**. A resolution passed unanimously by this body cites, "Approximately 1,700 UWRF students take science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses every year that could be taught in one central location, the Science and Technology Innovation Center." They also point out that the facility, which will house biology, chemistry, physics and psychological sciences will not serve only science majors. "SciTech supports additional fields at UWRF, specifically agricultural sciences and preparation of K-12 science educators," they stated.

Full construction funding for the SciTech project is included in the \$1.2 billion UW System capital budget request put forth by President Tommy Thompson for the 2021-23 biennium. At a cost of \$116.7 million, SciTech is ranked highest of the handful of new STEM facility construction funding requests on the list. SciTech will be a driver of local economic development and will meet the needs of businesses, innovators and entrepreneurs in a thriving economic region of the state and beyond. Located near a vibrant metropolitan area of approximately 4 million people, SciTech will help UW-River Falls become an attractor of STEM talent that will fuel the state's workforce pipeline.

SciTech is different from most other UW System capital projects as it includes a unique university/business collaboration hub that will benefit our students and local employers alike. This space will support enhanced internships, hands-on research, early talent engagement and incubation of joint university-business projects.

More than a dozen advocacy partners from public and private business as well as regional economic development leaders have joined together in support of SciTech and its impact, including:

River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau
Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce
New Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce
Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau
City of River Falls
Pierce County Board of Supervisors
Momentum West
Pierce County EDC
Polk County EDC
River Falls EDC
St. Croix EDC
UWRF Faculty Senate
UWRF Academic Staff Council
UWRF University Staff Senate
UWRF Student Senate
UWRF Foundation Board of Directors

For more information about SciTech, email beth.schommer@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-0662.

Three new CAFES faculty members funded by state's Dairy Innovation Hub

June 17, 2021 - Kate Creutzinger, Grace Lewis and Luis Peña-Lévano have been hired as faculty members by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, representing the first tenure-track faculty positions on campus funded by the Dairy Innovation Hub. These positions are 60% research and outreach and 40% teaching.

The Dairy Innovation Hub, which launched in 2019, harnesses research and development at [UW–Madison](#), [UW–Platteville](#) and [UW–River Falls](#) to keep Wisconsin's dairy community at the global forefront in producing nutritious dairy products in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. It is supported by a \$7.8 million annual investment by the State of Wisconsin.

"A fundamental component of the Hub is conducting critically important research to make a difference in the dairy community. The talented faculty hired to develop and implement this research will also be part of educating and training the next generation of dairy professionals through teaching and co-curricular activities, such as undergraduate research. UW-River Falls is very excited to welcome our initial cohort of three tenure-track faculty who bring significant expertise in the areas of animal welfare and behavior, dairy foods processing, and economic and community development," said [Dale Gallenberg](#), CAFES dean. "Their work will directly benefit farmers and others in the dairy community regionally, state-wide and beyond."

Creutzinger, Lewis and Peña-Lévano will start in August.

ABOUT KATE CREUTZINGER:



Creutzinger was hired as an assistant professor specializing in dairy animal welfare. In this role, she will establish a research and outreach program that will support Wisconsin dairy farmers and service providers through projects focused on dairy animal welfare. Creutzinger's research will leverage the university's laboratory farm with 100 milking cows and 100 youngstock as well as opportunities with commercial dairy farmers in Wisconsin and the upper Midwest. As a faculty member funded by the Dairy Innovation Hub, she will also have the ability to collaborate with colleagues at UW-River Falls, UW-Madison and UW-Platteville.

Creutzinger will teach undergraduate courses focusing on dairy and animal science with an emphasis on dairy cattle management and welfare. She will also advise students majoring in dairy science and mentor students with research projects related to her areas of expertise.

"I'm incredibly excited to start working on dairy welfare at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls," said Creutzinger. "It is my hope to improve the lives of Wisconsin dairy cows and farmers through my appointment at UWRF."

Creutzinger earned her BS (2014) and Ph.D. (2020) in animal science from The Ohio State University and her MS (2016) in large animal clinical science from University of Saskatchewan. She is currently a post-doc at the University of Guelph working

on the welfare of male dairy calves. Creutzinger's doctoral research focused on the effect of the social environment on transition dairy cow behavior and health with the goal of improving the management of cows housed in groups at calving. Her future interests involve the improvement of dairy cattle quality of life used in various agriculture systems by developing a robust teaching and research program focused on applied behavior, welfare, and sustainability.

ABOUT GRACE LEWIS:



Lewis was hired as an assistant professor specializing in dairy processing. She will develop a research and outreach program that supports Wisconsin dairy processors, entrepreneurs, farmers and service providers by generating research focused on technology, product development and processing systems in the dairy foods space. Lewis' research will leverage the university's newly remodeled Dairy Pilot Plant and opportunities with commercial dairy processors in Wisconsin. As with all faculty funded by the Dairy Innovation Hub, Lewis will join a collaborative cohort of colleagues at UW-River Falls, UW-Madison and UW-Platteville who routinely work together on research and mentor undergraduate and graduate students.

Lewis will also teach undergraduate courses in dairy manufacturing and food science with an emphasis on dairy processing and human health. She will advise students in the Food Science and Technology Program and mentor students with research projects in her area of expertise.

"The Dairy Innovation Hub initiative excites me, and I am so glad to be part of this initial cohort," said Lewis. "With such a collaborative environment, phenomenal students and many local dairy farmers and processors, I am thrilled to begin my research program at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls."

Lewis earned a BS (2018), and Ph.D. (2021) in food science at Pennsylvania State University. Her doctoral research focuses on dairy processing techniques that affect protein functionality and overall food physical properties. Specifically, Lewis is a member of a research team exploring the relationship between dairy processing operations and how food nutrients function considering the public's goal of minimally processed and clean label foods.

ABOUT LUIS PEÑA-LÉVANO:



Peña-Lévano was hired as an assistant professor specializing in community economic development. In this position, he will establish a research and outreach program that will support Wisconsin dairy farmers, agriculture start-ups, rural entrepreneurs and regional partnerships. Peña-Lévano's research will leverage new and established connections with the agribusiness community in Wisconsin and region. As a faculty member funded by the Dairy Innovation Hub, he will have the ability to collaborate with colleagues at UW-River Falls, UW-Madison and UW-Platteville and mentor undergraduate and graduate students.

Peña-Lévano will teach undergraduate courses in regional economics, agricultural economics and agribusiness management. He will also advise students in the agricultural business, agricultural studies and (agricultural) marketing communications

programs. He will also develop co-curricular opportunities for students that align with his research program.

"I am honored to become part of the agricultural economics team and the Dairy Innovation Hub," he said. "I am looking forward to this exciting opportunity of collaborating in expanding our knowledge on dairy and regional economics, finance and international trade."

Peña-Lévano earned his BS (2009) in food science and agriculture engineering from Zamorano University in Honduras, a MS (2012) in agriculture and applied economics from the University of Georgia and Ph.D. (2017) from Purdue University in agricultural economics, specializing in international trade, optimization and finance. He is currently an assistant professor at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore with an extension focus on community and economic development. Peña-Lévano's doctoral research focused on climate change interactions with agriculture, carbon taxes, forestry sequestration and food security.

