

SUMMER 2020 | VOL. 46, NO. 2

LANTERN

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE ALUMNI MAGAZINE



A spring of
promise in a
global pandemic

Stay informed! See back cover 

FEATURES

On the cover: Amid the global pandemic and ghost town-like campus, the spring flowers gave signs of hope.



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THEY'RE DISTINGUISHED



23

CAMPAIGN GARNERS \$18+ MILLION



28

THE GIFT OF LIFE



SAVE THE DATE!
OCTOBER 22-23, 2021

LANTERN

UW-LA CROSSE ALUMNI MAGAZINE SUMMER 2020 | VOL. 46, NO. 2

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UWL Murphy Library archives all past issues of the Alumnus/Lantern magazine. See: digitalcollections.uwlax.edu

CLASS NOTES ONLINE

Go to www.uwlalumni.org for complete class notes each quarter. Click on "News," then "Class Notes."

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 posting. See www.uwlaxalumni.org for details.

IT'S A DIFFERENT WORLD NOW

Social distancing. Flattening the curve. Both are phrases we never heard before — or even thought about if we had. That is until mid-March, when the coronavirus pandemic extended to the U.S.

Life as we knew it took a bigger U-turn than the one during 9/11. We slowed down, spent more time with family and planned grocery trips.

We rediscovered the importance of local businesses — and their innovations. Curb-side became vogue. Slider windows transformed into perfect pick-ups.

Instructors rushed to get coursework online. Students spent even more screen time balancing class, homework and binge-watching.

But along with madness and COVID-19 images, we observed human kindness bud faster than the backyard maple.

Brittany Jacob, '09, typically creates costumes for the Brewers' Famous Racing Sausages and others. But with mascots in

low demand amid COVID-19, Jacob and her team began crafting masks and face shields.

In southwestern Wisconsin, Ginny Moore, '83, set a poultry paradigm. She donated eggs from her 40 hens to the local food pantry in Richland Center. Following her first donation of 28 dozen — 336 eggs — she planned more.

Alumni and friends continue to donate to UWL CARES, an emergency relief fund supporting students caught in financial crisis. We find hope hearing about ancestors surviving the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic— we can get through this.

Throughout this magazine, you'll find details about UWL's COVID-19 response. Be proud of your alma mater as it continues to react responsibly.

Stay healthy and positive!

Brad Quarberg

Brad Quarberg, '85
Editor





UWL NO. 1 IN STATE, HIGH NATIONALLY FOR ROI

UWL is among the nation's top 20 colleges for Return On Investment. Great Value Colleges ranked UWL No. 16 among its 100 Most Affordable Public Schools with the Highest ROIs. Rankings came from data College Navigator collected regarding tuition, as well as information taken directly from institutions and 40-year ROI. The rank — highest among UWs — was selected not only for affordability and ROI, but also for “the institution’s overall outstanding reputation, its faculty excellence, and the unerring commitment to providing students a high-quality education while giving them all the tools that they need to achieve their future career goals.”

SENIOR ART EXHIBIT GOES VIRTUAL

The 12 art students who graduated in May didn't let a pandemic get in the way of their senior art exhibition. They shared their work in “UW-La Crosse Senior Art Exhibition: Highly Improbable; a very unlikely situation, but not impossible.” View it at uwlax.edu/go/HighlyImprobable

HONORARY DOCTORATES Radas recognized for distinction

Two respected and beloved retired educators who have been pillars of stalwart support for UWL were recognized during December's commencement. Ron and Jane Rada received UWL Honorary Doctorates, given for exceptional achievement and distinction supporting the university.

Ron had a distinguished career at UWL from 1975-2006, serving as professor, director of the River Studies Center, associate dean of the College of Science and Allied Health and interim provost twice.

Jane had a distinguished career at Western Technical College as an instructor in the Business Division from 1975-2002, serving as program head of the Business Technology Department from 1994-2000.

In 2001, the Radas received the UWL Chancellor's Award and established the Rada Distinguished Alumnus Award, which honors recent to mid-career alums for contributions to their profession and communities.





(LILLI) MINOR GETS MAJOR AWARD

Senior is National Student Employee of the Year

Lilli Minor's resume got a major boost just in time for spring graduation. The senior studying public health and community health education was named National Student Employee of the Year in April for her work as a peer health advocate. The National Student Employment Association honor came via nominations nationwide to identify the most outstanding student employee. "My initial reaction was just shock and pride," says Minor, a Hartford native. "This job has been my favorite part of my college life, and to be recognized for the work that I do helping others is incredible. It feels surreal to be graduating soon and to end my time at UWL in such a positive way."



A view of the fieldhouse project from the bleachers of Roger Harring Stadium at Veterans Memorial Field Sports Complex.

A FIELDHOUSE — FINALLY

Construction begins in September

After nearly six years of planning, the new campus fieldhouse received State Building Commission approval Feb. 27. Construction will begin in September with grand opening in August 2022.

No state tax dollars will be used for the estimated \$49 million project east of Roger Harring Stadium. It's funded through program revenue supported borrowing and program revenue cash.

The project allows UWL to keep pace with continued growth in campus athletic and recreational programs, as well as the Exercise and Sport Science Department. The facility will relieve Mitchell Hall congestion and increase instructional space.



THEY'RE DISTINGUISHED

ALUMNI AWARDS HONOR SIX

Alumni from five decades have earned top awards bestowed by the UWL Alumni Association for distinguished service and successful careers. The alumni were planning to return to campus in September but due to COVID-19 the event has been postponed to March 5 and 6, 2021. Recipients will participate in a panel at 2 p.m.

Friday, March 5, in the Stzrelczyk Great Hall, Cleary Alumni & Friends Center.

An Alumni Awards Brunch and Ceremony is planned for 9 a.m. Saturday,

March 6, in The Bluffs, Student Union. Tickets are \$25 and will be available online beginning Jan. 1, 2021.

2020 **UWL** DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

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.



Michael McGinley, '82

- Revered for a dedicated career in animal health, improving the lives of animals by preventing disease and championing more effective vaccines and drugs.
- President of Biologicals & Pharmaceuticals, Heska Corp.
- Bachelor's in microbiology. Master's and doctorate from Iowa State University. Advanced management program at Harvard University.



James Burkhart, '68

- Internationally recognized scholar in radon science and leader in developing high-quality radon measurement equipment to reduce radon-induced lung cancer.
- Professor emeritus in the Physics Department at the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs.
- Bachelor's in physics and math. Master's and doctorate from UW-Milwaukee.

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.



Kara Pennoyer, '06

- Respected leader in state government, including advisor to the Wisconsin governor and his chief of staff on planning, policy development and problem resolutions, along with overseeing numerous internal teams.
- Deputy Chief of Staff for Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers.
- Bachelor's in political science and communication studies. Master's from University of Illinois Chicago.

