

LANTERN

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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SUMMER 2017



5 decades of giving

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www.uwlax.edu

CLASS NOTES ONLINE

Go to www.uwlax.edu for complete class notes each quarter. Click on 'News,' then 'Class Notes.'

ON THE COVER:

UWL senior Hannah Thomsen is a double major in marketing and Spanish. She is also a scholarship recipient. This issue of the Lantern magazine focuses on 50 years of the UWL Foundation – a non-profit organization created to support UWL students in their academic pursuits. Learn more about the Foundation's beginnings, and those who give on page 16.

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CLASS NOTES POLICY: The UWL Alumni Association publishes class notes and obituaries online in January, April, July and October. The deadline is the 1st of the month prior to the quarterly postings. See www.uwlax.edu for details.



"I believe in the 'Pay it Forward' principle. Currently, I pay it forward with little everyday acts of kindnesses."

Hannah Thomsen

UWL senior benefitting from award, already giving back

Thanks to the Silver Eagles Alumni Association, I am one step closer to my goal of graduating in December 2017. I hope to pursue a career in event planning.

I was selected as a 2016-17 scholarship recipient.

By granting me this scholarship, the Silver Eagles have lightened my financial burden allowing me to focus on the most important aspect of college: learning. But this scholarship means more to me. The generosity of the Silver

Eagles Alumni Association to College of Business Administration students since 1996 is truly inspiring.

My college career here at UW-La Crosse has taught me many things — specifically financial responsibility and the true value of money. But also, it has taught me the importance of a community.

The Silver Eagle Alumni Association invested in me. They provided for me in a time of need out of the kindness of their heart. Although I cannot financially provide for others now, I

pledge to give back.

I believe in the 'Pay it Forward' principle. Currently, I pay it forward with little everyday acts of kindness. Someday, I hope to be in your seat, releasing the financial burden of an aspiring young student.

Silver Eagles Alumni Association, thank you very much for your kind contribution to my college career.

*Hannah Thomsen,
UWL senior, double major in
marketing and Spanish*



INTERIM NO MORE

Betsy Morgan named UWL provost

The interim title for Betsy Morgan has been removed following a national search. Chancellor Joe Gow announced in March that Morgan will become the university's next provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs. She replaces Heidi Macpherson, named president of The College at Brockport, State University of New York in May 2015.

A campus committee recruited an outstanding group of five finalists. Gow

identified Morgan as the candidate best qualified. "Our university will be very fortunate to benefit from her outstanding dedication and leadership skills," says Gow.

In addition to serving as interim provost since July 2015, Morgan has extensive experience as chair of the Psychology Department and as a faculty member since 1993. She served more than seven years as chair of the department, as well as another stint as interim provost in 2012.

TALK TEST

A simple, promising way for gauging exercise intensity

In a world full of exercise gizmos and gadgets — all promising to make you lean and healthy — UWL's Carl Foster, right, and John Porcari are keeping their exercise advice simple, practical and evidence-based.

The two UWL Department of Exercise and Sport Science professors have amassed 20 years of research on one of the simplest yet most promising ways of gauging the right exercise intensity for most people — the talk test.



The idea is simple. If you exercise to the point where you can no longer comfortably carry on a conversation, you are probably working too hard. You want to exercise at a point just below that threshold. That's the best for most people

because they can sustain longer workouts with the right intensity. Also, they are exercising at a level where cardiac events are unlikely to occur.

The talk test also avoids complex or cumbersome exercise intensity testing such as monitoring a pulse rate.

The test was recently recognized as a recommended method of monitoring exercise intensity in the 10th edition of "ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription" (2017).

NOW ACCREDITED

BIOCHEMISTRY MAJOR MEETING STATE DEMAND WITH SEAL OF APPROVAL

UWL's biochemistry major has received national accreditation just as demand for biochemists in Wisconsin is up. Biochemistry and biophysics ranked No. 11 among the state's top 25 fastest-growth occupations. With American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology accreditation — a first in the UW System — UWL's program is helping meet that demand.

PICTURED: Zoey Good, an undergraduate biochemistry major, with John May, assistant professor, Department Chemistry & Biochemistry in CHM 419: Advanced Biochemistry Lab. A research-embedded experience in this lab is just one of the impressive parts of UWL's Biochemistry curriculum, which helped it earn national accreditation in January.



MORE GOOD NEWS

UWL was one of two schools in Wisconsin to make Kiplinger's Personal Finance's list of the top 100 best values in public colleges for 2017. Rankings weigh college affordability alongside academic quality — helping students and parents discover what schools are really worth the price. UWL earned the No. 49 spot on the magazine's list of 100 best values in public colleges for out-of-state students and No. 89 for in-state students.

GOLD STANDARD

The latest campus building is also the latest with top marks in energy and environmental design. The \$55 million Student Union that opened in January has received LEED Gold Certification. LEED, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a national green building certification system.

“The LEED Gold Certification provides documentation that we followed defined building performance strategies that will result in 25 percent less energy, 19 percent lower operating costs, 27 percent higher occupant satisfaction, and 36 percent less CO₂ emissions,” says Doug Pearson, executive director of UWL Facilities Planning and Management.

Centennial and Eagle halls earned Gold Certification in 2011. Newer building efficiencies helped UWL earn one of 60 awards worldwide from the Association



of Energy Engineers in 2016 for reducing energy consumption by 12.7 percent in the previous decade.

An extensive storm water management system is one of the environmental features of the new Student Union — pictured above — which led to the building’s LEED Gold Certification.