Steve Kelm, a professor in food and animal science and also the campus champion for the hub's efforts at UW-River Falls, is excited to see longer-term research initiatives take hold on campus.

"Teaching is the primary focus for current CAFES faculty, and the scale of much of our work is defined by needs of semester-long courses. These new faculty members will foster long-term, multi-disciplinary and cross-campus collaborations to benefit the dairy community. It's an exciting time for us," Kelm said.

Contact: Maria Woldt, Dairy Innovation Hub program manager, 608-265-4009, maria.woldt@wisc.edu

University of Wisconsin-River Falls issues statement on webpage link

June 23, 2021 – UW-River Falls regrets the posting of a link on one of its webpages to an editable document from a third-party source which included statements against law enforcement.

The opinions and views reflected in the document do not reflect the values of the university. UWRF is appreciative of the work of law enforcement and is committed to promoting an inclusive campus environment.

The webpage has been removed and the university has taken steps to develop a process for reviewing such content in the future.

UW-River Falls Alumni Association to honor award recipients

Virtual Evening of Excellence set for Thursday, June 10, at 5 p.m.

June 8, 2021 – A River Falls community and education visionary leader and one of the city's most respected business institutions and families are among the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Alumni Association's annual award recipients to be honored during UWRF's virtual Evening of Excellence on Thursday, June 10, beginning at 5 p.m.

The honorees are:

Distinguished Alumnus Award – Carole Mottaz

Lifetime Achievement Award – Richard Vilstrup

Outstanding Young Alumnus Award – Brian Allen

Outstanding Service Award – First National Bank of River Falls and the Smith Family

Interim Chancellor Connie Foster will host the event and present the awards. Join the virtual ceremonies via Zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/UWRFEveningofExcellence>

For more information, contact UWRF Director of Alumni Relations Pedro Renta at 715-425-4553 or pedro.renta@uwrf.edu.



UW-River Falls expresses gratitude for new state investments

July 8, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls will benefit significantly from funding in the 2021-23 Wisconsin state budget, which was signed into law today by Governor Tony Evers.

“My deep appreciation goes to our legislature and to Governor Evers for their understanding of the value of UW System and UW-River Falls as evidenced in the 2021-23 biennial budget,” said UWRF Interim Chancellor Connie Foster. “Our students, faculty, staff and the employers in our region all stand to benefit from the support that the State of Wisconsin has provided.”

UW-River Falls will especially benefit from the \$111 million in capital funds for the Science and Technology Innovation Center (SciTech). This project promises to be transformational for the campus and will allow UWRF to continue contributing to the growth of its thriving economic region. The campus will also benefit from funding for initiatives such as the Freshwater Collaborative and funding for ag extension agents, in addition to a state pay plan that foresees two 2% increases.

UW-River Falls is grateful for the advocacy and support provided by members of campus as well as business and community leaders while budget deliberations were underway throughout the past several weeks. The campus also wishes to acknowledge the hard work of our elected officials, including those who represent River Falls in the state legislature, Representative Shannon Zimmerman and Senator Rob Stafsholt.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4306.



Jax Zajec (kneeling and holding Chris Clover, the 4-H mascot) and his siblings meet Casie Bass, Evan Henthorne, and Katie Stenroos along with Klover and Kitty.

UW-River Falls is “Foaling Around with Wisconsin 4-H”

July 16, 2021 -- During the spring semester, the Equine Breeding Program at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls collaborated with Wisconsin 4-H educators and developed an outreach program, “Foaling Around with Wisconsin 4-H.” Casie Bass, associate professor of Animal Science, and 15 college students enrolled in her Equine Reproductive Techniques course worked with Evan Henthorne, Adams County 4-H program educator, and Katie Stenroos, Douglas County 4-H program educator, on this project.

From February through May, the team collaborated to produce informational videos regarding foaling, mare and foal care, nutrition, exercise, and other educational topics related to horses and equine reproduction. Every other week Bass and her students met virtually with up to 100 4-H participants and parents in a live question and answer session to better engage with the 4-H members and continue the conversation on the various topics covered in the videos.

Through the semester-long program, Wisconsin 4-H participants were able to continue gaining knowledge about horses and equine reproduction, as well as meet UWRF college students and UWRF horses, despite face-to-face restrictions due to COVID. Jax Zajec, one of the 4-H participants, won the right to name one of the UWRF foals born this spring. This summer, Zajec, accompanied by his mother and siblings, visited UWRF to meet Bass, Henthorne and Stenroos in person and tour the facility. Most exciting for Zajec was meeting Klover, the foal that he named, and Klover’s dam, Kitty.

UW-River Falls welcomes new chancellor this week



July 12, 2021 – UW-River Falls will begin fall semester with a new leader in the Chancellor's Office. Maria Gallo, Ph.D., former president of Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pa., will begin as UWRF's 20th chancellor on Thursday, July 15.

Prior to her DelVal post, Gallo, a Fulbright Scholar, a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America, and a plant molecular biologist, was dean and director of Research and Cooperative Extension of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa and was professor and chair of the Agronomy Department at the University of Florida where she specialized in crop improvement. She earned her bachelor's degree in agronomy from Cornell University and both her master's degree in crop science and Ph.D. in genetics from North Carolina State University.

Gallo says she was inspired by the university's commitment to academic excellence, student success, and affordability.

"I look forward to partnering with the 12 chancellors in the UW System along with UW-River Falls faculty, staff, alumni, and friends to bring innovation and opportunity to the state and the St. Croix Valley," Gallo said.

Gallo was selected for the UWRF leadership role by the UW System Board of Regents in May. UW System President Tommy Thompson emphasized Gallo's extensive academic background in announcing her selection as UWRF's next chancellor.

"She is a scholar with expertise in agronomy and genetics," Thompson said. "She will take UW-River Falls to new heights."

The naming of Gallo as chancellor follows the departure of Chancellor Dean Van Galen who left UW-River Falls in July 2020 after being selected president of Missouri Southern State University. Van Galen was succeeded by Interim Chancellor Connie Foster who has lead the university for the past year.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu

Boetel named adviser of the year



September 22, 2021 - Brenda Boetel, professor of agricultural economics, has been named Adviser of the Year at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Boetel is the fourth faculty member from the Agricultural Economics Department to receive the award since its inception in 2000.

Current students and alumni submit nominations for the award each spring and the Faculty Senate Advising Committee reviews the nominations and makes the final selection.

"After I was re-admitted to UW-River Falls, Dr. Boetel served as my academic adviser," said one nominator. "She was integral in helping me choose a course load that did not hinder my education or progress toward graduation. She was always available to have a conversation and help me figure things out. If it wasn't for Dr. Boetel, I wouldn't have graduated, plain and simple. Because of her passion, care and advice, I returned to college and notched six consecutive semesters with a GPA greater than 3.0 as someone who was previously suspended."

