

# Eagle Edge

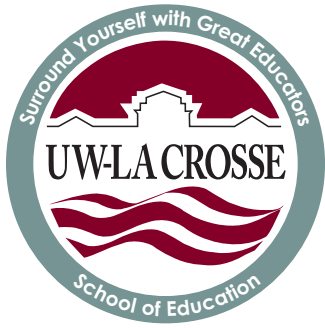
LEAD. EDUCATE.

COLLABORATE. INNOVATE.

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# Eagle Edge

Volume 5 | Issue 1  
Spring 2018 | *Eagle Edge* is published biannually for UW-La Crosse School of Education alumni and friends.

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### COVER IMAGE:

Photo illustration by Michael Lieurance, '02.

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## from THE DEAN

Trauma in our lives is sometimes unpreventable and many times unpredictable — No one is protected from trauma. And it certainly requires extra attention. Those who have strong support systems and strategies can weather through the storm, per say. They are more resilient and are able to get back on track more quickly. Others, like some learners in our classrooms, may not be so fortunate to have this system of support or the strategies necessary to help them

“bounce back” when feelings or situations become overwhelming. Regardless, more than two thirds of children report experiencing a traumatic event by age 16. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, “traumatic stress can interfere with children’s ability to concentrate and learn. Exposure in infancy and early childhood can seriously delay development of their brains and bodies.” At best this is an unsettling observation, and it connects trauma,



Marcie Wycoff-Horn, Ph.D.

## Partnering to support a trauma-informed school

### Our goal

To create a trauma-informed school that enables students to build caring relationships with adults and peers, manage their emotions and behaviors, and succeed academically, while supporting their physical health and well-being.



#### TRAUMA'S DAMAGING EFFECTS

### Common sources of toxic stress & trauma

- › abuse/neglect
- › violence in neighborhood
- › serious illness
- › substance abuse
- › bullying
- › mental illness
- › homelessness
- › domestic violence
- › family change

*“Traumatic stress can interfere with children’s ability to concentrate and learn. Exposure in infancy and early childhood can seriously delay development of their brains and bodies.”* —The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

#### HOW TRAUMA IMPACTS A CHILD’S LEARNING

### Children who are traumatized are often:



unready to learn when they get to school



unable to control their emotions & behaviors



have trouble forming relationships with teachers



respond to daily stress with higher anxiety

#### EVERYONE BENEFITS

### Trauma-informed schools help



#### Students

- › attend school consistently
- › decrease referrals & suspensions
- › achieve academically



#### Parents

- › feel more satisfied with the school
- › feel there is a positive school climate



#### Teachers

- › increase skills to recognize trauma & respond
- › gain more strategies to support students
- › feel there is a positive school climate

## See it on 60 Minutes

Oprah Winfrey reports on “Teaching Childhood Trauma” in this recent 60 Minutes video, click to watch.

mental health and the impact on learning. In response to this need, UWL has partnered with one La Crosse area school to help equip teachers and other personnel with the resources to address childhood trauma, how it affects students and schools, and how to become a trauma sensitive school. The goal of a trauma informed school is to gain a deeper understanding of current and past trauma students may have experienced, how it affects their ability to learn and new strategies to become proactive rather than reactive to student behavior. One role educators have is recognizing learners who may be in need of care and support in order to thrive in our schools. And helping them gain the skills they need such as self-regulation so that they can return to learning. Working together, parents, educators and other professionals can play a role in making sure all learners reap the benefits of education and receive the support they deserve.

In Partnership

Marcie Wycoff-Horn, Dean

# Trauma-Informed Schools

**An approach that benefits all students**

UWL faculty members, students help local school with goal to be 'trauma informed'

One out of every four children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior, according to The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

A student arrives at school in soiled clothes with no backpack or clear idea of where he will sleep at night. The student's parents were recently evicted from their apartment, and he walked to school from a nearby shelter.