‘WORM MOBILE’

UWL celebrated Earth Day with an electric vehicle donation from Honda Motorwërks, which carries food waste to a community vermicomposting project that originated at UWL. The partnership helped the new Student Union earn the campus’ third Gold LEED building certification.



Kara Pennoyer, chief of staff for Wisconsin Sen. Jennifer Shilling, says she prefers working in Wisconsin over Chicago, where she did graduate studies. At UWL, she studied abroad in Vienna, focusing on women in politics.

Lucky Error

Love for politics follows class scheduling error

Kara Pennoyer, '06, remembers that day working in Viroqua, in Wisconsin's rural Vernon County.

"I was sitting in a main street office when a truck filled with pigs parked in front of the office," recalls the chief of staff for State Sen. Jennifer Shilling. "I thought to myself 'I lived in Chicago a year ago, this is different.'"

Pennoyer has worked in the senate minority leader's Madison office since 2009. She's also the vice chair of the

UWL Alumni Association.

Pennoyer initially planned to be a TV news anchor, but a scheduling mishap put her in political science classes. That's when she fell in love with politics.

"I made an immediate turnaround in my schooling and started enjoying the academics as much as I was enjoying the social aspect of college," she notes.

Pennoyer earned degrees in political science and communication studies with

a minor in public administration. She continued her education at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Pennoyer got experience writing grants as a student while interning with New Horizon's Women's Shelter. That's one of the reasons she serves on the Wisconsin Women's Network board, a group that trains women to be advocates on issues affecting women and girls.

DISTINGUISHED

Alumni honored for distinguished service and successful careers return to campus to speak with students and participate in a panel at 2 p.m. Friday, Sept. 22, 2017, in the Great Hall, UWL Cleary Alumni & Friends Center. An Alumni Awards Brunch and Ceremony is planned for 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 23. Get details at www.uwlalumni.org

THE MAURICE O. GRAFF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Recognizes outstanding achievement of alumni who have brought honor and distinction to the university. Long-time administrator Maurice O. Graff instituted the honor in 1977.

RADA DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Recognizes alumni who have graduated within the last 20 years, achieved professional distinction and taken part in humanitarian activities. Professor emeritus Ron Rada and his wife, Jane, created the award in 2002.



Shelmina Abji, '85

- » Empowerment speaker with great passion for accelerating the success of girls and women.
- » Bachelor's in computer science.



Hollie Nyseth Brehm, '08

- » Assistant professor in sociology, Ohio State University; accomplished researcher and educator.
- » Bachelor of Science, double major in sociology and political science; double minor in Spanish and international studies.



Patrick Gonzales, '05

- » High-impact, peer-reviewed researcher in microbial genetics and genomics, addressing antibiotic resistance.
- » Master's in biology – cellular and molecular biology concentration.

ALUMNI

PARKER DISTINGUISHED MULTICULTURAL ALUMNI AWARD

Recognizes outstanding alumni who have contributed greatly to improve multiracial culture and understanding on campus and in their careers. History Professor Emeritus James Parker initiated the award in 1997.

BURT AND NORMA ALTMAN TEACHER EDUCATION AWARD

Honors and recognizes outstanding educators and the significant contributions they make to children and communities. Professor Emeritus Burt Altman and his wife, Norma, long-time supporters of teacher education, created the award in 2015.



Jessica Rae McMunn, '05

- » Award-winning filmmaker; stage manager and camera operator for Dodger Vision, Los Angeles Dodgers.
- » Bachelor's with a theatre major, Latin American studies minor.



Lisa Koenecke, '91

- » Passionate advocate for youth and school counseling; counselor at River Bluff Middle School, Stoughton.
- » Bachelor's in psychology.



Christopher Gleason, '02

- » Outstanding educator and accomplished musician, instrumental music teacher at Patrick Marsh Middle School, Sun Prairie.
- » Master's of Education Professional Development.



STARTING SOMETHING NEW

*Alumni couple supports up-and-coming entrepreneurs
— like they once were*

Sue Frey has a big, glass window in the corner of her company office looking over Hartland, Wisconsin. It's a stark contrast to the her first office — a storage closet.

Alums Rob and Sue Frey have worked hard to grow their company for 20 years. Since they opened Guthrie & Frey Water Conditioning LLC, the company

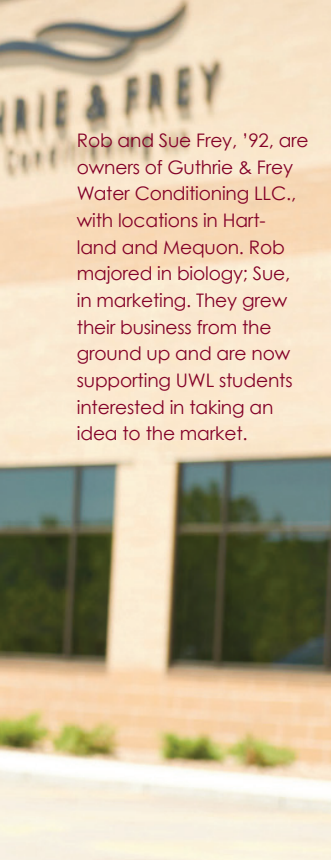
has added more than 30 employees, expanded from one location to three, and grown sales by a factor of 10.

Now the Freys are investing in UWL students with a similar fervor for entrepreneurship.

“What we are looking to do is contribute and help people willing to put hard work into starting something new — knowing

results don't happen over night,” says Sue.