Parker Distinguished Multicultural Alumni Award

Recognizes outstanding alumni who have contributed significantly to the improvement of multicultural understanding on campus and in their careers. History Professor Emeritus James Parker initiated the award in 1997.



Jennifer Miller, '70

- Renowned career working with low-income, poverty stricken or abused persons; worked to revitalize neighborhoods in Rock County, Wisconsin, and Chicago.
- Retired but remains active volunteering for the Heartland Alliance for Human Rights and Human Needs.
- Bachelor's in history and English.

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.



Penny Kroening, '85

- National award-winning leader in empowering kids to live physically active lifestyles by promoting physical literacy using creativity, design and integrated arts into lessons; 2016 SHAPE America Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year.
- Executive director of the Wisconsin Health and Physical Education Association.
- Bachelor's in physical education with a concentration in adaptive physical education. Master's from Carroll University.



Steven Olson, '85

- Respected educator with a reputation for putting students first, while leading with integrity; recently facilitated a five-year district strategic plan resulting in a mission statement of "Enter With Promise. Leave With Purpose."
- Superintendent of Community High School Dist. 155 in Crystal Lake, Illinois.
- Bachelor's in broadfield social studies. Master's from Northern Illinois University. Superintendent Endorsement from Aurora University.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COVID-19 UPDATE FROM THE UWL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

As we continue with social distancing, it becomes more and more apparent how much we need the support of our family, friends and fellow alumni.

This is an extraordinary time in history. I would have never thought we would be planning virtual activities to engage our alumni instead of meeting face-to-face. I, for one, am ready to gather with alumni, friends and family, but we need to be patient.

Our board and staff teams continue looking at new and different ways to keep you connected to your alma mater. Watch your

email and our website for more details. Make sure we have your correct info by completing: uwlax.edu/go/alum-email.

Most important, keep yourself and families healthy and safe!

Until we meet again, warm regards,

Janie Morgan, '86 & '86

Executive Director, UWL Alumni Association

Love UWL? Keep in touch: uwlax.edu/go/alum-email.

Special rate for a special class — and all alums

With the many COVID-19 disruptions for the Class of '20, the UWL Alumni Association is offering special rates on membership —

Class of 2020 alums:

Get lifetime Membership for **\$20.20!** (Regularly \$450)

All alums:

Annual single membership is only **\$20!** (Regularly \$40.)

Get both great deals at: uwlax.edu/alumni/membership/joinrenewcontribute



Lacrosse inaugural varsity season ends after 6 games

The women's lacrosse team played six games before its inaugural season was canceled due to COVID-19. The Eagles played their inaugural game at Carroll University Feb. 29 that featured freshman Anna Davis scoring the Eagles' first goal ever. UWL earned its first win with a 18-9 victory at Anderson University March 8. UWL played a pair of home games at Veterans Memorial Field Sports Complex before the season was called with a 1-5 record. Lacrosse is UWL's 21st varsity sport, including 12th for women.

Freshman Anna Davis, who scored UWL's first lacrosse goal ever, also led the team in goals, shots and shots on goal. Jim Lund photo.

Winter titles, spring seasons canceled

It was a season of dashed hopes — for both winter and spring sports. While winter sports had completed their competition, teams advancing to nationals didn't get to compete with the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Following that, hope for spring sports melted as fast as the winter snow. UWL seasons snuffed included baseball, softball, lacrosse, outdoor track & field, golf and tennis.

2019-20 WINTER SPORTS

TEAM	WIAC FINISH	NCAA III FINISH
WRESTLING	1ST	CANCELED
MEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING	4TH	---
WOMEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING	1ST	---
MEN'S BASKETBALL	3RD	---
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL	TIED 2ND	NCAA III FIRST ROUND
GYMNASTICS	3RD	* CANCELED
MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD	1ST	CANCELED
WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD	1ST	CANCELED

* NCGA



Roger Haring, '58, is carried on the shoulders of his players following one of three national titles.

ESPN's TOP 150

HARRING NAMED TO NETWORK'S GREATEST COACHES IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Former UWL Head Football Coach Roger Haring is No. 92 on ESPN's list of 150 greatest coaches in college football's 150-year history. A panel of 150 media members, administrators and former players and coaches selected the list.

Haring, '58, started his UWL coaching career in 1969, serving as head coach for 31 years until retiring following the '99 season. His 261-75-7 record included three national championships. His 261 victories ranks 17th at any collegiate level for football, fifth among NCAA III, along with the most in Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference history.

UWL won national titles in 1985 (NAIA), as well as 1992 and 1995 (NCAA III). Haring's teams made 14 playoffs, compiling a 23-11 record. His teams placed first or second in the WIAC 25 times, winning 15 titles. He was WIAC Coach of the Year seven times.



Janus heads up gridiron squad

A native of Lake Zurich, Illinois, will lead the Eagles as UWL's 14th head football coach this fall. Matt Janus, who completed his third year as UWL's defensive coordinator in 2019, took over in February following a search to replace Mike Schmidt. In March, Janus completed top coaching positions by naming Bryan Whitehead defensive coordinator and Michael McGuire offensive coordinator. The Eagles kick off at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, Saturday, Sept. 5.

POWER ON

COVID-19 didn't stop athletic training

Even though UWL teams didn't play their spring seasons due to COVID-19, the athletic training and sports performance center staffs continued to assist student-athletes and coaches. Once the conference canceled the spring season in mid-March, all competitions were nixed, along with athletic-related activities and practices.

"We are using email, text and video calls to update information and rehab and progressions to keep them moving forward," explained Assistant Athletic Director of Athletic Training Services and Sports Performance Joel Luedke. "A lot of information is sent via

email to provide the teams, but has links to videos for demonstrations, etc."

Luedke says student-athletes connected with the athletic training and SPC staffs with questions to help them better understand goals. Staff provided bodyweight and movement skills training to help teams progress.

The staffs worked closely with coaches to get more sport-related activities out to help athletes stay in shape and ready for play. Luedke says they mentored soft tissue work, such as foam rolling, to address issues they run out of time for in the year.



Kay (Bertelsen) Taylor, '57 & '68, waves to the crowd during the halftime of the UWL vs. UW-Eau Claire game that honored former basketball coach Rollo Taylor, '56. Jim Lund photo.

Coach Taylor remembered for his impact

More than 150 people attended a spaghetti dinner culminating a celebration of Basketball Coach Rollo Taylor, '56. Men's basketball alums returned for alumni weekend during the UWL vs. UW-Eau Claire in Mitchell Hall Feb. 22. Alums were honored during halftime, along with a program remembering Taylor's legacy. The day concluded with an end-of-season dinner reminiscent of those Rollo and his wife, Kay (Bertelsen) Taylor, '57 & '68, hosted for his freshman teams. The Taylor family established an endowment in Rollo's name to support men's basketball. The fund hit more than \$33,000 by the dinner. The family hopes to grow the fund to \$100,000. Donate by emailing foundation@uwlax.edu.