As the school day goes on, the student is in a hyper-aroused mental state. Seemingly small things such as having an incorrect answer on an assignment or cancelling recess provoke an outburst.

Although a hypothetical example, Northside Elementary Principal Laura Huber has seen similar situations at her school. The common theme is this: a student arrives at the school under extreme stress, is unready to learn and has difficulty controlling his or her emotions based on a traumatic event.

About three years ago, Northside staff were noticing an increase in children coming to school who were experiencing trauma. Then, in March 2017, Northside's School Counselor Melani Faye invited UW-La Crosse School Psychology Professor Betty DeBoer and Chileda's School Counselor Chris Nelson to train staff on trauma informed education, an emerging idea in school psychology programs and educational settings across the country.

Adults in a trauma-informed school are trained on how to think about and react when students come to school with potentially traumatizing stress, whether it is caused by unstable home lives, life-changing family events such as caregiver military deployment or significant illness, or attachment-related issues that started at birth.

Instead of focusing on a student's outward behavior issue, teachers think about how outward behavior may be the result of what's going on inside the brain such as how neural pathways were formed in early development or how a student's current psychological state is impacting his or her ability to handle the task at

hand. Understanding these inner struggles can be the key to helping these students reconnect and begin making new, healthier neuropathways.

Trauma informed schools also have systems to support teachers so the school can be a safe and respectful environment that promotes healthy relationships, self-management, and academic skills. Additionally, teachers have colleagues who they can go to for help.

With funding from several grants, DeBoer was invited back to Northside Elementary this academic year to support it in becoming a trauma informed school. She is assessing the school's strengths and needs to become trauma informed. She has observed classrooms, interviewed faculty, and conducted surveys of staff, students and parents. A dozen school psychology graduate students and almost another two dozen undergraduate teacher education and psychology students have helped her with the needs assessment thus far.

Over the next year, DeBoer aims to help the school develop policies and procedures, provide staff training and expand supports based on what she has found. The goal is to ensure that students who are experiencing trauma and need support are getting it, cultural issues are considered and the environment is welcoming.

"Often, the secret of being a trauma consultant is recognizing that the staff have many insightful suggestions," says DeBoer. "It is a matter of finding and organizing them within a trauma informed framework."

About 15-20 UWL teacher education candidates who are completing field school or student teaching at Northside Elementary and Coulee Montessori (located in the same building) are also learning from DeBoer's work. Watching her presentations and visiting

classes, they are beginning to understand how they might better respond when a student is triggered by an issue like homelessness in their future classrooms, says Alyssa Boardman, assistant professor of Educational Studies.

"They (student teachers) need to be part of this process so they can learn what it means to have a trauma lens," explains Boardman.

DeBoer stresses being a trauma-informed school is not just about training staff. It's also about having support for staff by helping them when things are no longer manageable in class, and helping their needier students develop self regulation and competence with supplemental supports, such as small group or individual counseling.

Northside staff have appreciated the practicality of the information DeBoer has shared thus far, says Huber.

"I think staff appreciate being heard," says Huber. "Their worries about children are validated, and they feel hopeful for the next stage."

Boardman hopes her teacher education students will bring the ideas with them to their future schools, realizing options they have in situations where traditional classroom management techniques don't work.



#### **THE COLLABORATIVE WORK AT NORTHSIDE IS FUNDED THROUGH GRANTS AND DONATIONS FROM:**

The Cleary Foundation  
Franke Foundation  
La Crosse Public Education Foundation  
The Sisters of Perpetual Adoration  
David and Virginia Huber  
Northside PTO  
Department of Public Instruction School  
Mental Health Project  
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# ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Gift carries on dedication to teaching children an active lifestyle

This May, Peter and Mary Werner will bike the 180-mile stretch of the C & O Canal from Cumberland, Maryland, to Washington, D.C. When they are not biking, the 74-year-old UWL alumni couple is canoeing and hiking. They were active children and they never quit, they say.