The Freys donated \$25,000 to start an endowment that will support entrepreneurship in the sciences. Students in the College of Science and Health will receive awards to explore the marketability of their research through the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, including



Rob and Sue Frey, '92, are owners of Guthrie & Frey Water Conditioning LLC., with locations in Hartland and Mequon. Rob majored in biology; Sue, in marketing. They grew their business from the ground up and are now supporting UWL students interested in taking an idea to the market.

the new Innovation Generation programs, which, at the collegiate level, help students refine and test their ideas to form viable business plans.

Rob began thinking about giving back after an interview for a trade magazine. The reporter asked about community involvement. Rob felt he was lacking in the area. Minutes later, UWL Foundation Development

Officer Jay Scott walked into his office. “The timing was brilliant,” says Rob.

Giving back to education was particularly exciting to Rob and Sue because of the results. Unlike giving to some charities, giving to UWL students — in a way that could influence their future — felt more tangible. And they could target students in a specific way through the fund.

“What we are looking to do is contribute and help people willing to put hard work into starting something new — knowing results don’t happen over night.”

Sue Frey, '92

Rob and Sue came to entrepreneurship in a round about way. After graduating from UWL, they both initially went into retail.

Rob recalls the first moment he considered entrepreneurship. He was “happily selling microscopes” when his dad asked if he was inter-

ested in going into the family well business. Rob gave it try, but notes his father is still in charge of the business today. However, that brush with running his own business had Rob intrigued enough to start his own company with Sue. They combined their skillsets and learned how to build a water-conditioning company.

Rob says his UWL background taught him how to compete. He remembers not initially doing well academically his freshman year. He quickly realized the high-caliber students working alongside him. “I dug in the rest of my college career,” he says. “It became about learning time management, persistence and social skills”

Sue found similar challenges, learning balance in college while maintaining part-time work for 20 hours or more a week.

College was challenging, but they had a good experience. Professors were accessible and willing to help, and class sizes were small. Now, their son, Scott, who will be a junior marketing major in the fall, is having a similar positive experience.

“We wanted to get involved in something, and we love La Crosse,” says Sue. “Our willingness to contribute there was a natural fit.”

Support after SADNESS

Milwaukee firm finds inspiring support after death of three employees

On the morning of Nov. 3, 2016, employees of RitzHolman were mourning the death of their co-workers.

On the way home from a UWL recruiting event, three were killed and one was severely injured in an accident on Interstate 94.

Learning the news, some of the accounting firm's employees wanted to be alone. Others wanted to cry and share stories.

"When it's a tragic, horrible situation like this, there are so many emotions," says Kris Franceschi, human resources manager for RitzHolman.

But in their sadness, RitzHolman employees found support. When Franceschi opened her email, she found many from students — and about two dozen from UWL. Many had met the employees just hours before they died.

That immediate and ongoing support from UWL, as well as the business community of the Greater Milwaukee area, inspired the firm to partner and create scholarships at UWL and two other UW schools.

"These were not one- or two-sentence emails. They were overwhelmingly well written, genuine and sending their love and support."

Kris Franceschi

THE ACCIDENT AND ITS AFTERMATH

Katey Pasqualini, Kim Radtke, Clenton T. Hall, and Brian Falk came to UWL Nov. 2 to inspire students in UWL's Beta Alpha Psi chapter, an honor society for accountancy and financial information students. The four — all in their 20s and in early stages of their accountancy careers — shared their wit, jokes and excitement about working for the firm.

UWL student Vincent Dombrowski, then president

of Beta Alpha Psi, remembers relaxed conversation and a lot of laughs. When the RitzHolman employees left, students felt a real connection to them, he recalls.

That's why it was such a shock the next day when word spread that three of the visitors — Pasqualini, Radtke and Hall — had died on their way home. Falk sustained life-threatening injuries.

At the firm, employees gathered for an early morning meeting about what happened. News reports eventually confirmed that a drunk driver who was attempting to evade police turned around and drove the wrong way in the eastbound lanes of Interstate 94, hitting the car carrying the four RitzHolman employees head on, as well as another vehicle.

The firm reached out to support their co-workers' families. People from the Milwaukee area and beyond reached out to support the firm.

So many flowers were delivered to their Milwaukee suite that they filled all of the tables and offices, says



Katey Pasqualini



Kim Radtke



Clenton T. Hall

Franceschi. Condolences and contributions came from Milwaukee, as well as across the state — from UWL students and faculty.



Kris Franceschi, right, announced the establishment of The RitzHolman Scholarship in memory of Clenton, Katey and Kim at UWL's accountancy scholarship banquet in April. She and Brian Wilson, CPA, senior manager at RitzHolman, left, recognized the first \$1,500 recipient, Vincent Dombrowski. "We hope that it will become an annual scholarship with their names tied to it," said William Maas, Accountancy Department chair.

"These were not one- or two-sentence emails," she says. "They were overwhelmingly well written, genuine and sending their love and support."

Dombrowski felt so moved that he drove across the state to Pasqualini's funeral to support the firm and families. "For all of the families, I wanted them to know that their kids left a big impact on us," says the UWL student. "I wanted to definitely let them know that in person."

Julie Ancius, associate lecturer in UWL's Accountancy Department, says many students in Beta Alpha Psi were coming into her office shocked and upset. Many wanted to help. That inspired Ancius to contribute \$500 to the UWL Foundation for a scholarship memorial.

Employees at RitzHolman had a similar idea. They sent a letter to clients thanking them for their support and letting them know about the firm's partnerships with UWL, UW-Whitewater and UW-Milwaukee to establish three, ongoing memorial scholarships. They will be awarded to students who carry on the passion the employees inspired in others.