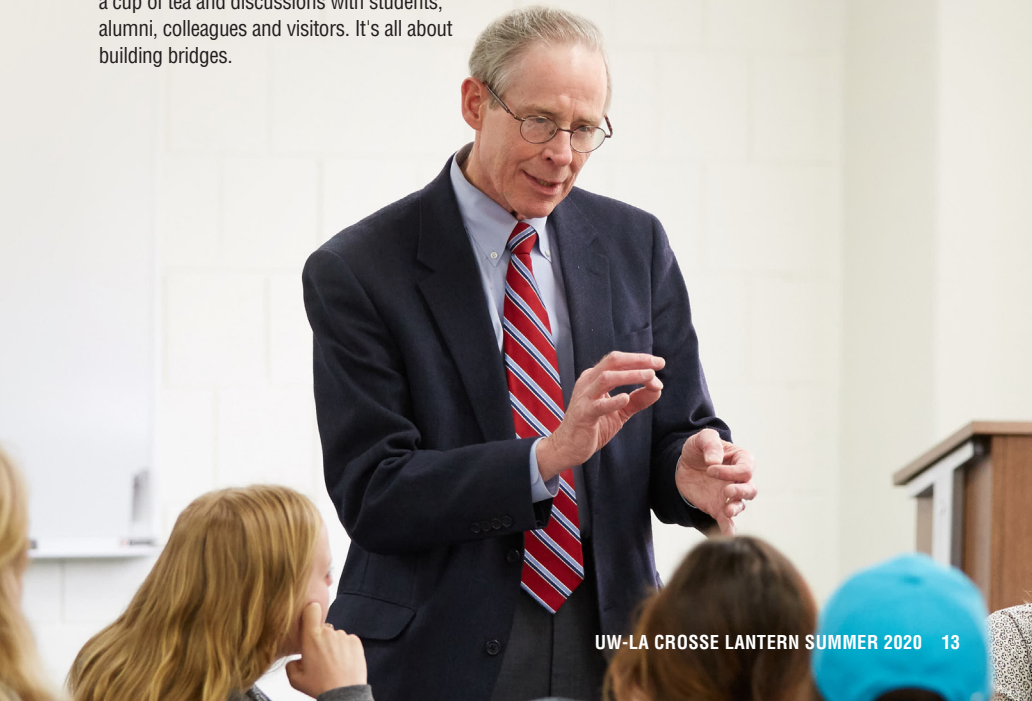


The athletic training room was quiet during the spring sports season, but training went on using email, text and video to keep student-athletes moving forward.

GARY'S FAVES | GARY GILMORE

Professor and Director of Graduate Community Health and Public Health Programs
At UWL since: 1974 | College majors: Biology and public health

- **Favorite class to teach:** Undergraduate and Graduate Epidemiology. In my 50th year of public health practice, now more than ever, we all need to make a difference personally and professionally by doing our part to foster the health and well-being of those around us. Public health enables me to do so each and every day.
- **Class you'd like to retake:** Communicable Disease Prevention and Control at my alma mater, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. The inter-disciplinary class was taught by Dr. Gaylord Anderson, Founding Dean of the School of Public Health. We used the fourth edition of his textbook as a grounding point, relying on discussion and problem-solving throughout the semester.
- **Favorite spot at UWL:** In the Union having a cup of tea and discussions with students, alumni, colleagues and visitors. It's all about building bridges.
- **Favorite pastime when not working:** Any project at home, inside or out — different types of creativity and accomplishments in a country setting.
- **Hobbies:** Reading and discussing hard-copy biographies, other non-fiction literature.
- **Favorite places to visit:** In-country: Twin Cities; New York City; Mount Pleasant, South Carolina: Adult children and grandchildren. Out-of-country: United Kingdom and the Scandinavian countries. Treasuring our roots and global friends and colleagues.
- **Looking forward:** I love the journey. Interacting with and learning from others in unique parts of the U.S. and world with my wife, Elizabeth, for 49 years. We share unique insights and vantage points that otherwise might be missed.



Jay Gatsby was right — you can repeat the past.

From vintage cereal boxes to glass soda bottles and arcade video games, companies are reviving products and packaging of old, tugging at the strings of society's nostalgia.

“We’ve reached a point where it’s easier for a company to restart something that has a latent memory than to invest in something new and untried,” explains Dan Wallace, an associate lecturer in the UWL Marketing Department. “Brands can’t hide behind clever advertising anymore. They have to have utility, and they have to have a positive customer experience, a positive memory, tied to them.”

Wallace is the co-author of “The Physics of Brand,” a 2016 book exploring why brands exist and how customer experience contributes to their success. He’s a frequent source in Twin Cities business articles.

Building upon established principles of “customer experience” marketing, Wallace and his co-authors argue that memory — not catchy slogans or multimillion-dollar ad campaigns — is the driving force behind customers’ decisions.

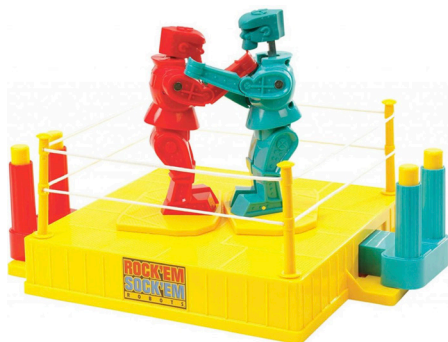
As they write in the book: “Brands are screaming at an audience that is frequently distracted as they tap into a galaxy of information from the smartphone in their pockets and purses. And amid all this noise, people make decisions based on all of their experiences with a brand.

“Many positive memories with many people,” they conclude, “lead to brand energy, sales and profits.”

So it’s no surprise companies, increasingly, are rolling out retro products and vintage packaging.

Marketing & Memories

NOSTALGIA A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND BRANDS THAT ENDURE





Dan Wallace

These strategies allow older generations to reconnect with their childhood, with a past that now seems idyllic, and younger generations to experience trends they missed. The brands also provide a sense of normalcy in the unpredictable time of COVID-19.

“People are naturally curious about the past, especially when the current situation is troubling,” Wallace says. “The future looks risky, and the past looks safe.”

Not every brand can pull this off.

Appeals to nostalgia work best for name brands with popular products, products that have built-in flair and emotional depth, Wallace says.

Retro video games are perfect for this because they tend to conjure cherished memories: Friday nights with childhood friends, too much pizza and a greasy joystick.

Hamburger Helper on the other hand . . .