But it was UWL's Physical Education Program that helped the two learn how to share that love for physical activity with children. After graduating with degrees in physical education in the 1960s, they started out teaching physical education to elementary and middle school children.

Peter continued on to earn a doctoral degree in physical education with a minor in elementary education. He spent the majority of his career teaching college students to be physical education teachers at the University of South Carolina. In the early years of child rearing, Mary was a stay-at-home mom. As the children matured, Mary earned a master's degree in Library Science. She enjoyed ten years of working in the Office of Graphics and Public Information at the School of Public Health, University of South Carolina.

At UWL they learned from teachers who saw physical education as a comprehensive program including games, dance and gymnastics. Their professors helped them appreciate a variety of activities to give children an appetite for exercise throughout life. They were required to take one-credit courses in everything from archery to gymnastics to modern dance.

Peter, '66, and Mary, '67, Werner earned degrees in physical education. At UWL, Peter says he fell in love with teaching young children who "have a sheer exuberance for life." During his first job out of college teaching elementary physical education, he received 700 valentines. He went on to work in higher education, sharing his love of working with children with future teachers. Mary says her "well-rounded education" led to exploring a variety of career paths.

They also took opportunities to gain experiences in leadership and service outside of class. They remember dancing with the L-Bar-X Dancers, a folk dance group on campus, and meeting new friends through fraternities and sororities.

Peter became president of Kappa Delta Pi his senior year, which allowed him to attend an all-expense-paid trip to the national convention in Houston, Texas.

“I’d never been out of Wisconsin,” he recalls. “It opened my eyes to what is out there in the world ... I saw how important it was to be involved in your profession.”

During his career, Peter was highly involved, leading and serving on recreation and physical education-related boards and committees locally and nationally. He wrote five books and more than 100 articles related to teaching children how to lead healthy, active lifestyles while having fun. He was respected for his contributions in children’s dance, educational gymnastics and integrating academic concepts with physical education.

In college, Mary was in Alpha Phi, a social sorority which allowed her to connect with women from different academic

disciplines who were equally ambitious about life. “To be among women who were active and busy and interested in a career was exciting,” she says.

As Peter and Mary considered how UWL influenced their lives and gave them a good start in their careers, they decided to establish a scholarship at UWL.

In 2013 they created a fund that will support elementary education majors with a preference for students who study physical education. In 2017, they provided a second gift to establish funding for an elementary education major who is student teaching.

“We feel strongly about education and working to support teachers,” says Peter.

They also have personal experience understanding the need. Both were first-generation students from blue-collar families. They worked throughout their college years — either during school terms and/or summer terms.

“I can’t imagine there aren’t students who can benefit from extra support,” says Mary. “That’s why we want to help.”

Peter and Mary Werner pictured with their children’s families. The couple established the Werner-Engsberg Family Scholarship for Elementary Education.



# COMMUNICATION DISCONNECT

UWL team studies how to improve communication, connection between teachers and parents of students with disabilities



Alyssa Nelson, a UWL education major and special education minor, left, is currently doing her student teaching. She will present at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in early April. Nelson has already presented with faculty member Leslie Rogers, right, at two other national conferences.

UWL students are making a big impact in our local community and beyond.

A part-time job doing play therapy with children with Autism first opened UWL senior Alyssa Nelson's eyes to miscommunication between parents and teachers.

"I worked closely with parents," she says reflecting on the job during her sophomore year in college. "Parents felt that sometimes communication was going well with teachers, but sometimes it was not."

Nelson will graduate with an education degree in May. She's thinking a lot about steps she can take to be a teacher who develops strong partnerships with parents. Her ideas on how to do that come from UWL research she is helping conduct.

Nelson is part of a UWL undergraduate research team working to improve partnerships between parents of students with disabilities and their teachers. The five-year longitudinal study is led by UWL faculty members, Leslie Rogers, Educational Studies, and Jennifer Butler Modaff, Communication Studies. Their goal is knock down barriers and to facilitate better communication.