Pasqualini and Hall were graduates of UW-Whitewater and Radtke was a graduate of UW-Milwaukee. It was natural for RitzHolman to partner with UWL. "When trying to manage the sadness, the support we received from UWL was truly inspiring," says Franceschi.

Grappling with greatness

Brad Bruhn finding success as a wrestler

Brad Bruhn never grappled with the idea of wrestling. He watched his brother and cousin on the mats — and learned moves when they practiced on him. With seven of nine tournament wins in his first year, it's easy to see how Bruhn was hooked.

Bruhn chose UWL after looking for a strong physical education major. The Cadott native didn't visit campus until he came in fall.



"I came from a very small town where everyone knew everyone," explains Bruhn.

College made him grow up. "I learned the harder you work, the better chance you have at

getting where you want to be," Bruhn says. "I realized I was capable of a lot more than I thought."

Bruhn teamed up with wrestlers early on at UWL too, rooming with teammates throughout college. They became his second family.

"It was a great experience with a great group of guys and an amazing coach," says Bruhn. "Coach (Greg) Lonning pushed us to our limits and our teams were better every year. He was such a great mentor."

The SUNY-Cortland coach and National Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame director was gratified with those inducted into the NWCA Hall of Fame at the NCAA III championships in La Crosse in March. It brought back fond memories when his former coaches and teammates — Jeff O'Gara, Tim Fader and Greg Lonning — made the cut.

"It really wasn't about the accomplishments that stick out, but more of the journey with the people that were there with me," he says.



THE BRAD BRUHN FILE

- » Earned a bachelor's (1997) and master's (2002) from UWL in physical education teaching.
- » Four-year member of the Eagles wrestling team; team captain; three-time member of the NWCA Scholar Team; conference title holder; NCAA III All-American.
- » Just completed his 15th season as head wrestling coach at SUNY Cortland.



GYMNASTICS GURU: Kasey Crawford

A familiar face will head UWL Women's Gymnastics. Kasey Crawford was named head gymnastics coach in April. Crawford was interim coach for 2016-17, leading the Eagles to a second-place finish in the 2017 National Collegiate Gymnastics Association championships — the team's 24th top-two finish in 34 outings. Before being named interim head coach after Barbara Gibson retired in July 2016, Crawford was an assistant coach for eight years. She also teaches in the Exercise Sport Science Department.



Davis to head Track & Field

Nickolas Davis has been named head coach for women's track & field. Davis completed his fourth season as assistant men's and women's track & field coach and instructor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2017. The Racine native will also be an associate lecturer in UWL's Exercise Sport Science Department.

"UWL is steeped in a history of excellence across all sports and, in particular, track & field," says Davis. "Joining this tradition is a very humbling experience. UWL women's track & field has been built on the hard work and dedication of so many talented coaches and athletes before me and it is my aim to build on that tradition."

Men take record 15th title

UWL's men's track & field won its record 15th NCAA III outdoor title May 27, at SPIRE Institute in Geneva, Ohio. The Eagles finished at 47.0 to capture the crown for the third consecutive year, edging out UW-Whitewater with 45.0. It's the 12th time the Eagles swept the NCAA III indoor and outdoor titles. UWL earned the 2016-17 U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) Men's NCAA III Al Carius Program of the Year Award.





Five decades
of giving



Breanne Thompson

Seeing a child smile motivates Breanne Thompson. And, now Thompson has a smile on her face too. The first-generation biology student received the Laura Schuh Biology Scholarship, allowing her to cut back her part-time job to focus on major-related experiences. One was Dance-Abilities, an area program that allows children with disabilities to participate in dance. The experience helped Thompson prepare to begin UWL's Doctor of Physical Therapy program this summer. Thompson was one of around 850 UWL students who received more than \$1 million in scholarships in the last academic year. With the UWL Foundation's scholarships continuing to grow, more students are able to focus on their studies, rather than trying to make ends meet.

UWL FOUNDATION: GIVING SINCE 1967

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Foundation Inc. was formed as an independent, non-profit Wisconsin corporation in 1967. It wasn't the first established to help UWL students. The UW-La Crosse Scholarships Inc., formerly the La Crosse State College Foundation, and the State College Student Welfare Association merged with the UWL Foundation in the mid-1980s to create a single charity dedicated to advancing philanthropy benefitting UWL.

The foundation's assets have grown to more than \$25 million — with a major boost in the last half decade from the “Share the La Crosse Experience” campaign that's growing scholarships.

When the campaign began in 2013, the UWL Foundation was awarding slightly more than \$500,000 annually. This spring, awards totaled more than \$1 million.

“The campaign has been very well received by our alumni and friends,” says Greg Reichert, vice chancellor of Advancement and president of the UWL Foundation. “We have seen gifts come in from all over the world to support new scholarships and we are extremely pleased to see that our alumni are still connected with their alma mater.”

The campaign has raised \$9.5 million in its first four years — more than half of its \$15 million goal by 2019.

“We have a dedicated team in place to expand the opportunities for our students and campus community through private support,” says Reichert.

In the following pages, you'll meet those impacted by earning scholarships, and those making an impact by funding scholarships. It's been a great 50 years for the UWL Foundation.

1960s



TOM CARROLL, '68

- » Physical education and history major
- » Northstar Brand Development Co.
- » Centennial, Colorado

ROSE CARROLL, '69

- » Physical education major
- » Health minor
- » Retired middle school teacher
- » Centennial, Colorado

Tom's company, Northstar Brand Development Co., markets food specialty items. Rose enjoys substitute teaching. They began traveling extensively after Rose went into remission from stage 4 non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, knowing they have to make the most of their time. The couple married in 1966 in college and didn't receive financial assistance.