“It’s harder to make companies like Hamburger Helper a nostalgic brand, just because of the functional attributes,” Wallace says. “You need to have those emotional components, too.”

Then there are brands that never truly fade, that evolve with the times while never losing touch with their soul — the thing that first made them popular.

Many iconic brands have managed to not just survive but thrive in this way. And at a certain point, Wallace notes, companies reap the benefits of consistently delivering positive experiences, as customers become their best brand ambassadors.

“Take something like the Mario Bros. video games,” he says. “You have parents who played that as a first-generation video game when they were kids, and now they’re reliving their childhood by introducing it to their children. I, personally, always thought the game was quirky and weird. But maybe that’s why it’s so memorable.”



The images of COVID-19



A PANDEMIC

RESPONSE

Campus
adjusts to
new normal

Spring break quickly became a week away from campus to a half-semester away. By the end of March, classes moved online for the rest of the semester. Residence halls emptied. Campus got quiet. Really quiet.

As the university helped students move from campus and prepare for classes online, it also adjusted to faculty and staff working entirely off campus. Faculty worked hard to change over to online instruction while student support service staff discovered unique ways to assist students.

Here's a look at how UWL faculty, staff and alumni are getting through the unchartered times.

Teaching from afar

Faculty, staff get creative to engage students remotely

Masks designed from paper bags. Outreach to local nonprofits. Remote connections to cutting-edge software.

This is how UWL faculty were engaging students in remote or online formats in the age of COVID-19.

"Teaching online takes months of planning and preparation, and we had to make the change in just a couple weeks," says Kristin Koepke, director of UWL's Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning (CATL).

"This was an emergency situation where we had to do things out of the ordinary," she explains. "But there's been

a lot of creative brainstorming, and faculty are embracing the opportunity to help our students as best we can."

That meant different approaches for different courses and disciplines.

In Geography and Earth Science, faculty found a way for students to conduct lab work. With help from Information Technology Services, they developed a system for students to remotely log into university computers, allowing them to access professional-quality GIS software.

Students use it for tracking changes to urban areas and the natural environment over time, or creating maps to display data, such as precise election results.

Continued on next page

Colin Belby, professor of geography and earth science, headed to Bohemian Valley in rural Coon Valley to take students on a virtual field trip for his online classes. Belby used a GoPro to record labs for his Earth Surface Processes and Landforms class.



“There are a lot of free GIS programs online, but we wanted our students to use the higher quality software,” explains Assistant Professor John Kelly. “Those free programs wouldn’t have given them the full benefit or the same hands-on experience they’d have at school, or in the workplace.”

One problem stemmed with faculty not there in person. “It’s harder to grab ahold of the computer and

Associate Professor Christa Kiersch’s human resources students were supposed to design an in-person HR training program. Instead, they adapted theirs online.

Other students under Kiersch created a package of online HR tools for local nonprofits. They presented their ideas during a virtual meeting.

“I hope they’re able to see how the slightest change in an expression we give a mask can change the entire look,” he says. “It doesn’t have to be a big change or dramatic facial gesture to communicate to an audience what you want to say. Also, I hope this shows them that, sometimes, these things happen very quickly, and they don’t have to angst over every little detail.”



Christa Kiersch



Kristin Koepke



John Kelly

help them with whatever problem they’re running into,” notes Professor Colin Belby, chair of the department.

Students also didn’t benefit from working shoulder-to-shoulder in a lab, sharing ideas and offering feedback on each other’s research.

In other departments, faculty also rose to the challenge.

In Theatre Arts, students couldn’t access fabrics, materials and equipment in the costume shop. Instead, Professor Joe Anderson’s students concocted costumes from objects around the house: tape, glue, staples, nails, screws, egg cartons, cardboard, pipe cleaners and more.

In another assignment, Anderson asked students to craft a decorative mask out of a paper bag and whatever else sparks their imagination.

In total, faculty moved more than 2,500 in-person courses online in just two weeks.

CATL provided the necessary support, but Koepke credited the smoothness of the transition to staff and faculty.

“I think our university did a really great job of being proactive,” she says. “We’re doing our best to be ahead of, and stay ahead of, the game.”



La Crosse Normal President Fassett E. Cotton, seated in the center, organized and led the school band. With many men headed to war, there weren't enough interested from the Normal School in 1918 to form a band, so Cotton recruited young men from Central High School and formed a group of about 40 musicians. Here they are posing for a practice session in the spring on the campus grounds in front of the unfinished physical education building, which was eventually named Wittich Hall. While construction started on the building in 1916, it was stopped during WWI and the building opened in 1920. The university closed in mid-October 1918 due to the Spanish flu epidemic.

Learning from history

Archival holdings reveal Spanish flu message similar to today

Schools closed. Church services canceled. UWL students sent home at mid-semester.

While it sounds like what happened during COVID-19, it actually happened in La Crosse more than 100 years ago as part of the Spanish flu pandemic from 1918-20.

“As with other happenings of the past, even though conditions have changed over time, especially in regards to globalization and medical technology, it is still helpful to study the responses to and effects of similar events,” says Laura Godden, '07, a historian and archivist with the Murphy Library Special Collections and Area Research Center.

Godden researched the impact of the Spanish flu in

the area for the La Crosse County Historical Society's Discover the Silent City cemetery tour in 2018.

Godden says about 30,000 people lived in La Crosse at the time. It fared better than neighboring counties because of closures and stay-at-home orders.

The La Crosse County death rate for the pandemic was only 7.6 per 1,000 residents, compared with Vernon County's 33.8 and Trempealeau County's 15.4.

One reason for the relatively low death rate, according to accounts of modern experts Godden researched, was the progressive public health department at the state and local levels.

Godden says this historical example can serve as an important reminder of why government and health leaders supported a Safer-at-Home order for COVID-19 — before seeing devastating effects. History also shows

many locations experienced a second wave of Spanish flu infections and deaths when relaxing social distancing standards too soon.

“That is something that we should be aware of and potentially brace ourselves for in the future,” Godden says.

Studying history, Godden finds, can put an uncertain time into perspective. “It can also help society make more informed decisions and recover psychologically,” she explains. “Just knowing that the world successfully recovered from a large pandemic in the modern era, for example, can provide hope that we can do it again.”

Godden adds that being aware of the long-term effects and how people dealt with them following the end of the Spanish flu outbreak could provide guidance to a smoother COVID-19 recovery.



Brittany Jacob, '09, left, usually works on creating costumes at a Milwaukee company that makes mascots for the Brewers' Famous Racing Sausages and others. Amid COVID-19, Jacob and her team are making masks and face shields.

From mascots to masks

Usually, Brittany Jacob, '09, creates costumes for the Brewers' Famous Racing Sausages and other characters. But with mascots in low demand amid COVID-19, the theatre major and her team have pivoted to making masks and face shields — badly needed in southeastern Wisconsin.