"I have always been motivated by individuals that are passionate about what they do. I have never been that invested in my academics but meeting Dr. Boetel inspired me to take ownership in my education and find the value in it," wrote an alumnus. "Opening my eyes to the opportunities in front of me and again inspiring me from her passion in what she does. I felt she believed she was successful when I was, it was never just another day or another meeting with a student when I walked into her office. I knew that she was going to do everything she could to help me be successful."

Another nominator said, "Her insight and advice was second to none. When I was in my last semester of college, we had numerous conversations about the future and what it held. I may not have chosen to pursue a career in my degree field immediately upon graduating, however, almost three years later, I find myself still recalling her advice and wisdom. It is this that has led me back into the agricultural field where I have actively been pursuing a career. All in all, I believe that Dr. Brenda Boetel is more than deserving of this award, not just because of my story or situation, but because there are many more like mine."

Boetel, of River Falls, was formally presented with the award by UWRF Provost David Travis on the Opening Day of the fall semester.

"I am overwhelmed with gratitude. Having students take their time to nominate me for this award is incredibly meaningful," said Boetel. "I truly enjoy working with the students and probably get as much from our interactions as they do."

Boetel joined the faculty at UW-River Falls in 2002 accepting a joint teaching and Extension appointment. In this position she also serves as the state-wide agricultural marketing specialist focusing on the areas of livestock marketing and price analysis for UW-Madison Division of Extension. Since 2016, Boetel has served as chair of the Agricultural Economics Department. She is originally from **Huron, S.D.**, and earned her BA degree at Minnesota State University Moorhead, her MS from the

University of Kentucky and her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota.

For more information, email laura.walsh@uwrf.edu

Cudd named distinguished teacher



September 17, 2021 - Distinguished Music Lecturer Patti Cudd has been named the Distinguished Teacher of the Year at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The award was established more than 50 years ago and is the highest honor a faculty member can receive on campus. Each year nominations are sought from current seniors and recent graduates.

"Patti Cudd is my applied percussion teacher, mentor, and friend," one nominator wrote. "I have learned so much about what it means to be a female percussionist and how to be confident in doing so. Patti challenges me in my lessons and in her ensembles while also having grace for the days that I am not at my best. She treats all of her students with great respect and understanding, and that is why she leaves such a lasting impression on her students."

Cudd is active as a percussion soloist, chamber musician and educator. She teaches percussion and new music studies at UW-River Falls and at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University.

The Distinguished Teacher Award recognizes excellence in both mentoring as well as teaching, something former students spoke to in letters of nomination.

"Her relationships with her students are phenomenal, and I hope to reflect her compassion in my future career," a student wrote. "My life will forever be changed by Patti because I can honestly say that I have never had someone believe in me the way that she does."

"She has persevered through a global pandemic and has managed to still provide students with excellent ensemble experiences. She is a phenomenal Music 100 teacher and an extraordinary music educator as a whole," another student wrote.

Yet another student wrote "With fierce determination Dr. Cudd cares about her craft and the students she diligently passes it along to. She is a master at evoking a sense of purpose as well as an everlasting curiosity in every class she teaches. Beyond an educational front, Dr. Cudd is always pleasant to talk to and work with. With a quick wit and an unreasonable amount of patience she provides her students a comfortable person to reach out to."

Cudd, a Hudson native who lives in Woodbury, Minn., has been teaching at UWRF since 1998. As a UWRF alum, being named the university's Distinguished Teacher was particularly impactful.

"As an educator, I hold this award to be one of the greatest honors," said Cudd. "It is especially meaningful knowing this award comes from the students. I am truly humbled by this recognition!"

Cudd holds a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree specializing in contemporary musical studies from the University of California, San Diego; Master of Music Degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo; undergraduate studies at UW-River Falls; and, studied in the soloist class with a Fulbright Scholarship at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music in

Copenhagen, Denmark.

Cudd will be honored September 21 during a reception on campus. A plaque of her likeness will be added to the wall of Distinguished Teachers in the Wyman Education Building. As the recipient of the Distinguished Teacher Award, she will deliver an address at fall commencement in December.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4306.

Innovator in Residence to speak Oct. 20



September 22, 2021 - **Jeremy Dumond, director of research, insights and analytics for Land O'Lakes Dairy Foods**, is the fall 2021 Innovator in Residence at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. He will speak on "**INNOVATION in Sales and Marketing Strategy Through Cutting-Edge Technologies**," on Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 2 p.m. in the Riverview Ballroom of the University Center. The talk is free and open to all.

The Innovator in Residence is part of an innovation program at UWRF's College of Business and Economics. Students learn to solve problems creatively and develop business models from their ideas in innovation classes and also compete in the campus Innovation Challenge. UWRF students have taken first place in the Wisconsin Big Idea Tournament three times in the past six years and have gone on to start businesses that impact some of the biggest global issues, including homelessness and water security.

Dumond was born in River Falls and spent his first decade on dairy farms in the River Falls area and has spent his entire career working in the Dairy Aisle for Old Home Foods and Land O'Lakes. Over the course of his two-plus decades in the Dairy Aisle, he has worked in sales, finance, information technology and logistics prior to his current role.

Dumond is a resident of Hudson and still has many friends and family members in River Falls and the surrounding area.

The Land O'Lakes Dairy Foods Team has been on a journey to best-in-class deployments of cutting-edge technologies such as machine Learning, virtual reality and social listening over the past several years. These technologies have driven unprecedented success in the marketplace and have been recognized by CIO Magazine with their coveted "CIO 100 Award for IT Innovation" and numerous citations from CPG industry strategic partners and advisors. By connecting endless sources of consumer data with practical in-market execution through these technologies, Land O'Lakes Dairy Foods is growing market share and profit and thus enhancing the financial viability of its 1600+ farmer-member owners.

For more information about this event, call 715-425-3335 or visit go.uwrf.edu/innovator.

UW-River Falls recognized for excellence by U.S. News & World Report

September 14, 2021 – U.S. News & World Report has again named the University of Wisconsin-River Falls a Best Regional University, a Top Public University and a Top Performer on Social Mobility.

The newest rankings appear in the U.S. News & World Report's 2022 edition of Best Colleges. Schools are ranked according to their performance across a set of widely accepted indicators of excellence.

"Recognition by U.S. News and World Report is to be celebrated across campus," said Chancellor Maria Gallo. "Our commitment to academic excellence and student success is demonstrated daily in and out of the classroom. I am proud of the important work of our faculty, instructors, advisers and employees who remain steadfast in their dedication to the success of our students."