Why did you create a scholarship through the UWL Foundation?

Rose and I decided to create a scholarship after a return visit to UWL. We learned there were very few scholarships available to incoming freshmen and because of that several deserving students who wished to attend UWL could not afford to come to this great institution. Our scholarship is not huge, but a small step for an incoming freshman.

What kind of connection do you feel to the students you are giving to?

We have received wonderful letters from freshmen receiving our scholarship and it is heart warming. We hope we make a slight difference.

Why would you encourage others to support funding scholarships?

As we get older and our priorities change, we need

to continue to think how we can make a difference in people's lives. We can give of ourselves as we do in our marriage ministry, and we can give financially as we have decided to do with our small scholarship for freshman at UWL. The key is, if the spirit moves you, time is a-wasting.

1970s



SAMIR “SAM” SAMBAR, '71

- » Political science and French major
- » New Berlin, Wisconsin

Samir “Sam” Sambar, '71; left, with scholarship recipient Hoang Nguyen and Anne Sambar.

Sambar came to UWL from Israel on a full scholarship from the Wisconsin legislature for high-achieving international students. Now Sambar is giving other UWL international students a similar boost. He and his wife, Anne, donated \$10,000 to the UWL Foundation to start a scholarship for UWL international students. Sam says UWL was an ideal place for international students to attend.

What kind of connection do you feel to students you are giving to?

To see what these students are aiming for in life has been very reminiscent of my own experience leaving family back home and coming here. The culture and the language were new. It was not easy. Talking to him (scholarship recipient Hoang Nguyen, an international student from Hanoi,

Vietnam), I remembered having similar problems. But I was glad to hear that he had people here who made the transition easier like I did. During my first year here, we stayed in the dorms over Christmas. Arrangements were made to visit local families on Christmas Eve and Day with dinner and gifts. . . . That was very impressive. He (Nguyen) experienced the same — a host family to do that for him. La Crosse is a close

community. . . You don't feel like a stranger. — *Samir*

Why would you encourage others to support funding scholarships?

I felt like we got more out of it than he did. We gave very little, but he (Nguyen) made us feel very proud — that you could in a small way help a stranger who really wanted an education. — *Anne*

1980s



MICHAEL J. MCGINLEY, '82

- » Microbiology major
- » Chemistry minor —1982
- » President, Biologicals & Pharmaceuticals Heska Corp.
- » Fort Collins, Colorado

McGinley didn't receive any scholarships for college, but he worked as a resident assistant in Coate Hall. He says the experience instilled fundamental leadership skills that have served him throughout his personal and professional life. McGinley encourages others to support a scholarship. "Your gift will really make a difference for a deserving student," he explains. "And you'll have to trust me on this: it feels good!"

Why did you create a scholarship through the UWL Foundation?

I began to feel a real calling to give back, in some way, to the institution that gave me so much. As I talked to others about their undergraduate experiences at other schools, I began to realize what a special place UWL is — and what a unique experience I was afforded by going there. I wanted to help make that possible for others.

What kind of connection do you feel to the students you are giving to?

The scholarship I set up is for junior or senior microbiology majors. I remember what a critical time that is. I connect with students at that stage of their undergraduate education because I remember how hard and stressful it can be striving to find a way to complete your degree, not to mention thinking about what the future, after graduation,

will look like. I hope our scholarship provides a little financial security, incentive to achieve more, and room to focus on completing a degree.

1990s



CONSTANCE ARZGIAN

- » Anthropology PhD, UW-Madison 1993
- » Employed at UWL since 1988, first at the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center; currently, teaching in the Archaeology and Anthropology Department
- » La Crosse, Wisconsin

Arzgian received scholarships and assistantships in graduate school that made a tremendous impact. She could complete coursework without having to work multiple non-archaeology jobs and it gave her the flexibility of working career-relevant jobs. “More importantly,” she adds, “it told me someone else thought I was worthy of being in school and of being supported, which can be very encouraging.”

What kind of connection do you feel to students you are giving to?

I contribute because I want to help other students explore their passion for archaeology. I teach an archaeology field school for high school students, so I see many who aren't sure what they want to do with their lives, but really like archaeology and want to pursue it. Many will come to UWL, and I'll teach them again as undergrads. It's very satisfying to see a student progress from learner to

colleague. The scholarships make an important financial contribution for their academic career, and give them a point of pride for their future job resumes. And, hopefully, they tell students that someone wants them to succeed, has faith in them, and is willing to put money on it.

Why would you encourage others to support funding scholarships?

It can make a profound difference in someone's life, particularly for those who

might otherwise literally never dream of attending college or pursuing their passion. If you have the resources to share, scholarship funds are one of the most direct and specific ways to facilitate someone's successful education and, hopefully, the rest of their life.

2000s



JENNY (SUMTER) STANIEC, '00

- » Accountancy major
- » Lead Tax Analyst, Deluxe Corp.
- » Oak Grove, Minnesota

Staniec received a Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship, as well as a UWL Foundation scholarship. These enabled her to worry less about finances and focus on studies. Staniec remembers the long hours of studying. "College isn't easy, by any means," she explains. "If I can make things a little easier financially, that's the least I can do."

Why did you create a scholarship through the UWL Foundation?