"Mascots bring a smile to people's faces, because they're cool to look at," notes Jacob. "But to send something out that helps doctors and nurses, it's a cool feeling. At least for me, going to work every day, it's very inspirational."

In her eight years with Olympus Group, a digital printing and mascot company in Milwaukee, Jacob hasn't seen an all-hands-on-deck endeavor like this. Olympus has received thank-yous

from hospitals, along with inquiries from companies and communities wanting masks of their own.

"I always joked when we were making mascots and worrying about deadlines: It's not life or death. We're not sending organs out or anything," Jacob says. "This is obviously a different situation, and we're trying to provide that relief so people don't get exposed to the virus. It feels good knowing we're doing all we can."

A poultry pandemic paradigm

Ginny Moore, '83, set a good egg-ample once the pandemic set in. The rural Muscoda grad helped around 28 households serve up breakfast and more in rural Richland County.

Moore, executive director of The Richland Hospital Foundation in Richland Center, donated 28 dozen eggs from her farm to the food pantry in Richland Center. It took about 17 days

for her 40 hens to lay the 336 eggs destined to help people start the day off with a hearty breakfast, or added as a needed staple in desserts or other dishes.

Moore typically shares the eggs with family and friends. But with COVID-19 and the safer-at-home order, things just added up for the accountancy major to put them to a different use. "It just seemed like the right time to do something like this," says Moore.



Ginny Moore, '83, with her 28 dozen eggs laid by her 40 hens, prior to taking them to the food pantry in Richland Center.



Peter Thielen, front, works with Tom Mehoke on sequencing of the SARS-CoV-2 genome, the virus that causes COVID-19, at the Johns Hopkins Hospital molecular diagnostics laboratory. Thielen says his time at UWL was a major component of his future success. When he finished his bachelor's and started grad school, he came to appreciate his UWL education even more.

Cracking coronavirus code

As world awaits vaccine, alum sequences virus' genome

Alum Peter Thielen, '05, is on the front lines of efforts to understand — and ultimately defeat — the virus causing COVID-19.

The molecular biologist at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland, is sequencing the genome of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

“When a sample comes through and is diagnosed for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, we take the remainder of that sample and sequence the entire genome,” he explains. “We’re looking at tests from as many patients as possible, so we can observe genome mutations and track the evolutionary changes that occur when it passes through large numbers of people.”

Early results show the SARS-CoV-2 genome has only a small number of

mutations since being

identified in China late in 2019.

The version on the U.S. West Coast appears to have been imported by a traveler from China, while versions on the East Coast likely originated in Europe. It’s an important distinction, Thielen says, because that information is used to establish public health responses.

Thielen’s is sequencing as many SARS-CoV-2 genomes as possible, so researchers can better understand the virus’ genetic diversity and develop an effective vaccine. Even though teams are working fast, a vaccine is probably at least a year away.

But there’s good news: Because SARS-CoV-2 is mutating more slowly than viruses like influenza, it may take only a single vaccine to prevent it. It would be more like chickenpox and less like flu.

“At this point, it is unlikely that a seasonal vaccine would be required,” Thielen says. “But the only way we’ll know

for sure is if the scientific

community performs the proper clinical trials.”

Back in La Crosse, Associate Professor of Biology Anne Galbraith says the world is fortunate to have someone like Thielen working on its behalf. She worked with Thielen in both the classroom and her research lab when he was an undergrad 15 years ago.

“I remember Pete as just a good, smart, funny person, and he’s clearly moved up the ranks to where he is now,” she says. “I know a lot of people are suffering and will suffer because of the virus, but it makes me happy to know that someone like Pete is out there helping battle this.”

Galbraith says there are many other alums making a difference, too.

“I know students who have gone on to become doctors and other health care providers, who are doing the dangerous work of treating patients,” she says. “There’s a whole bunch of UWL alums who are all over the front

SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN GARNERS \$18+ MILLION

Students are benefitting from more than 100 new funds established in the UWL Foundation's "Share the La Crosse Experience" scholarship campaign. The drive wrapped up in December 2019 with more than \$18 million raised for scholarships. The drive started in 2013 with dreams to raise \$15 million by 2019. You can still support UWL! Visit www.uwlax.edu/foundation

150+
GIFTS OF \$25K+

3 LARGEST
GIFTS

\$2 MILLION
\$1.2+ MILLION
\$500K

\$30+
MILLION
FOUNDATION'S ASSETS



Doug DeMuth, '69, who endowed scholarships for members of Delta Sigma Pi, granting up to 15 scholarships a year

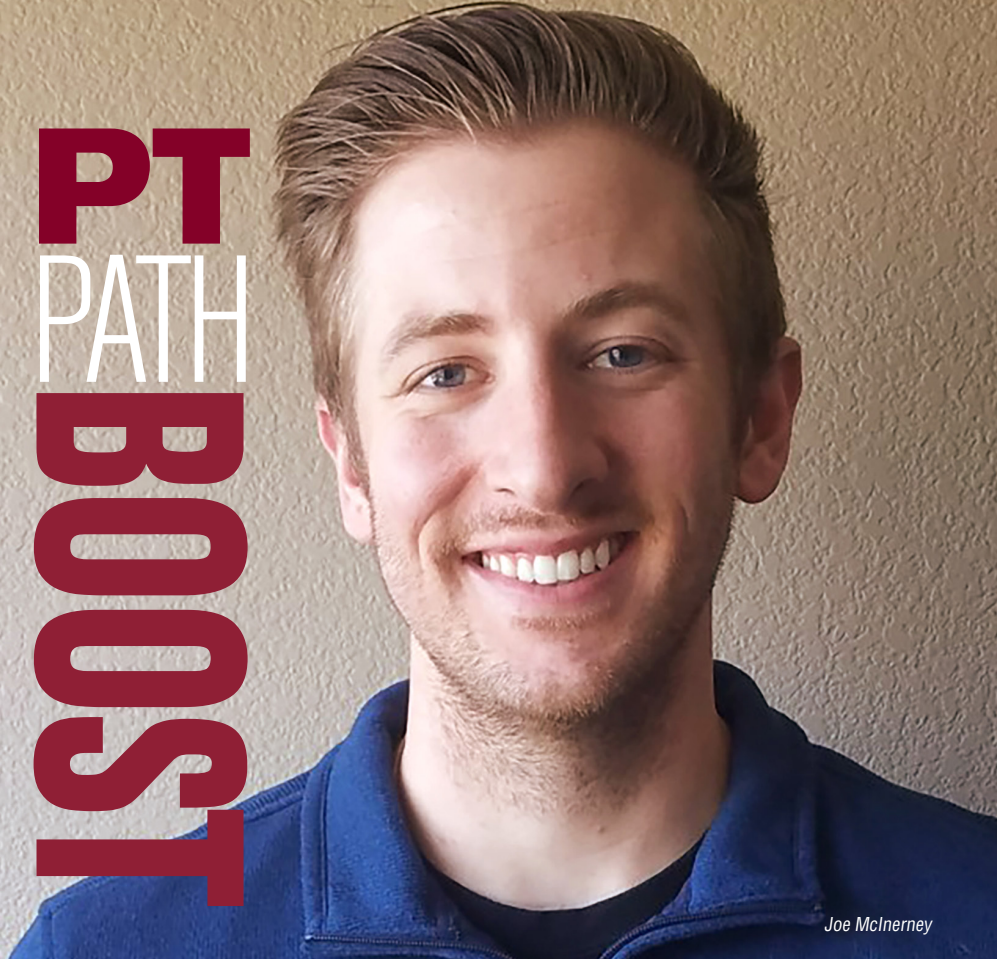
"It is heartwarming that something as significant and important to me 50 years ago is still significant and important to the student body today. As I am wrapping up my professional career, if I can do something to help those people in the same field I have been in my entire life, that is rewarding to me."