The initial findings from this work was presented by Nelson at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, or NCUR, April 4-7, at the University of Central Oklahoma. Nelson was the first teacher education undergraduate student to ever present at this conference. "This is a rare opportunity for undergraduate students across the U.S. and Nelson's acceptance is extremely noteworthy," shared Dr. Rogers, Nelson's advisor. "Ally's passion and talents are what we hope to cultivate and grow at UWL. It has been an incredible privilege to mentor her as she has worked to investigate and share these important findings."



*“I want to make sure when I have my own classroom I am not only able to meet the needs of my students, but also to provide support for their families as well. Families and teachers are a team when it comes to supporting the child.”*

*- Jaycelin Chan, education major and special education minor*



Questions about how to improve the experience of students with disabilities in pre-K-12 general education classrooms has been on the minds of educators for decades. In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHCA, now referred to as the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Education Act or IDEA) became law, making it mandatory that students with disabilities receive services “in the least restrictive environment” — meaning when possible alongside other students in general education classrooms. A key factor to ensure successful outcomes for all students is the successful partnership with parents (or caretakers), who are the consistent support and resource throughout a child’s schooling, says Rogers. Unfortunately, research has found that parents of students with disabilities are often not provided with the opportunity to make meaningful contributions and there is often a breakdown in communication between parents and teachers, says Rogers.

However, one of the primary findings from surveys and interviews so far is that both parents and teachers want this partnership, says Nelson.

The research team has collected information and is deciding what interventions should look like to improve that partnership.

Even though those interventions aren’t clear yet, students are learning from the process. UWL student researcher Jaycelin Chan has learned that one can never have too much practice communicating with others and not everything will be black and white. “We need to be willing to see the gray area that lies between both sides,” she says.

Nelson conducted four interviews with parents this school year, and transcribed five out of 24 interviews completed as part of the larger study. Nelson also helped analyze the 350 survey

UWL student researcher Jaycelin Chan, right, became interested in the research project after taking a course with Leslie Rogers where the class interviewed teachers and parents of students with disabilities. After helping transcribe notes, she was intrigued by thoughts from both parents and teachers about communication and collaboration in the classroom.

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responses. She says her involvement has helped improve her confidence in talking with parents and helped her reflect on how she’ll communicate with parents of her future students. Little things like asking what type of communication caretakers prefer — phone or email — and letting them know about positive news about their child, in addition to the behavior issues, are steps that were important to parents she interviewed.

Rogers says motivation for the project comes from giving UWL students undergraduate research experience. “When students know they are participating in something meaningful, their ability to retain information and apply it to situations improves,” she says.

Chan, who is interested in teaching middle school, says this research will be important wherever she ends up starting her career.

“I believe that collaboration and communication are some of the most important skills I could learn to become a better teacher,” she says.



# COLLEGE IMPRINT

Couple's energy for art influences their classrooms



When Sarah and Timothy Znidarsich married in 2015, they thought a honeymoon in Italy would be romantic. But a printing press — they agreed — would be even more exciting.

Considering the two met in a UWL printmaking class during their undergraduate years in college, their investment isn't much of a surprise.

Now married and living in Baraboo, the 2011 graduates have continued to integrate printmaking into their lives. If it's not their names in lead type or the Salvador Dali print that adorn their living room walls, it's the full-scale printmaking shop they've created in a lower level of their home. On one end is the aforementioned printing press and on the other cloth towels stacked and ready for ink. Their dream is to hold community printmaking classes in this space.

The excitement is palpable as the two discuss how they serendipitously stumbled upon a Craigslist ad while on their honeymoon in Toronto, Canada — a compromise on the Italy plan. There they found everything to equip a printmaking shop from another that was going out of business. High quality paper, flat files and other furnishings that would have cost thousands, they brought home for close to nothing.