UWL Career Services did a fantastic job arranging interviews for accountancy students. I got the internship I wanted and returned for my final semester knowing I had a job. Everyone is not that fortunate and I am very grateful for the experience. Donating is my way of saying, "Thanks!"

Why would you encourage others to support scholarships?

I encourage others to think about what they spend on things like TV and Internet. I can't justify spending money on those things and not giving back to my alma mater. I encourage others to look at it from that perspective. Every little bit helps. Make donating a habit and increase your contributions as your financial future

becomes more stable. I work for an employer with a generous matching gift plan. To think that \$500 out of my pocket becomes \$1,500 for the university is rather remarkable. I urge donors to look into whether their employers offer such a program.

Global Generosity

Teaching runs in the blood of the Wegners

Greg Wegner taught for 34 years — 24 as a history professor at UWL. During the time on campus, he was even named Wisconsin professor of the year.

His daughter carried that on in the Peace Corps. Mary Clare taught reading and English in Uganda.

During that time, she found some limitations — most prominently the technol-

ogy available. Mary Clare was teaching at a school with about



Greg Wegner

71,000 students. It had only eight working computers. “They were trying to get by on dinosaurs of computers,” explains Mary Clare.

That’s when the Wegners came up with the idea to give some used computers to the school.

Fifteen used laptops were donated to the Wegner’s cause. They also connected with Jennifer Kosiak, UWL professor of mathematics, to find free, online resources to build the curriculum.

“It’s my time to give back,” Greg reflected on his time teaching. “We need to do



TOP: Students in Uganda use computers brought to them through the help of Greg Wegner, '71, and his wife and daughter.

ABOVE: The building in a small village in Uganda that the Wegner family helped acquire to house computers for school children living there.

everything we can to support global education efforts.”

Joined by his wife, Paula, Greg worked with the school and government to get through the red tape. After lengthy efforts to get the computers there, the couple guided the computers to the village to a newly built building.

During the Wegner’s stay, they were able to participate in a traditional feast, including local food and drink. “Every-

one came together,” says Paula. “They were all so generous with what little they had.”

Now Greg and Paula are considering applying to the Peace Corps themselves, a great way to give back and promote the mission of global peace and understanding.

“This travel was eye-opening,” notes Paula. “It’s so important to see and experience other cultures.”



A CAREER AND A CRAFT

**Popular professor, life-long learner honored
through scholarship**

David Witmer helped evolve UWL into what it is today. As assistant chancellor from 1972-90, he provided leadership in planning, budgeting and establishing new academic programs. He helped secure approval for campus buildings, including Center for the Arts and Wimberly Hall.

But what Doris Witmer remembers most about her husband's time at UWL isn't related to program development or facility planning. She pulls a framed column off the wall of her La Crosse home. Originally printed in the Racquet student

newspaper and written by a former graduate student of David's, it describes him as having "an absolute passion for his craft in teaching." It goes on to thank David for being the type of professor who shares his love for his subject area.

Lee Goodhart, a retired professor of teacher education, had the office next door to David's in Morris Hall when they both taught education courses. Goodhart describes David as "a quiet guy with a wry sense of humor" who was not only popular among students. Many faculty went to him

At UWL David Witmer oversaw planning, budgeting and faculty personnel as assistant chancellor from 1972-90. He was also a passionate instructor for teacher preparation courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. A scholarship in his name will support education majors.

Photo courtesy of UWL Murphy Library, Special Collections

for his thoughtful advice and admired the way he engaged students in topics.

Goodhart and other education faculty would sometimes go to David's classroom just to watch him kick off a class. He was known for starting in a dramatic way — with some outrageous statistic or unbelievable fact, says Goodhart.

Not only was he a gifted teacher, David was a life-long learner. Doris recalled many evenings when he'd go to his upstairs room, where papers were spread across the floor, to do research well into the evening.



“He said, ‘what do you want that you don’t have?’ I thought about it. There was nothing. That was the end of that. I became a cheerful giver from that point on.”

Doris Witmer

David grew ill with pancreatic cancer in the spring 1998. Some students who knew of his diagnosis placed his name on top of their mortarboards at spring commencement. He died that August at age 65.

Doris says starting a scholarship that honors her husband and supports education majors just made sense. Not only because David was an educator who deeply connected with and motivated students, but also because he spent his lifetime giving to others.

David was raised in a parsonage and his parents taught him to be generous, says Doris. Throughout his working career, he always gave money to different causes whether the church or the local hospital. At one point Doris shared her con-

cerns with David that he was giving away more money than was coming in.

“He said, ‘what do you want that you don’t have?’” recalls Doris. “I thought about it. There was nothing. That was the end of that. I became a cheerful giver from that point on.”

All three of the Witmer’s children graduated from UWL: Mark, ’79; Jeffrey, ’79; and Laura, ’85, Jeffrey contributed \$8,000 to the fund. The first scholarship was awarded in April 2016.

Doris says her husband would be very pleased to learn she decided to direct her giving toward UWL. “He’d wonder why I didn’t do it sooner,” she says.

A UW SYSTEM START

Prior to UWL, David Witmer was a program coordinator in Academic Affairs for UW System central administration. He brought experience as an administrative officer, systems and procedure analyst, teacher and military police officer. He had also served as a staff and legislative lobbyist for the Board of Regents from 1964-72. Under Gov. Warren Knowles and Gov. Patrick Lucey, he served on the staff of the Kellett Commission, successfully urging creation of the University of Wisconsin System.

A START IN ART

Alum recalls the intense moment that sparked his interest in metalsmithing

Alum Dale Wedig remembers his first brush with a future in art.