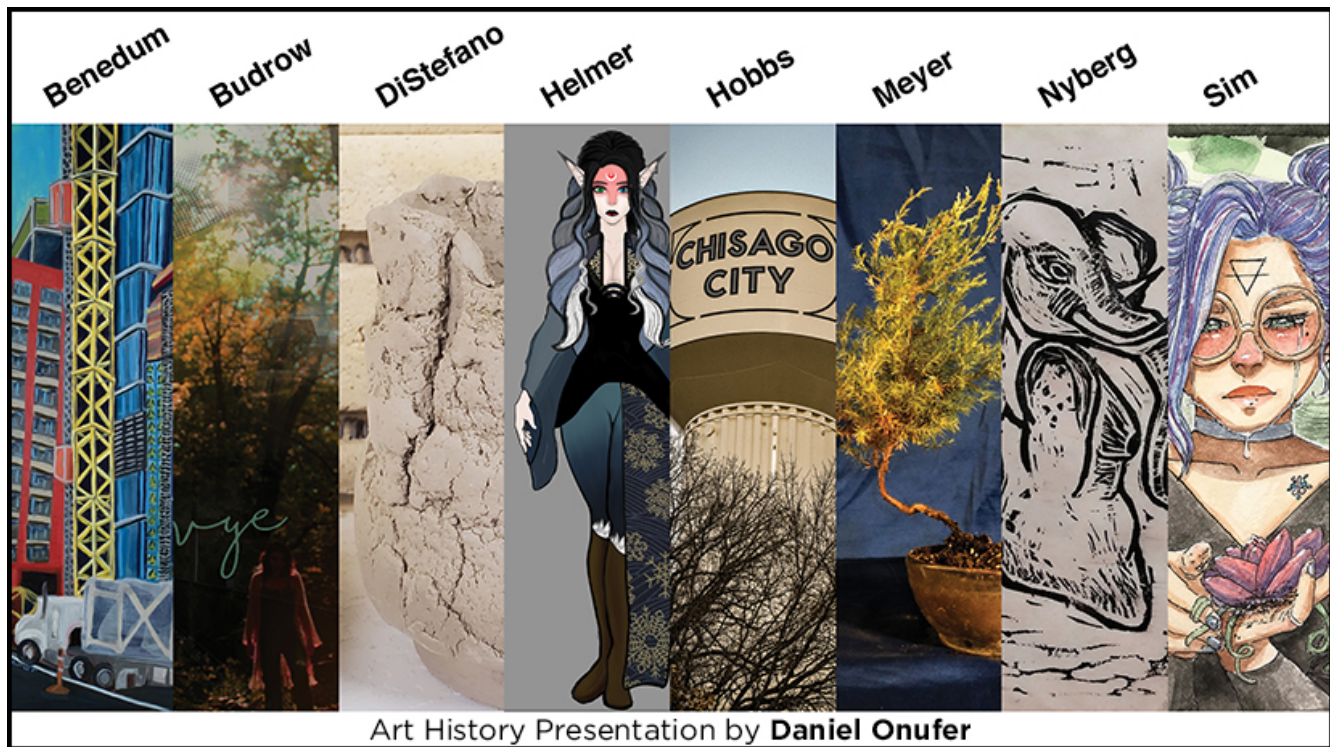
In the survey, UW-River Falls was recognized for its focus on social mobility, supporting economically disadvantaged students who are less likely than others to finish college.

"Education is the number one way to positively change one's socio-economic status so advancing social mobility is key to UWRF's student success efforts," said Assistant Chancellor for Student Success Jamie Zamjahn. "We are here to support each and every student and make this happen no matter their resources. Our priority is understanding how best to ensure their success."

Student-to-faculty ratios and smaller class sizes were also acknowledged, both of which provide better access to instructors and support a student-centered learning environment.

The U.S. News & World Report rankings evaluate more than 1,400 colleges and universities on up to 17 measures of academic quality. The 2022 rankings can be found online at usnews.com/best-colleges.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4306.



BFA senior thesis exhibition/presentation

October 14, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls 2021 BFA graduating class will present their senior thesis work Oct. 25-Nov. 19 in Gallery 101 in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building. On display will be ceramic works, paintings, drawings, illustration, graphic design, and an art history theses digital presentation.

Works and artists include:

Daniel Benedum, of West Bend, has an emphasis in painting and drawing. His work reflects his interactions to spaces in his environment and community and the emotional connections that are created in them.

Camille Budrow, of Roberts, has an emphasis in graphic design, paired with a degree in marketing communications. Her work combines graphics, photo editing, and social media content creation. It highlights the intersection of music production, design, and branding, through the release of a small original album "With the Sun."

Soren DiStefano, who grew up in and around the Midwest before ending up in Stillwater, Minn., has an emphasis in ceramics. His work is motivated by a love and appreciation of both the media and the community, and he draws much of his inspiration from nature and the outdoors.

Cassandra Helmer, of Roberts, has an emphasis in printmaking. Her work is an exploration of the fantasy genre with inspiration drawn from the Ukiyo-e era of Japanese printmaking.

Callista Hobbs, of Oakdale, Minn., has an emphasis in ceramics and photography. Her work centers around comfort and

nostalgia by celebrating simplicity in her ceramic work and drawing inspiration from time spent at her family cabin in her photographic work.

Dani Meyer, of Amery, has an emphasis in graphic design. Her exhibit represents Bonsai as a form of stress relief and art. She also uses her graphic arts skill to create a packaging design.

Raine Nyberg, of Lindstrom, Minn., has an emphasis in painting and printmaking. Her work straddles the line between realism and surrealism and explores different ways beauty can be depicted and defined.

Daniel Onufer, who grew up in Washingtonville, N.Y., before moving to Stillwater, Minn., has an emphasis in art history. He will give a presentation on animation and the appreciation it has gained in the last 50 years, as well as the many stigmas and limitations that held it back from being utilized by influential art movements similar to that of film.

Dallie Sim, of St. Paul, has an emphasis in graphic design and drawing. Her work creates narrative illustrations directly from her dreams to share different stories. The main part of her show will focus on the recreation of a children's book from her middle school years, which is meant to inspire young girls to be who they want to be when they grow up.

An art history presentation will be held Friday, Nov. 5, at 4:15 p.m. in Room 141, Kleinpell Fine Arts, followed by a gallery reception in Gallery 101 from 5–8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Masks required.

Contact the UWRF Art Department at 715-425-3266 for more information.



Career Fair attracts more than 800 students

October 18, 2021 - The first in-person Career Fair at UW-River Falls since February 2020 had more than 800 UWRF students attending during the two-day event in the University Center last week.

Some 80 unique employers were on hand each day and at least 55 companies had representatives who are UWRF alumni. UWRF Career Services staff noted employers thanked UWRF for the in-person fair because it again permitted “organic” connections. One employer added that the UWRF Career Fair was the best attended he’d been to this recruiting season. Career Services noted some UW System schools have reported a 50 percent drop in participation compared to pre-COVID times.

The Career Fair is an excellent way for students and alumni to network with employers from a variety of organizations and UWRF graduate programs. Students benefit from attending by gathering information on organizations and possible job or internship opportunities and by enhancing professional communications skills from speaking with company representatives. Many students obtain jobs or internships as a result of attending the Career Fair.

The spring UWRF career fair is set for Feb. 16, 2022.

Home for the Hallo-Days: Stage and Screen Arts streams “Mary Frankenstein”

October 21, 2021 - Despite a season without live performances, University of Wisconsin-River Falls theatre patrons can now enjoy a filmed production from last year's performance calendar at home.