Late evenings and weekends they go downstairs to roll out new prints they've designed by hand. In 2016 they had enough prints for their first art show. Today they continue shows and supply three stores with printed aprons, towels and bags.

But they've limited how much they'll take on. The printmaking shop is only a side hobby. The two are first and foremost full-time art teachers for the Baraboo School

District. But, like at home, their energy for art is equally charged in the classroom.

“When I arrived, I just stood here with my jaw dropped — watching the energy and enthusiasm,” says their former Printmaking Professor Joe Elgin who visited Timothy’s classroom in October. “I love to see printmakers who are teaching ... Printmaking is something people want to pass on. It’s something about the collective.”

### PASSING ON THE ART EXPERIENCE

On a Friday afternoon in October, Timothy and Sarah, or Mr. and Ms. Z, as students call them, usher students to a printing press at the back of Mr. Z’s classroom.

“Today is a special day,” Mr. Z tells his students.

Today they will have a visiting artist. “He pretty much showed me how to be the printmaker I am today,” adds Mr. Z.

The guest is Elgin, who taught the UWL classes where Sarah and Timothy met.

Students watch Elgin rub black ink into an etched design on a copper plate, wiping away the excess ink and sending it through the press. What comes out is a fine-lined print onto paper.

“Cool” the group says in unison. The students work on designs of their own: an octopus, a Martian, a wide-open eye.

Eighth grader Anna Janssen, who has had Mr. Z for the past two years, says his art classes are her favorite of the day. The class is a safe space to create, adds student Emmalee Feick.

“This is a place where I can express myself and create that same little bubble for kids, so they can make their best work,” says Timothy.

Likewise, the printmaking program at UWL provided that comfortable atmosphere. Timothy spent more time at the UWL print shop in Center for the Arts than at home in college, he says.

“All you needed was a loaf of bread, peanut butter and slippers...” jokes Sarah.

It was a collaborative, supportive community — not just a class, they agree.

But Professor Elgin had his class “rules,” they add. Among them was that students with varying levels in printmaking expertise could not mix. He didn’t want advanced students to potentially take over for beginners — denying them the full space to develop. In Elgin’s class, Sarah had been taking printmaking for several semesters by the time Timothy started — meaning they couldn’t collaborate.

“You two were a bunch of rule breakers,” quips Elgin.

The two found it hard not to break the rule — they had a lot in common and a lot of chemistry.

From UWL art classes, Timothy and Sarah not only found each other, but they also found the mindset they would need to be life-long artists. “I’m a fairly intense person. If you are not going to do something passionately, it’s not worth doing,” says Timothy.

They also both believe they need to continue to be dedicated artists to be good teachers of art. They recently took a grant-funded trip to Japan to learn traditional Japanese printmaking techniques in August.

When Sarah returned she showed all of her Baraboo High School students what she made and how. “I want them to understand that art is a real, living thing out there — not just something they can do for an hour a day.”

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**OPPOSITE PAGE PHOTOS:** Sarah (Higley) Znidarsich and Timothy Znidarsich, both '11, met in a UWL printmaking class. Here they share prints in their home shop with their former UWL Printmaking Professor Joel Elgin, far left. The two also teach high school and middle school art, respectively, in the Baraboo School District. Elgin was impressed to see Timothy teach middle school students printmaking during a classroom visit this fall. The process is often considered too complex to organize at that grade level.

Inset photo: These rooster-printed towels are one of many print products created in the printmaking shop in the lower level of their home. The two supply three stores with their prints, including Full Circle Supply in La Crosse.

# Inspiring others

*Meet SOE's new  
Multicultural Advisor/  
Recruiter:  
Mai Chao Duddeck*

Mai Chao Duddeck,  
'06, '08



Leaders can come from anywhere to change the world. As a leader, I am intrinsically motivated and challenge myself and others to take ownership for the betterment of ourselves and our communities. For the past 11 years, I taught K-12 Art in the La Crosse public schools. I was not only a staff member in that role, but a voice for multiculturalism and inclusive advocacy for diverse learners.