The UWL physical education major and athlete was strolling by the metalsmithing studio in the Center for the Arts one evening when he heard yelling.

Art Professor William "Bill" Fiorini was fed up with students not paying attention. He walked out of the class and slammed the door.

Wedig was intrigued with Fiorini's intensity — so

much so that he decided to take his class the following semester. "He obviously believed that what he was teaching was really important," says Wedig.

Fiorini's class proved as captivating as Wedig's initial encounter with the man. It led Wedig to change career plans from physical education to art.

Today Wedig carries a similar intensity as an art professor at Northern Michigan University School

of Art and Design. He teaches metalsmithing and sculpture, along with other core art courses.

Wedig was one of 17 UWL Department of Art alumni invited to showcase their work in the UWL Alumni Invitation Exhibition, Jan. 27-Feb.11, in the Center for the Arts. The exhibition presented a cross section of graduate interests and contributions.

Wedig also spoke with metalsmithing students in



William "Bill" Fiorini

UWL alumnus Dale Wedig demonstrated at classes in the Metal Studio in February. Wedig, who graduated with degrees in physical education and art, was one of four artists presenting through a College of Liberal Studies grant-funded Visiting Artist Series.



Brad Nichols, associate professor of art, teaches all levels of metalsmithing and blacksmithing, as well as foundation courses in studio arts. Nichols was among the six UWL faculty members to receive the Eagle Teaching Excellence Award this spring. Nominations came from UWL students.



UWL alumni artist Paul Finch talks with UWL Provost Betsy Morgan at the reception for the UWL Alumni Invitation Exhibition in January.

Associate Professor Brad Nichols' class and gave a community talk.

Wedig says not only the intensity of UWL faculty, but also the caliber of the students in the Art Department pushed him to not settle for mediocrity and ultimately succeed in the field. Wedig went on to earn full-ride scholarships for advanced degrees at Iowa State and Arizona State before starting to teach university art classes in 1983.

"I was at the right place at the right time," says Wedig. "Bill had a lot of people come out of his program that became very successful."

Nichols is an example of a successful alum who eventually came back to UWL — replacing Fiorini after he retired. Nichols now heads up the department's metalsmithing and blacksmithing classes.

Fiorini wooed Nichols into metalsmithing as well. The well-known Damascus knife maker brought examples into his intro-level art course.

"I was a punk kid," recalls Nichols. "I wanted to make knives, so I signed up."

Nichols was surprised and a bit hesitant when the first metalsmithing classes focused on jewelry. But Nichols stuck with the class and discovered he loved transforming ridged metal into anything — jewelry, knives or other objects. Nichols agrees that Fiorini could be intense, but, ultimately, taught him a lot.

During his return visit, Wedig told students to take in as much as they can while in college — even if it feels difficult.

"Undergraduate years are the time to acquire skills and keep your eyes on the lookout for anything that could possibly help you build a future," explains Wedig.

He's glad his eyes opened in the Center for the Arts hallway that night. Not being afraid to take that first class with Fiorini changed his future.

PARTICIPATING ALUMNI ARTISTS

- » Devon Browning, '09, San Diego, California
- » Carissa Brudos, '95, De Soto
- » Matt Duckett, '09, Chicago
- » Mai Chao Duddeck, '05, Onalaska
- » Sarah Dudgeon, '96, Eastman
- » Paul Finch, last attended in '76, Prescott, Arizona
- » Lisa Lenarz, '07, La Crosse
- » Becky McDonah, '95, Millersville, Pennsylvania
- » Tedd R. McDonah, '96, Millersville, Pennsylvania
- » Andrew Meyer, '11, Coon Valley
- » Andrew Musil, '14, La Crosse
- » Amanda Struver, '14, La Crosse
- » Kim Van Someren, '02, Seattle
- » Ryan Varley, '99, Minneapolis
- » Dale Wedig, '97, Gwinn, Michigan
- » Ian Wright, '15, Madison
- » Tim Znidarsich, '11, Baraboo

STARTING with GRACE

*Incoming student prepares for college
with support from a UWL alumni family*



LEFT TO RIGHT:
Godfather Karanja Rouse, '95, new UWL student Grace Oliver, and father Jason Oliver at START (Student Advising, Registration, and Transition) in June. Family helped connect Grace to campus.

Grace Oliver was sitting in that space between high school and college. At an orientation for new UWL students, she was also sitting between two people eager to watch her make the transition. Grace was one of many new incoming students participating in START — Student Advising, Registration, and Transition— on campus in June. It’s a jumping off point to help students with college transition where many attend with parents or guardians. Grace was with her father, Jason Oliver, and godfather, Karanja Rouse, both 1995 alums. They have a lot of stories about their college years. Without UWL experiences — particularly serving in Residence Life — they likely wouldn’t be in their careers in information technology and law, respectively, today. In fact, without UWL, Grace wouldn’t even exist.

Jason met Grace’s mother, Lisa (Grothman) Oliver, also ’95, when she walked into Rouse’s UWL residence hall room with a friend. Rouse, a close friend of Jason’s who had followed him from high school to UWL, was trying to look out for Jason and actually warned Jason against the relationship. Today, Rouse laughs at the advice, noting that it would have been the biggest mistake in Jason’s life if he would have followed Rouse’s guidance.

“He made the right choice. Lisa is fantastic,” says Rouse regarding the relationship. “There are not a lot of couples you can look to as role models, but with them, I can do that.”