“Mary Frankenstein” is an adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic “Frankenstein,” written and directed by Stage and Screen Arts Instructor Kathy Welch. In this creative re-telling, Mary Frankenstein, an ambitious medical student, toils to answer the bold questions of science to heal her grieving heart. When her creation stirs to life, she runs away in terror, and Mary's refusal to nurture the unfortunate creature ends in tragedy.

The UWRF production team used a variety of film and theatrical techniques including shadow work and puppetry to create this highly stylized and unique production. The film was shot in Syse Theatre in KFA on campus which was converted to a film studio for the purpose. Faculty and students learned interesting new ways of bringing theatre to audiences, while observing proper COVID-19 prevention measures.

Visit <https://youtu.be/SOduHRu3pSA> to view “Mary Frankenstein” on YouTube (length: approximately 45 minutes).

Student cast:

Meredith Bowermaster: doctor (White Bear Lake, Minn.)

Ryan Huling: monster (Farmington, Minn.)

Lizzy Bunnell: mother (Janesville)

Lexus Zeigler: betrothed (Osceola)

Ben Brannon: blind cottager (New Brighton, Minn.)

Sebastian Kulow: blind cottager's son and ensemble (River Falls)

Klara Fansler: blind cottager's daughter and ensemble (Osceola)

Ensemble:

Mitchell Engel (Jordan, Minn.)

Austin Albright (Roberts)

Becca Donley (Mounds View, Minn.)

Bailey Hudak (Medford)

For more information, email martha.donnelly@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4788.



Newbattle Aerial View - copyright cameronphotography.co.uk.

UW-River Falls has new partner, location for its Experience Scotland study abroad program

October 1, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls has identified a new partner and program location for its Experience Scotland program and is again enrolling students in this education abroad experience.

For 34 years, the program was located at Dalkeith House. From that home base, over 4,500 students, staff, and faculty alumni fell in love with the community of Dalkeith, the wide-ranging offerings of Edinburgh and Scotland.

Following the end of its lease of the Dalkeith House, UWRF engaged with Newbattle Abbey College as the new home base for the Experience Scotland program. Newbattle Abbey, an equally historic and unique location for students to live and learn, is a former Cistercian monastery. Today, the site is home to the residential Newbattle Abbey College.

While students enrolled in the Experience Scotland program will continue to take coursework offered by faculty selected from U.S. partner campuses, the opportunity to live and engage in shared programming alongside Scottish students is a particularly exciting aspect of this new partnership.

“We are delighted that our students will continue to have amazing experiences living in, learning about and exploring Scotland,” said UWRF Associate Provost Wes Chapin. “Program alumni have been expressing their enthusiasm for the new location in Dalkeith, and our current students have been excited about the possibility as well.”

“Newbattle Abbey College is delighted to have agreed this contract with the University of Wisconsin-River Falls,” said Marian Docherty, principal, Newbattle Abbey College. “The partnership will be of major benefit to the college as a whole. We look forward to welcoming Wisconsin students and staff to Newbattle and hope this is the start of a lasting partnership.”

The Experience Scotland program is described as an opportunity for students to embark on a new learning experience and personal journey in the safe supportive hands of faculty drawn from the U.S. and Scotland.

“As someone who has contributed to the Experience Scotland programme over many years and met successive generations of American students, I know only too well how life transforming the experience has been for them,” said Gerry Mooney, professor at the Open University in Scotland and Experience Scotland faculty member. “The programme provides an opportunity to learn about a country which enjoys close links to the U.S.; a country in which English is the official language, even if [it] is the Scottish version of English and a unique place to explore and learn about - as well as contributing to your understanding of your own world.”

The Experience Scotland program was established in 1986 as the Wisconsin in Scotland program. Administered at UW-River Falls, the program has a number of partner universities throughout the University of Wisconsin System and beyond, and is open to students throughout the U.S.

UW-River Falls is now accepting applications for the Experience Scotland program for spring semester 2022.

For more information, email kelsey.mclean@uwrf.edu

UW-River Falls reaches 70% threshold for student vaccinations

October 14, 2021- The University of Wisconsin System announced today that UW-River Falls has attained a 70 percent vaccination rate among students.

"This is quite an accomplishment for the students of UW-River Falls and a sign of the hard work and commitment of the university's staff and administration," said System President Tommy Thompson. "Our vaccination campaign is working."

UW-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse, UW-Milwaukee, UW Oshkosh, UW-Stout, and UW-Whitewater have already reached the 70 percent threshold. UW-Madison, which is running its own vaccination campaign, has a student vaccination rate over 90 percent.

The UW System provides vaccination rates for all universities weekly.

The System extended the deadline for its Vax Up! "70 for 70" campaign to encourage students to become vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. The new deadline is October 31, 2021.

Under the UW System's "70 for 70" campaign, fully vaccinated students who attend universities that reach the 70 percent threshold, based on fall 2020 full-time-equivalent enrollment and excluding students studying only online, are eligible to win one of 70 scholarships valued at \$7,000.

Source: UW System Release

Community invited to participate in healthy habit booths

November 3, 2021 – Local businesses and UW-River Falls will host booths showing off healthy habits on Friday, Nov. 19, from 4-6 p.m. in the Falcon Center. The event is hosted by the UWRF Health and Human Performance Department and is free and open to everyone.

The event will offer a family friendly environment with activities for all ages, including an adventure bingo game and a lifting circuit competition. The Falcon Center climbing wall will also be open. Prizes will be available for game participants thanks to local community sponsors.

Registration for the lifting circuit competition can be accessed at recreation.uwrf.edu under special events and then Recreation Sport Management. Registration can also be completed on site the day of the competition. Those who register early will get a discounted registration fee of \$10.

Donations will be accepted to help fund an upcoming Sport, Fitness, and Recreation Management class field trip and to help other Health and Human Performance students attend conferences and workshops.

For more information, call Mari Kline-Kluck at 715-425-0743 or email mari.kline@uwrf.edu.

River Falls recognized as one of top 50 safest college towns in the country

November 11, 2021- The city of River Falls ranks No. 34 in the safest college towns in the country, according to a recent SafeWise study, **The 50 Safest College Towns in America of 2021**. This ranking is up 26 spots from River Falls' No. 60 ranking in 2020. The study reviewed 422 cities with populations of at least 15,000 that were home to accredited colleges with four-year degrees.



“It is wonderful to share the exciting news about River Falls being one of the 50 safest college towns this year. It’s great to see the numbers confirm the safe feeling that so many of our community members have about River Falls,” said River Falls Mayor Dan Toland. “This accomplishment would not have been possible without the excellent work and dedication of both the UW-River Falls University Police Department and the River Falls Police Department. We thank all of the men and women of both departments for their dedication and hard work.”

SafeWise reviewed data from FBI statistics for their study. To determine the level of violent crimes, it examined the number of reported murders, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults in the college towns.

The study reported that there were only 0.8 violent crimes per 1,000 people and 11.7 property crimes per 1,000 people in River Falls which has a population of 16,183 residents, including 5,862 college students.