Working in the School of Education has opened my eyes to see the level of collaboration between students, staff, faculty, and community organizations. In April, the Grow Our Own - Teacher Diversity program received a grant to support an ongoing effort to increase the number of diverse teachers in the School District of La Crosse. Through this generous gift from the La Crosse Public Education Foundation, underrepresented teacher candidates will have a direct impact in “growing” teachers who reflect, acknowledge, and celebrate the diversity of the community’s student population. We are thankful to have these collaborative relationships from leaders who invest in our hopes and dreams.

I believe, through education, citizens will have greater success to improve their way of life, gain courage to follow their aspirations, and give back to their communities. We have a responsibility to inspire the next generation of people to do good in this world.

If you are thinking about becoming a PK-12 educator, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I am thrilled to sit down, listen, and share about the teacher preparation programs we offer through the School of Education, Professional and Continuing Education.

La Crosse is my home and I am a two-time alumnus at UW-La Crosse. During my leisure time, I love being with family, making art, and writing creatively about my cultural identity. I look forward to meeting and seeing you on campus!



## **The annual School of Education Day took place at UWL on Friday, March 2.**

During the day, high school students in grades 10-12 had a campus tour and hands-on experiences alongside current education faculty and students in classrooms in Elementary, Secondary, PE/Health and Art. They’ll also had opportunities to talk with UWL education students and faculty during a lunch and ice cream social.

# Lessons in hope

*Alumna's life experiences shape how she teaches teen moms*

## As a society we give up way too soon.

That's what UWL alumna Gerianne (Buchner) Wettstein, '90, '98, says after reflecting on her life. When she returned to UWL a decade after dropping out with a transcript full of Fs, she continued on to earn a master's degree. When she was told her son who had complications at birth would probably never learn to walk, she watched him grow into a successful mechanical engineer. When a concussion at age 55 made it impossible for Wettstein to continue teaching Kindergarten, she fell into a deep depression. But she didn't give up hope then either.

Today Wettstein is an instructor at the Family and Children's Center's Hope Academy in La Crosse. She works with teen moms just like the one she was as a UWL student for the first time in 1976.

The job allows her to fulfill some of her passions — among them is a fascination with the process of learning. She points to the front of her head: the frontal lobe. To learn, says Wettstein, people need to access this space in the brain. But if other regions are consumed with more basic thoughts, such as how to get the next meal, that learning is not going to happen.

"Sometimes we have to realize that now is not the perfect time. We need to settle some

other things first," says Wettstein.

That was true for her as a teen mom attempting college in 1976. She was too overwhelmed with caring for a new baby and full-time work to support the two of them. She couldn't make room in her brain for new learning. Instead, she and her best friend turned in their books and walked out after three weeks of classes. She didn't even withdraw.

On a side note, Wettstein doesn't recommend the dramatic departure. When she came back 10 years later to try college again, she was presented a transcript filled with Fs. She would need to retake all of those classes she'd failed.

But when Wettstein returned to college for the second time, it was the right time. She was married to a supporting husband, Dan Wettstein, and the two had a stable income. She even found support from her children who were in grade school, Jaime and Jordana, as they did homework and studied for tests together.

Wettstein graduated with honors and

a degree in elementary education four years later in 1990 and began teaching Kindergarten at a private school. She grew enthralled with teaching children this age.

"They are the most brilliant children you will meet in your life," she says. "I am constantly asking 'why?' They are constantly asking 'why?' It was a match made in heaven."

With Kindergarteners, she witnessed the magical interaction that can happen between a teacher and student when a student grasps an idea for the first time. She compares it to a pitch in a baseball game that the crowd sees at 90 miles per hour, but the batter sees slowly connecting at the bat.