Donney Moroney, '97, set up a pass-through scholarship fund with a three to five year commitment of \$1,050 annually. The Donney Moroney COVE Leadership Scholarship assists juniors or seniors demonstrating commitment to social justice through their leadership and involvement in student organizations.

Love UWL? Keep in touch: uwlax.edu/go/alum-email.

PT PATH BOOST



Joe McInerney

THORMAN FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTS STUDENTS OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

For UWL graduate student Joe McInerney, the road to graduate school wasn't easy.

McInerney started thinking about a health career in high school because of his personal interest in sports and weightlifting. Subsequent job shadowing of physical

therapists during college led him to apply to UWL's Physical Therapy graduate program, a competitive one that only accepts 45 students annually out of hundreds.

McInerney remembers coming close to giving up when he didn't get into the program on his second try.

But working as a rehab technician at Gundersen Health System, McInerney saw physical therapists daily. The image of himself in the position wouldn't go away.

"I just kinda threw all my eggs in the basket and gave it one more shot," he says.

His perseverance paid off. On his third try McInerney landed a spot, distinguishing himself as one who doesn't give up. His story of overcoming adversity helped him secure a UWL Foundation scholarship, specifically targeted at students who do just that.

McInerney earned the Thorman Family Pay It Forward Scholarship for Physical Therapy in spring 2019, which provided \$1,500.

When McInerney got the news it completely reaffirmed his commitment to PT. And the name on the scholarship, "Thorman," made it feel like an even greater achievement.

Michele Thorman, a retired professor and long-time director of UWL's program, is known worldwide for contributions to the

profession, including receiving the Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association's Otto A. Cordero Lifetime Achievement Award.

Thorman says the scholarship name honors her parents, hard-working farmers from northeastern Iowa who paid for her college. "I am not able to pay them back, but I can pay it forward," explains Thorman.

“Being associated with a scholarship with her name on it means a lot”

— Joe McInerney

Thorman hopes her award makes the road to a degree easier — particularly

for students overcoming adversity.

"On a good day this program is hard, but when students are dealing with a personal strain or health issue, it can be even more so," she notes.

McInerney is glad he persevered. McInerney, who earned his PT degree in May, is glad he will make a difference in someone's life.

"I enjoy the connection you can make with an individual — you get to watch them grow and get back to doing something they love," he says. "That is why I got into the field. I love it.

McInerney is particularly grateful to Thorman. "If I can make half as big of an impact on the profession as she made, I will consider myself a champion," he says.

Michele Thorman, retired director of UWL's Physical Therapy program, started the Thorman Family Pay It Forward Scholarship supporting PT students who have overcome adversity. Thorman also served on the UWL Foundation Board of Directors for nine years and chaired its scholarship committee.





Students in the Doctorate of Physical Therapy program work with Ronald Erickson, a community member prior to the Safer at Home order. Erickson is a participant in EXPAND (Exercise Program for Adults with Neurological Disorders), a UWL course that makes a big difference in the lives of community members with neurological disorders.

BUILDING COMMUNITY Students help area residents, city reach goals

Whether helping the City of La Crosse on going carbon neutral or making life easier for those with neurological disorders, UWL students are connecting with the community in important ways.

“The biggest benefit we see from this collaboration is when students can focus on their interests and see the impact it can have on the broader community,” says Lewis Kuhlman, environmental planner for the City of La Crosse.

Student researchers engage in 2050 carbon neutral goal

When the City of La Crosse announced a commitment to using 100 percent renewable energy and becoming carbon neutral by 2050, UWL undergraduates stepped up. Margot Higgins, associate lecturer of environmental sustainability, assigned students to research successful programs nationwide going carbon neutral such as urban forestry, urban gardening, toxic sites and redevelopment, bicycle share, transit, chemical use and energy use.

After presenting findings to city officials in December, a smaller student group continued researching carbon neutral ideas for summer and fall 2020.

UWL students Kelly Flynn and Joey Rampolla examined how other communities have grown, managed, and expanded community gardens, providing ideas to test and implement locally. Changes could help reduce the large carbon footprint of food processing, says Kuhlman.

“If our citizens can reduce their dependence on fertilizers,

herbicides, pesticides, refrigeration, and shipping, the city can make a lot of progress toward reducing that footprint,” notes Kuhlman.



Margot Higgins, associate lecturer of Environmental Sustainability, assigned her students the task of researching successful programs to contribute to the City of La Crosse's plans to go carbon neutral.

UWL is regularly engaging projects with wider community benefits. Christa Kiersch, associate professor of management, and students in her Human Resources Management classes collaborated to address non-profit human resources challenges in partnership with Great Rivers United Way during spring 2019. Then, a student subgroup provided an overall needs analysis and research-based tools for Great Rivers United Way partners to address their HR needs, including developing an online 'HR Toolbox' for local nonprofits.

The student projects were supported by donations

through the UWL Foundation, as well as UWL's Office of Undergraduate Research & Creativity.

EXPAND-ing reach to those with neurological disorders

During a semester-long course, UWL Doctorate of Physical Therapy graduate students have worked one-on-one with community members with neurological disorders. The students developed aerobic, resistance and balance-coordination training activities and put the plans into action.

The course, EXPAND (Exercise Program for Adults with Neurological Disorders), has made a big difference. About 95% of EXPAND's clients improve in each training area over the duration of the program, according to course faculty.

“I can still function and I can still drive my own car safely. It [the EXPAND program] has been the difference between me

being in a rest home and being in my own home,” says Ronald Erickson, community member and EXPAND client with Parkinson's disease. “My life has been a lot better. I am a firm believer in this EXPAND program.”