Second to meeting Lisa, the other smart thing Jason did at UWL was get involved in Residence Life. He started off in RHAC, but then assumed an IT internship for the Office of Residence Life. At the time, each residence hall had a computer room in its basement. Through this internship, Jason learned valuable Information

Technology (IT) skills that helped to launch his career in information technology after graduation. Today he is a Solutions Architect for Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Co., working with Wisconsin clients developing their work environments using HPE technologies.

Rouse has equal praise for his Residence Life experience. He served on the Residence Hall Association Council (RHAC) in various positions, working up to president of the group.

“It gave me a chance to develop leadership skills through serving my fellow residents. I believe that RHAC made living in the residences halls better. What we did had real consequences, but it still provided an environment where one could make mistakes. I learned as much from my failures there as my successes.” he says. “It was a wonderful opportunity that gave me the confidence to run for and win a seat on the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors as a student.”

Those student leadership skills carried on as he started

law school and his career. He is now a senior staff attorney with Covington & Burling, in Washington, D.C.

“We’ll be pushing RHAC very hard,” he says to Grace, with a nudge and smile.

Grace says UWL alums opened her up to the campus as a school choice, but a tour sealed her decision.

“The campus is beautiful. And it’s the right size — not too big where I feel like I’ll get lost,” she says. “It also has a good biology program, which I’m interested in.”

Hearing her mother’s, father’s and godfather’s UWL stories makes her anticipate the kind of opportunities she will find in coming years, she adds.

“We know our story here and what this university did for us,” says Rouse. “Now we’re excited to see what she makes of it here. I expect great things from her. I think she’ll have a wonderful experience.”

Returning the Gift

Alum funds scholarship after successful IT career

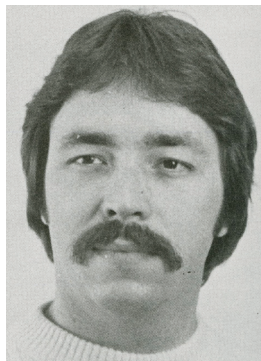
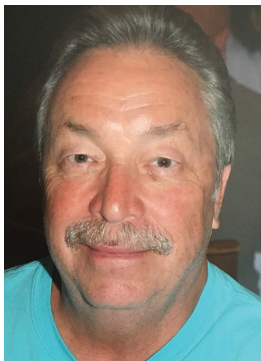
While at UWL in the early '70s, Gregory Staat developed life goals, perspective and preparation for a career in the computer industry's early years. He graduated in three years in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science honors degree in business administration and computer science.

“My UWL education along with my extracurricular activities provided the right career foundation.”

Gregory Staat, '74

That's why Staat, a successful IT professional turned entrepreneur, decided to give back to UWL with an estate gift. He and his wife, Carolyn, set up The Gregory A. Staat Endowed Scholarship Fund that will provide scholarships to future UWL computer science majors.

Staat came to campus as a recent veteran of the U.S. Air Force with experience working with early computers on classified military projects. Those computers



LEFT: Gregory Staat, '74, of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, had a successful career in information technology working for major national banks and insurance companies. He retired as an IT manager from a major bank, then opened two restaurants while doing IT consulting work. He is now able to fulfill his dream to set up an estate gift to give back to his alma mater.

RIGHT: Greg Staat pictured in the 1974 La Crosse yearbook.

Image courtesy UWL Murphy Library, Special Collections.

were very large-filled with vacuum tubes and housed within large buildings. His military experience and encouragement from UWL professors led him to use his degree to enter the business world where computers were becoming smaller, faster and more accurate — providing great career opportunities.

“The first five years out of college, I saw a rapid career advancement,” says Staat. “My UWL education along with my extracurricular activities provided the

right career foundation.”

Staat was profiled in “Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges,” an annual publication of outstanding students nationwide. In college he was a member of Blue Key National Honor Fraternity, Delta Sigma Pi, Professional Business Fraternity, Homecoming Committee, Student Senate and UWL Veterans Club.

Leaving a Legacy

ROBIN MUELLER, '78

Though his parents funded his college education, Robin Clark Mueller was eager to set up a scholarship for students who might be facing financial constraints. The 1978 interpersonal communications grad adds: "It's time to give back. I've been blessed."

Mueller is endowing a scholarship for juniors majoring in communication studies — the first award for that discipline. He and his family members will stay involved in selecting recipients by conducting face-to-face interviews.

"You never know when a student may be on the fence and an award like this could rein them back in," he explains.

Mueller was so impressed with candidates when selecting the first recipient this spring that he awarded three scholarships instead of one.

Mueller has made the UWL Foundation the beneficiary of a \$100,000 life insurance policy. The arrangement provides him a tax benefit while funding the policy. When the policy is cashed in, it will boost the original \$25,000 endowment and provide additional annual awards.

Mueller encourages others to think about endowing scholarships by using a life insurance policy or other creative financial planning. "Their smiles on recognition night say it all," he says. "What are you leaving behind?"



Robin Clark Mueller, 78', pictured with his scholarship's first three recipients.

LEAVE YOUR OWN LEGACY

There are many ways to create a scholarship fund to help future generations of UWL students. Please contact Greg Reichert at 608.785.8672 or greichert@uwlax.edu

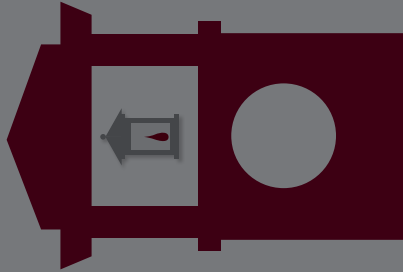
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