Wettstein returned to UWL and ended up completing a master's in early childhood education. She then made a leap into the public schools where she worked with kids from pre-K through fourth grade. She had positions in several schools including Hamilton Elementary School, which she calls "the best gig ever." Staff members were focused on students and families, and

*"Gerianne is definitely inspirational and encouraging me not to give up — that I should do what I want in life."*

*- Haley Martella, Hope Academy senior*

education of the whole person, she says.

Former Hamilton Principal Jim Bagniewski calls Wettstein an excellent teacher who was always there for her students whether going to school board meeting to support for a particular cause or gathering food donations for the school pantry.

She has always been an advocate for the underdog,” says Bagniewski. “But she doesn’t want to just sit there and talk about it. She wants to get things done.”

Wettstein’s daughter, Jaime Erickson, also saw her mother’s devotion to the kids she taught. “Those kids always knew that she loved them and would do anything for them,” Erickson says. “She was always reminding them they have someone in their corner no matter what. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people who are never told that.”

Wettstein was loving the difference she could make for kids at Hamilton when she fell and suffered a concussion in 2013. Neurologists wouldn’t clear her to work in a room filled with five-year-olds again.

Wettstein missed her “family” at Hamilton. She missed the magical connections with kids. What occurred next was a deep and long depression.

Erickson said her mother thrived when she was making an impact, and she saw her suffering without that potential. Erickson began searching for positions for her mother that would bring her that opportunity. When she found the position at Hope Academy, she knew her mother would be a good fit.

Wettstein says working with kids who are completing their high school or GED is very different from Kindergarteners. If you show a group of five-year-olds a flower, a leaf and a pile of dog poop — all of it is exciting and amazing, she says. For the older students that same magic has faded, which makes it more difficult to regroup when faced with challenges. Plus, the challenges her students at the Hope Academy face are bigger and more systemic.

But they get hope when Wettstein shows them her transcript filled with Fs from UWL.

“It is crazy for the simple fact that she has overcome it all,” says Hope Academy Senior Haley Martella. “She is here and she is amazing.”

Martella, 17, has a baby girl while balancing two part-time jobs, and school at Hope Academy.

“She is definitely inspirational and encouraging me not to give up — that I should do what I want in life.”