While EXPAND is free, it is only available by referral and carries limited availability based on students and supervisors involved each semester. Since its inception, clients and their families have donated to establish student scholarships. Make a donation at: uwlax.edu/foundation.

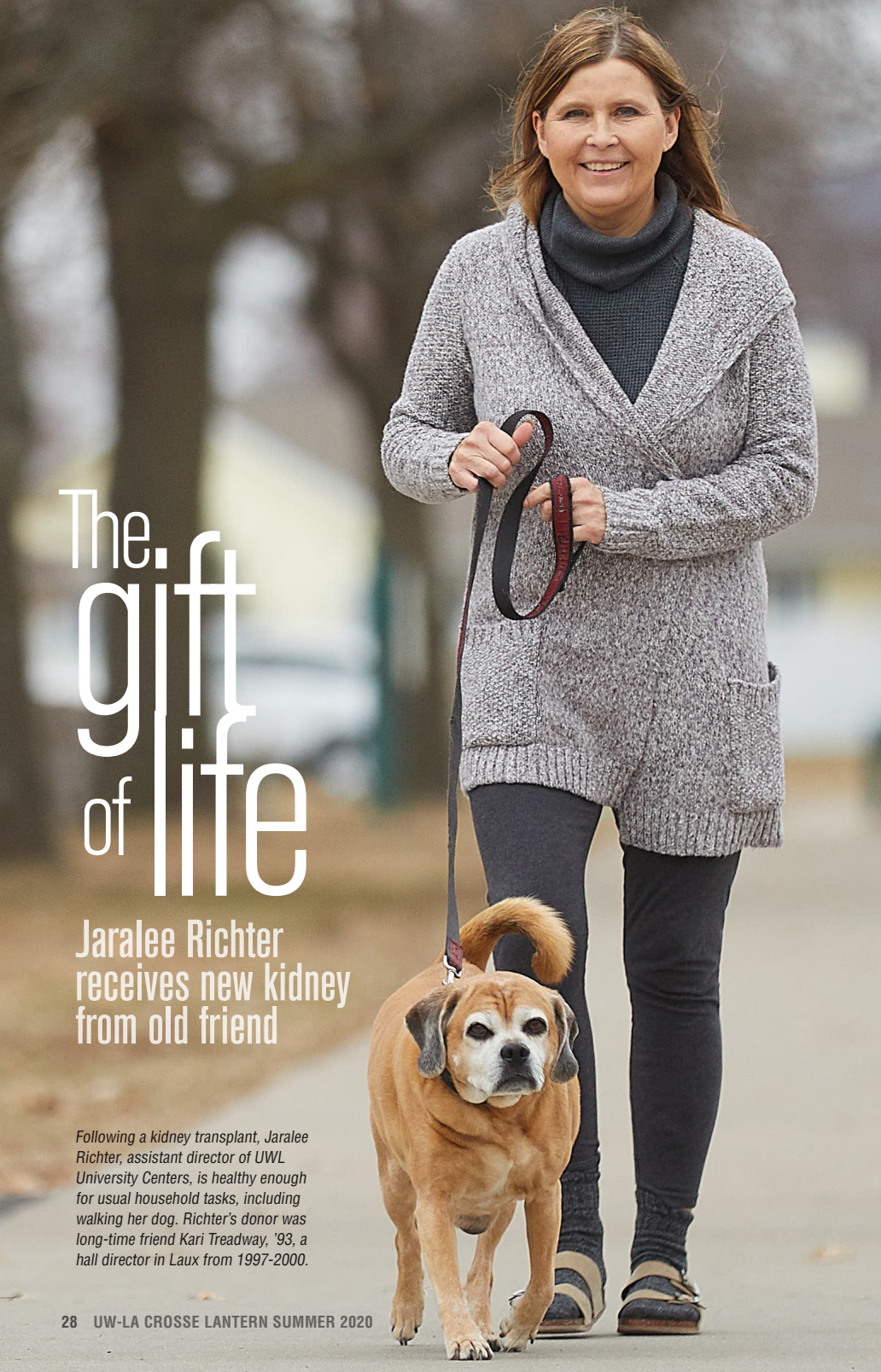
Watch the video on EXPAND at: uwlax.edu/go/expand

Engaging the community

It's easier to link with UWL. Lisa Klein, '97, is UWL's new community engagement coordinator, helping organizations link with students through internships, research, volunteering, service-learning and more. Connect with her at uwlax.edu/info/community.



UWL Associate Professor Christa Kiersch, right, meets with a team of students, including Alexa Thurmes, doing HR management outreach to La Crosse non-profits.



The gift of life

Jaralee Richter
receives new kidney
from old friend

Following a kidney transplant, Jaralee Richter, assistant director of UWL University Centers, is healthy enough for usual household tasks, including walking her dog. Richter's donor was long-time friend Kari Treadway, '93, a hall director in Laux from 1997-2000.

Jaralee Richter has a new lease on life, and an old friend to thank for it.

Richter, assistant director of UWL University Centers, was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease in late 2018.

On her worst days, Richter spent hours in bed, hooked to a dialysis machine, too frail to stand. She had heart-to-heart talks with her family, in case she didn't survive.



Kari Treadway, '93

Then came a ray of light. Kari Treadway, her friend of 25 years, volunteered to donate one of her kidneys. The women were a near-perfect match.

"I just felt this huge sense of relief like, 'Wow, I'm going to get my life back,'" Richter recalls. "It was such a precious gift to even dream about receiving."

Post-surgery, Richter is healthy enough for usual household tasks: walking the

dog, preparing meals, cleaning the house. Her hospital visits are less frequent and she's reducing her medication.

"Kidney transplantation is not a cure," she notes. "But it's the closest thing to normal that I could ever hope for."

Richter, whose husband, Troy, is an '89 grad and assistant director of Residence Life, knew something was wrong in December 2018 when she noticed her urine was dark. The darkness turned out to be blood, and the cause turned out to be anti-Glomerular Basement Membrane disease. Richter's kidneys were struggling to remove waste from her body. Eventually, the disease would be fatal.

Through many hospital visits, many complications and many dark days at home, Richter leaned on her faith.

"I didn't want to die," she explains. "But I accepted that there are worse things in life than dying."

Richter clung to hopes of a transplant. Rather than wait for a deceased donor, she turned to family and friends. One of Richter's sisters was a strong match, but doctors had found an even better candidate.

"Right after Christmas, Dec. 26, [2019] I called Jaralee and told her I had a present for her," says Treadway, who first

met Richter in the early 1990s. Treadway, a 1993 UWL alumna, was hall director of Laux Hall from 1997-2000.