River Falls Police Chief Gordon Young agrees that this ranking is a testament to the work done in River Falls to keep both violent crimes and property crimes as low as possible.

“I could not be prouder of the way our department and Chief Fleury’s University Police Department work together to serve this community,” Young said. “We also want to extend our gratitude to all the community members who also strive to make River Falls a safe and positive community to work, play and live.”

River Falls was one of only three Wisconsin cities in the ranking, and it was the only city with a school in the University of Wisconsin System to be included in the top 50.

“River Falls is certainly a special community to live and learn in, with safety a top priority in both cases,” said UW-River Falls Chancellor Maria Gallo. “We are thrilled to see this acknowledgment from SafeWise and know that our students and their families will appreciate this reassurance. Many thanks to the UW-River Falls University Police Department and the City of River Falls law enforcement for their role in crime prevention, as well as in education and community building.”

Source: City of River Falls

Six students accepted into Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program

November 19, 2021 – Six students were recently accepted into the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The McNair program prepares eligible scholars to pursue a graduate program following the completion of their undergraduate degree at UW-River Falls.

Students accepted were:

Josh Hassing, of Chisago City, Minn., is a junior majoring in chemistry. Hassing is interested in researching physical chemistry or organic chemistry and plans to pursue a doctoral degree in medicinal chemistry after graduation.

Sidney Hyet, of Pensacola, Fla., is a junior majoring in chemistry-biochemistry. Hyet will be participating in the McNair Program's Summer Research Institute this summer where he will work with mentor Biology Professor Timothy Lyden on tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. After graduating, Hyet plans to pursue a doctoral degree in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine.

Dylan Jensen, of Racine, is a junior majoring in neuroscience and psychology. He plans to pursue a doctoral degree in cognitive neuroscience after graduation.

Chayla Kuss, of Woodworth, N.D., is a junior majoring in animal science. She plans to pursue an advanced degree in reproductive physiology after graduation.

Izzy Rottier, of Stevens Point, is a sophomore majoring in communication sciences and disorders. Izzy is interested in researching cleft palate issues and autism-related effects in speech development. She plans to pursue a master's degree in communication sciences and disorders after graduation.

Abigail Wick-Lambert, of Racine, is a junior majoring in animal science and biology. Wick-Lambert participated in a Research Experiences for Undergraduates program at UW-Madison over the summer. Her goal is to get into a comparative biomedical sciences graduate program after she graduates from UW-River Falls.

For more information about the McNair Scholars Program at UW-River Falls, visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/McNair-Program/> or email mcnair.scholars.program@uwrf.edu.

Students complete McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program

November 19, 2021 – Five University of Wisconsin-River Falls students have recently completed the Summer Research Institute with the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program. The McNair Program prepares eligible scholars to pursue a graduate program following the completion of their undergraduate degree at UW-River Falls.

Students completing their work include:

Charlie Huschka, of Necedah, is a senior majoring in elementary education. During the Summer Research Institute, Huschka researched social media literacy and training within college athletics under the mentorship of Associate Athletics Director Kellen Wells-Mangold and Marketing Communications Assistant Professor David Bonko. He plans to pursue his master's degree in athletic administration in the fall of 2022.

Crystal Malagon, of Willmar, Minn., is a senior majoring in psychology. During the Summer Research Institute, Malagon researched stigma surrounding mental health in the Hispanic community under the mentorship of Psychology Professor Cyndi Kernahan. She plans to pursue a doctoral degree in counseling psychology in the fall of 2022.

Ashley McGee, of Hudson, is a senior art and marketing communications major. During the Summer Research Institute, McGee researched motherhood brand creation on Instagram under the mentorship of Assistant Professor of Marketing Communications Amber Mitchell. She plans to pursue a doctoral degree in communication studies with an emphasis in media and digital studies after graduation.

Jaidan Scheunemann, of Lake Geneva, is a senior biomedical science major. During the Summer Research Institute, Scheunemann researched the evolution of occupational therapy under the mentorship of Biology Professor Timothy Lyden. She plans to pursue her doctorate in occupational therapy in the fall of 2023.

Ara Smith, of Newport, Minn., is a senior majoring in horticulture. During the Summer Research Institute, Smith researched cluster thinning on great white and green giant tomatoes under the mentorship of Horticulture Assistant Professor Sonja Maki. He plans to study applied plant sciences with a focus on plant breeding in the fall of 2023.

For more information about the McNair Scholars Program at UW-River Falls, visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/McNair-Program/> or email mcnair.scholars.program@uwrf.edu.

UW-River Falls receives sustainability distinctions

November 15, 2021 – The University of Wisconsin-River Falls commitment to sustainability has once again been recognized as the university's efforts to expand sustainable practices continue to grow. The campus has received numerous accolades over the past several months, most recently being featured in The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges 2022 Edition.

"Recognition of our sustainability successes is exciting and serves to acknowledge UWRF's sustainability vision and values," said UWRF Chancellor Maria Gallo. "The university is committed to being a leader in engaging students, employees and the broader community in shared accountability for sustainability efforts now and into the future."

Additionally, UW-River Falls became an affiliate of Bee Campus USA in July, earned a STARS Silver rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) in August and was named to the 2021 Sierra Club's Cool Schools List in September.

"I am absolutely thrilled that UW-River Falls has received these recognitions. These positive distinctions are the results of significant ongoing efforts of many students, faculty, staff and community members," said UWRF Sustainability and Custodial Supervisor Mark Klapatch-Mathias. "While these distinctions are phenomenal for our campus, there is significant work to be done regarding sustainability on campus and within our community. We are certainly proud of our accomplishments, but this is not the end game. We still have work to do and will continue to advocate for and strive to be a more sustainable campus."

Bee Campus USA Affiliation

The Bee Campus USA program is designed to marshal the strengths of educational campuses for the benefit of pollinators. UW-River Falls joins other cities and campuses across the country united in improving their landscapes for pollinators. Bee City USA and Bee Campus USA are initiatives of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, a nonprofit organization based in Portland, Ore., with offices across the country. The mission is to galvanize communities and campuses to sustain pollinators by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants, and free of pesticides. Pollinators like bumble bees, sweat bees, mason bees, honeybees, butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, hummingbirds, and many others are responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species and one in every three bites of food we consume.

The UWRF Bee Club, a student organization aimed at raising awareness of pollinator habitat conservation and benefits, was instrumental in helping UWRF become a Bee Campus USA affiliate.

"I would like to thank all the students, faculty, and community members who have helped us over the last year to join the ranks of Bee Campus USA. This last year was not an easy one for anyone. However, we persevered and through campus outreach and the creation/sale of many bee-themed masks, we raised enough awareness and funds to achieve this title," said

Bee Club president Lexie Schalk. "I look forward to using this new platform to continue to work together and to aid in efforts to raise awareness and increase native pollinator habitation in our area."

More information on Bee Campus USA can be found at <https://www.uwrf.edu/Sustainability/Bee-Club-Bee-Campus-USA.cfm>.