Martella plans to attend Western Technical College to pursue a welding

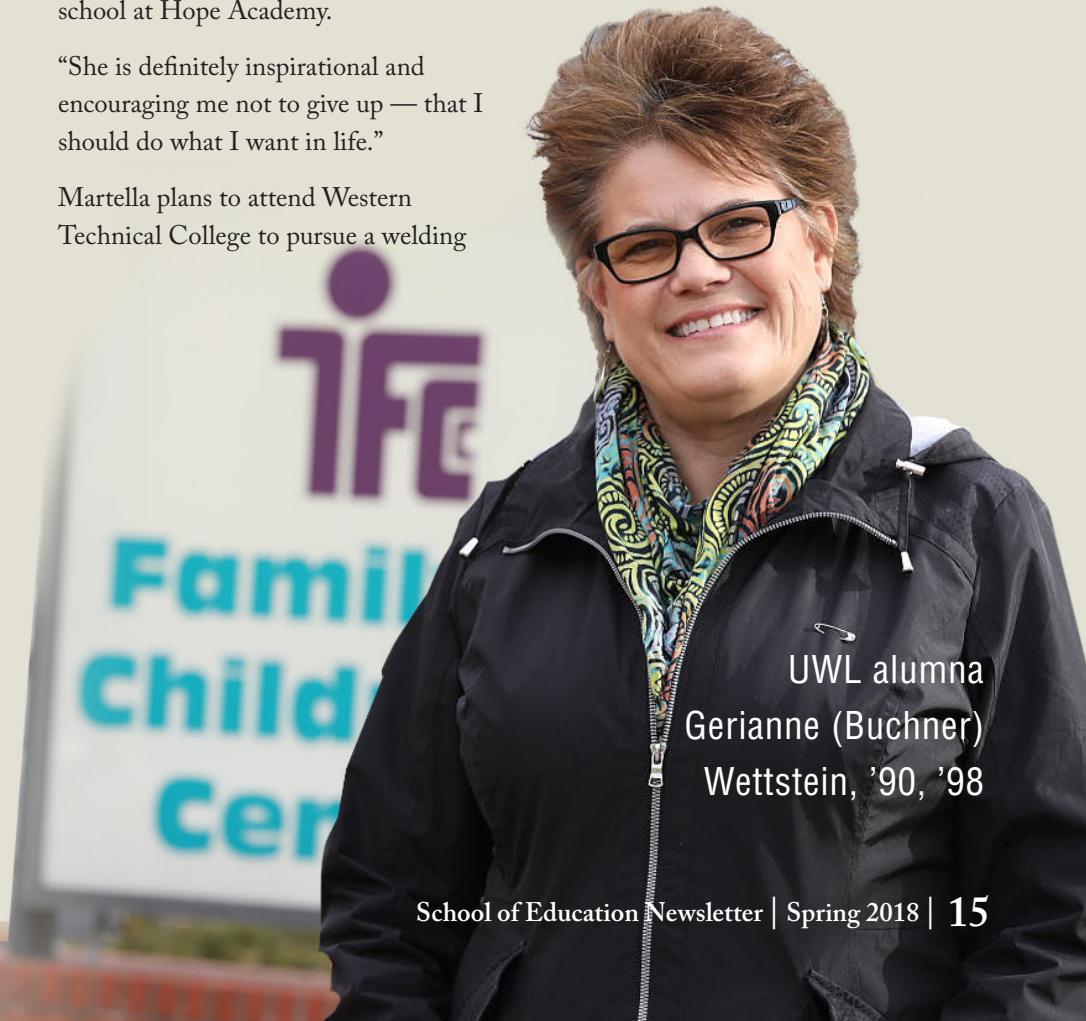
career next year.

“Right now everything I’m learning and everything Geri has taught me is helping me with my mindset on what I want to do with the rest of my life,” she says.

Wettstein says she was blessed to have a place like UWL, which gave her a second chance. And she is grateful for her support system of family, friends and amazing teachers who believed in her. “They have been my north star as there are times my life can get very dark and appear very hopeless,” she explains.

Erickson says her mother’s story showed her that struggles can at times feel unpassable, but — eventually — you get there.

“It may take years, but you get there,” she says. “We all learned that from her.”



UWL alumna  
Gerianne (Buchner)  
Wettstein, '90, '98

# SOE dean receives YWCA Tribute to Outstanding Women Award

Marcie Wycoff-Horn, dean, UWL School of Education, Professional and Continuing Education — received this year's YWCA Tribute to Outstanding Women Education award. Wycoff-Horn received the award along with ten other community women and “young women of tomorrow” during a dinner and award ceremony Nov. 9, 2017, at the La Crosse Center.

Wycoff-Horn earned her doctoral degree in Health Education/Health Promotion from the University of Southern Illinois-Carbondale and joined UWL as an assistant professor in 2002. She was named director of the School of Education in 2009, promoted to full professor in 2011, and appointed dean of the School of Education in 2015.

Over the course of her tenure, she has been responsible for a number of initiatives. In particular, she has invested substantial effort developing teacher education programs through partnerships to increase cultural competencies, particularly in areas of urban education, and promoted global learning and education through international collaborations. This variety of experiences for teacher candidates “... allows them to bring another lens to the classroom. They look at the world differently and approach teaching differently — with not just the academic learning goal in mind, but the whole child,” explains Wycoff-Horn.

Acutely aware that most education majors are women, Wycoff-Horn is known on and off-campus for

providing and promoting leadership opportunities for students, and in particular female students, considering K-12 careers. Furthermore, she is a mentor for many female faculty and staff members on campus as they navigate their professional goals.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Wycoff-Horn is proud of her family, including her husband, Scott, and her daughter, Riley.