"Jaralee kept telling me that I could back out at any time, but I wanted to assure her that I wasn't going to," Treadway says. "I was truly honored and fortunate to be able to do it."

Two months later, at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, the women hugged before being wheeled away for surgery. The doctors described Richter's new kidney as "perfect," even if Treadway had one apology.

"We joke about this all the time ... knowing she has to go to the bathroom a lot because of me," Treadway says. "I gave her a very active kidney."

Richter and Treadway are recovering at home, taking added precautions with COVID-19, but feeling better each day.

They were friends before, but they now share an unbreakable bond. One will always carry a piece of the other, a piece that saved her life.

"It's humbling to think I'm walking around with her kidney in my body," Richter says. "Thinking that she was willing to give up a part of her to make me healthy ... it's made me appreciate living even more."

UWL student Matthew Wright wants to be a pathologist, studying diseases like the one that has upended our world. But his career goal came long before COVID-19.

faculty on special projects or collaborative research with a \$1,000 stipend. Students can continue the program their second year, bringing Eagle Apprentices to more than 50 annually.

“I love to learn and discover new things, and I want to give back after everything my doctors have done for me,” notes Wright.

Apprentice awarded

Gift supports a student's pathology dream, UWL's recruitment of top students

When he was a child, Wright was diagnosed with syndactyly, a condition that has made his right hand less functional than his left. Wright learned to adapt and never let the condition hold him back. Instead, he emerged as a stand-out student.

Coming on campus in fall 2019, Wright was among 26 students offered a spot in UWL's Eagle Apprentice program. It provides freshmen scholars an opportunity to work side-by-side with UWL

Wright was paired with Biology Professor Sumei Liu, who researches effects of stress on gut functions. Wright is studying a barrier in the gut's inner lining that serves as a first-line of defense. If impaired, pathogens or allergens can get into the body and potentially cause diseases. The research lines up perfectly with Wright's interests, and the experience helps him get one step closer to his career goal in pathology.

Leaving a legacy

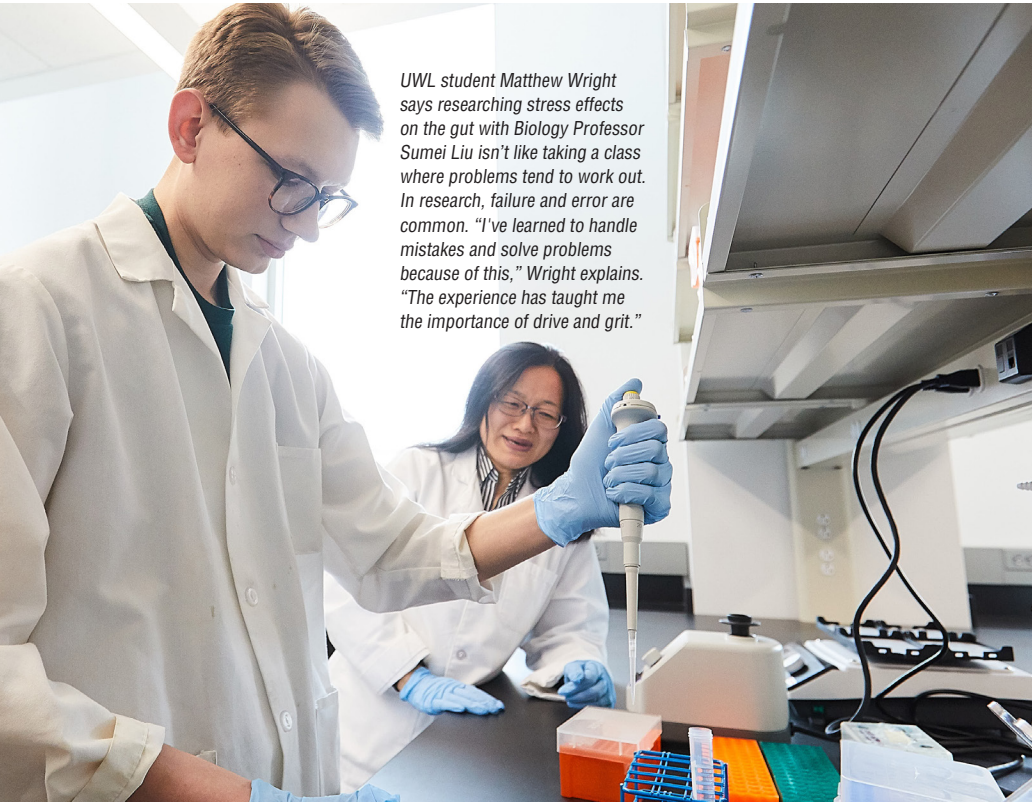
Normally, the Eagle Apprentice program includes 25 incoming students. In fall 2019 it offered one more to Wright. The additional student was possible because of UWL alums, Jerrilyn and Bruce Brewer, who provided additional funds. They say the Eagle Apprentice program fit with their goals of leaving a legacy in education.

The two spent their careers in education. Jerrilyn was a teacher and administrator in higher education. Bruce was a science teacher, activities director and coach at the secondary level. Supporting education is a core value for them and they hope their gift inspires others.

“It is a big decision to commit money — it really is,” says Jerrilyn. “You have to think about it and find something that really hits your



UWL alums Jerrilyn (Jerri) and Bruce Brewer are retired educators from Western Technical College and the Bangor School District, respectively. Their gift supports their value of education. Bruce earned a Bachelor of Science in 1978 and a Master of Education in Professional Development in 1990. Jerrilyn earned a Bachelor of Education in 1970 and a Master of Science Reading in 1986 from UWL. She holds a Doctorate in Education from the University of Minnesota in 1995.



UWL student Matthew Wright says researching stress effects on the gut with Biology Professor Sumei Liu isn't like taking a class where problems tend to work out. In research, failure and error are common. "I've learned to handle mistakes and solve problems because of this," Wright explains. "The experience has taught me the importance of drive and grit."

“Eagle Apprenticeships are part of our successful student recruitment strategy and provide deserving students an experience not available elsewhere.”

— Corey Sjoquist | UWL Director of Admissions

heart. This hits our heart and it makes us feel good about the future.”

The two felt that feeling when they met Wright in his lab this spring. Walking out of the lab and back to their car, they knew they made the right decision.

“He was just a great person and so appreciative,”

recalls Bruce. “We both left feeling very touched.”

Wright says he wouldn't have the research experience without the Brewers. Being selected an Eagle Apprentice was the main reason he chose UWL.

“I was given an opportunity that I could never have anywhere else,” Wright

explains. “It really made me feel like the campus cares, and they want everyone here to be someone special.”

SUPPORT THE PROGRAM

To support the Eagle Apprentice Program, contact the UWL Foundation at 877.895.3863 or foundation@uwlax.edu



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