STARS Silver Rating

In recognition of its sustainability achievements, UW-River Falls has been awarded a STARS Silver Rating from AASHE. STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

With more than 900 participants in 40 countries, AASHE's STARS program is the most widely recognized framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university's sustainability performance. Participants report achievements in five overall areas: academic, engagement, operations, planning and administration, and innovation and leadership.

"STARS was developed by the campus sustainability community to provide high standards for recognizing campus sustainability efforts," said AASHE Executive Director Meghan Fay Zahniser. "UW-River Falls has demonstrated a substantial commitment to sustainability by achieving a STARS Silver Rating and is to be congratulated for their efforts."

The UWRF STARS report is publicly available on the STARS website at <https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-wisconsin-river-falls-wi/report/2021-06-30/>. An executive summary can be found at <https://www.uwrf.edu/Sustainability/upload/STARS-Silver-Executive-Summary-2021-2.pdf>.

Sierra Club's List of Cool Schools

2021 marks The Sierra Club's 15th annual "Cool Schools" ranking of North America's greenest colleges and universities. This year, Sierra received submissions from a record-breaking 328 schools across the United States and Canada. Using a customized scoring system, independent researchers ranked colleges and universities based on academic criteria, such as environmentally-focused curricula, student engagement with environmental activism, renewable energy and waste management operations and schools' planning and administrative standards. UW-River Falls has consistently been included on the list over the years. The full list of colleges and universities along with their ratings can be found at <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/cool-schools-2021/cool-schools-2021-full-ranking>.

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying and legal action. For more information, visit www.sierraclub.org.

The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges

UW-River Falls has been featured in The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges 2022 Edition, solidifying the institution as one of the nation's most environmentally responsible colleges according to The Princeton Review®. The guide, released on October 26, is available at www.princetonreview.com/green-guide.

The Princeton Review selected the 420 schools in the guide based on its annual survey of administrators at 835 colleges. Administrators were surveyed about their institutions' commitments to the environment and sustainability. The company's editors analyzed more than 25 survey data points to select the schools.

"We strongly recommend UW-River Falls to students who care about the environment and want to study and live at a green college," said Rob Franek, The Princeton Review's editor-in-chief. "UW-River Falls offers excellent academics and demonstrates a commitment to sustainability that is exemplary on many counts."

Franek noted that The Princeton Review has seen an increasing level of interest among students in attending colleges with green practices, programs and offerings. Seventy-eight percent of the more than 11,000 college applicants that participated in The Princeton Review's 2021 College Hopes & Worries Survey said that having information about a college's commitment to the environment would affect their decision to apply to or attend a school. This was a 12% increase over the 2020 survey results.

For more information about UWRF's sustainability efforts, please visit <https://www.uwrf.edu/Sustainability/Index.cfm> or email Mark Klapatch-Mathias at sustainability@uwrf.edu.



Annual art sale going on now

December 2, 2021 - The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Art Department would like to help brighten up the season with a small Art Scholarship Sale. Choose from a wonderful selection of studio arts including glass, ceramics, painting, printmaking, photography, and mixed media.

Participating artists retain 65% of the proceeds while the balance remains in the Art Department for use towards scholarships, student organizations and the visiting artist fund.

The sale, held in Gallery 101 in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building, runs through Friday, Dec. 10, during the following hours:

Dec 3: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Dec 6: 11:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Dec 7: 11:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Dec 8: 11:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Dec 9: 11:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Dec 10: 11 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

For more information, contact the Art Department at 715-425-3266. Masks must be worn when entering all campus buildings.

Four faculty fellowships funded by state-sponsored Dairy Innovation Hub

December 17, 2021 - The University of Wisconsin-River Falls College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) recently awarded four faculty research fellowships to help increase dairy-related research capacity through the Dairy Innovation Hub initiative. The selected faculty members will tackle research projects in the Hub's four priority areas: stewarding land and water resources; enriching human health and nutrition; ensuring animal health and welfare; and growing farm business and communities.

Funded through a \$7.8 million per year investment by the state of Wisconsin, the hub harnesses research and development at [UW–Madison](#), [UW–Platteville](#) and [UW–River Falls](#) campuses to keep Wisconsin's \$45.6 billion dairy community at the global forefront in producing nutritious dairy foods in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. Since its launch in 2019, the hub has funded more than 100 projects across the three campuses.

A faculty research fellowship is a temporary position for permanent faculty members. The goal is to provide support for a specific research project and any ancillary costs – including ensuring that the faculty member will have time to conduct the research and support for existing teaching responsibilities.

With additional hub support, UW-River Falls recently hired three assistant professors in the areas of animal welfare, dairy processing, and community economic development. Two additional faculty scientists in the areas of climate and water management will be announced soon. Grants for capacity-building supplies and equipment have also been selected for funding from the hub. More information is at dairyinnovationhub.wisc.edu.

The following UW-River Falls faculty fellows were selected for funding:

Christopher Holtkamp, Plant and Earth Science Department

"Understanding the impact of dairy farm changes on social capital in rural Wisconsin"

christopher.holtkamp@uwrf.edu, 715-425-4158

Holtkamp is an assistant professor of conservation and environmental planning, with experience and focus on rural communities. As a planner, Holtkamp takes the unique challenges and opportunities facing small towns and helps them leverage their limited resources for maximum benefit.

Project summary: Dairy farming is transitioning as small farms, a hallmark of Wisconsin's identity, are declining in favor of larger farms. Research finds that changes in farm size and ownership are contributing to changes in economic conditions and social capital in affected areas. Developing policies that foster social capital in communities experiencing a transition to larger farms may contribute to more sustainable economic vitality. This project will

provide local knowledge of changes occurring in Wisconsin communities. Interviews will be conducted in communities transitioning to larger farms and communities where small farms still dominate. Additional research using secondary sources will be used to understand social and economic conditions. The overall goal of this study is to understand how changes in dairy farming are affecting communities in rural Wisconsin.

Sylvia Kehoe, Animal and Food Science Department

"Evaluation of two caustic paste brands when disbudding calves"

sylvia.kehoe@uwrf.edu, 715-425-4321

Kehoe, professor of animal and food science, is also an academic adviser. She teaches courses on lactation and milk quality as well as animal welfare.

Project summary: In the U.S., more than 94 percent of dairy calves require disbudding, a process that removes their horn tissue. Caustic paste is increasing in popularity; however, no research has been done to evaluate appropriate application volumes. The primary objective of this research is to determine the necessary volume of two different brands of paste for effective disbudding. The secondary objective is to determine pain and wound healing from these different paste volumes and brands. Kate Creutzinger, also from the Animal and Food Science Department, is collaborating on this project.

Joel Peterson, Agricultural Engineering Technology Department

"Updating manure values in SNAPplus for better nutrient management planning"

joel.peterson@uwrf.edu, 715-425-3985

Peterson brought his expertise in civil and environmental engineering to UW-River Falls in 2010. He has industry experience with private engineering consulting firms as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. While with the Army Corps of Engineers, he spent four months in Iraq as the lead project engineer on several environmental rehabilitation projects.

Project summary: SnapPlus is a nutrient management planning software that allows farmers, planners, and others to estimate soil and nutrient runoff losses on a field-by-field basis and is a key tool to help decision makers protect soil and water quality. Excreted manure nutrient values from laboratory testing may be used as input to the program, if available. In the absence of laboratory results, default values, derived from laboratory analyses conducted in 2012 across Wisconsin, are used for manure nutrient values in confined housing where the manure is recoverable. Increases in dairy productivity and diet have led to changes in manure nutrient excretion values. This project will update the manure nutrient values for indoor housed and grazing animals, compare them to regression and mass-based volume and nutrient excretion values contained in ASABE standard D384 and recommend changes if necessary. Finally, researchers will implement any recommended changes and evaluate the impact of those changes in a case study. Laura Ward Good from the Soil Science Department at UW-Madison is collaborating on this project.

Arquimides Reyes, Animal and Food Science Department

"Preliminary comparison of HolSim cattle vs. Angus x Holstein cattle"

arquimides.reyes@uwrf.edu, 715-425-3704

Reyes, assistant professor of animal and food science, was born in El Salvador on a small dairy and beef farm and started his career in the meat industry through consulting, buying, and selling meat. He then attended graduate school while working full time with an emphasis in ruminant nutrition, meat safety and quality. Reyes' research interests include pre-harvest food safety, the impact of management strategies on cattle efficiency and product quality, and processed meat and product development.

Project summary: UW-River Falls and the Holstein Association USA are working to provide dairy and beef farmers with

research into dairy-beef feedlot performance and carcass

composition that provide premiums. This information will allow farmers to increase margins by better planning genetic selection and nutrition management practices designed to increase profitability. Meanwhile, farmers who background dairy-beef calves will have the information to base buying decisions and production information to help determine optimal cattle that will produce high quality, red meat yield. The increased production of crossbred dairy-beef calves, the decline in dairy profitability, and the increase in requests for price information regarding the premiums or discounts received for dairy versus beef versus dairy-beef calves has sparked interest in the topic of selecting the correct breed to develop market ready animals that meet or exceed current beef cattle performance.

For more information, contact Maria Woldt, Dairy Innovation Hub program manager, at 608-265-4009 or email maria.woldt@wisc.edu



UW-River Falls chancellor expresses support for change to Minnesota-Wisconsin tuition reciprocity

December 8, 2021 – University of Wisconsin-River Falls Chancellor Maria Gallo testified in Madison today expressing support for a proposed change to a 30-year-old tuition reciprocity agreement with the state of Minnesota. Speaking before the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities, Gallo spoke on the negative impact of the current outdated mechanism on UW-River Falls and spoke in favor of draft legislation that would allow all UW System campuses to better maximize this relationship between the two states.

“UW-River Falls and the other UW campuses that educate Minnesota students are not allowed to retain the difference in tuition that a Minnesota student pays,” explained Gallo. “That revenue is deposited into the state’s General Fund with part returned to Minnesota and the rest used for purposes unrelated to higher education.”

According to 2020-21 data, UW-River Falls enrolled almost 46% of its students from Minnesota. Gallo expressed concern over the missed opportunities.

“We could have recovered over \$3 million in earned revenue that could have been reinvested in high-quality programming for our students, meeting their demands and filling regional employer needs,” said Gallo.

Gallo also expressed her gratitude to Representative Shannon Zimmerman and Senator Rob Stafsholt. Zimmerman and Stafsholt are lead authors on the tuition reciprocity bills AB-714 and SB-717, demonstrating their awareness of the positive impact the change will have on education and economic development in the districts they represent.

“Employers in our region look to UWRF to help them fill their workforce and talent needs,” concluded Gallo. “We will be most effective if we are able to fully capitalize on and reinvest the revenue we raise through the Minnesota-Wisconsin tuition

reciprocity arrangement.”

UW-River Falls enrolls an average of 6,000 students, attracting primarily Wisconsin and Minnesota students in a variety of fields that are valuable to the economic growth of Western Wisconsin.

For more information, email dina.fassino@uwrf.edu or call 715-425-4306.

UW-River Falls to hold in-person commencement Dec. 18

December 6, 2021 – Family and friends of University of Wisconsin-River Falls graduates will gather in person to celebrate commencement achievements on Saturday, Dec. 18. Face coverings will be required.

Fall commencement will honor 442 bachelor's and master's degree graduates during two ceremonies at Knowles Field House in the Falcon Center.

- The first ceremony at 8 a.m. is for the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences; the College of Business and Economics; and Graduate Studies.
- The 11:30 a.m. ceremony is for the College of Arts and Sciences; and the College of Education and Professional Studies.

During the ceremonies, nearly 60 graduates from 2020 will join in a ceremonial stage-crossing since they missed that option last year due to the pandemic. The Alumni Relations Office offered the opportunity to all 2020 grads.

UWRF's 2021 Distinguished Teacher, Patti Cudd of the Music Department, will be recognized during the ceremony.

Chancellor Maria Gallo will confer degrees. Presenting candidates for degrees are College of Arts and Sciences Dean Dean Yohnk; College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences Dean Dale Gallenberg; College of Business and Economics Interim Dean Marina Onken; College of Education and Professional Studies Interim Dean Ogden Rogers; and Associate Provost Wes Chapin.

Those not able to attend can tune into the livestream:

- 8 a.m. ceremony - <https://livestream.com/uwrf/events/9931618>
- 11:30 a.m. ceremony - <https://livestream.com/uwrf/events/9931627>

For more information, call the UWRF Registrar's Office at 715-425-3342.



Jake Sailer of Sailer's Food Market and Meat Processing in Elmwood discusses the balancing act between producing new and unique food products while maintaining a reliable supply of successfully branded products.

UW-River Falls to offer international dual degree program, partners with university in the Netherlands

December 10, 2021 – The UW System Board of Regents has approved a new undergraduate Bachelor of Science program in international food operations management at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

This is a first of its kind dual degree program for UWRF involving an international partner, Aeres University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands.

"I appreciate the support of the Board of Regents in approving our international food operations management program," said Dale Gallenberg, UWRF dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences. "The program creates unique and exciting opportunities for students who will receive degrees from UWRF and Aeres University."

While a world away from each other, UWRF and Aeres students will be studying in sync. UWRF students will spend the full third year of the four-year program in the Netherlands, while AERES students will spend the full second year of the program in the U.S.

"The unique program will provide students with expertise and experience in the principles of food processing technology and operations management from both international production and marketing perspectives," said Agricultural Economics Professor Brenda Boetel. "Experiential learning is a required part of the curriculum and includes internship, work placement,

and independent study courses.”

According to UW-River Falls Provost David Travis, the international food operations management program responds to the heightened demand for food business professionals trained to address the reorganization of inputs and supply chain management including the reduction of food waste.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, demand for graduates of this program is expected to be strong with an anticipated 10-year growth rate of 11.5% for food business-related jobs in Wisconsin; annual increases of 5.4% in business and financial operations jobs; and 17.3% in food scientist and technologist jobs.

For more information about the new program, email brenda.boetel@uwrf.edu.

Mass Archive

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