



December 12, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

The La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) is proud to support funding for the Prairie Springs Science Center Completion Project at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse (UWL). The Chamber is a member driven, non-profit dedicated to elevating and strengthening the business community to enhance the quality of life in Greater La Crosse. We focus our efforts on talent attraction and retention, professional education, providing small business resources, and collaborating with local and state elected officials. For our area to grow and flourish, our businesses need a talented, trained workforce.

Funding the Prairie Springs Science Center Completion Project – and replacing a 60-year-old science building that leaks when it rains, lacks fire suppression, and ADA accessibility – will increase UWL’s capacity for educating our region’s best science students. The La Crosse Chamber and its area businesses believe that funding the Prairie Springs Science Center Completion Project is essential for driving the local business economy and supporting the growth of science-based industries in the region. By enhancing UW-La Crosse’s STEM programs, the Center will produce a steady pipeline of skilled workers, helping local businesses in sectors like healthcare, biotech, and manufacturing meet their current and future workforce needs. Attracting top talent from neighboring states ensures that companies can recruit qualified professionals locally and retain them in Western Wisconsin while fostering regional economic stability. Supporting the Prairie Springs Science Center Completion Project is an investment in the long-term success of La Crosse's businesses and industries, ensuring sustained growth and competitiveness in the marketplace.

Health care and education are paramount industries in Greater La Crosse, and UWL has forged impressive research and employment partnerships with Mayo Clinic Health System and Emplify Health by Gundersen. In fact, UWL science graduates work in health-care fields throughout Wisconsin. In addition, UWL science-education graduates teach science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in schools throughout our state. UWL science graduates are not limited to health care. They also work at Trane Technologies, Chart Industries, Kwik Trip, City Brewing Company, J.F. Brennan/Brennan Marine in the La Crosse area and beyond. Completing the Prairie Springs Science Center will provide more modern space to better train our workforce of tomorrow and enhance opportunities for research and development in innovative technologies.

The La Crosse Chamber and its area businesses believe that funding the Prairie Springs Science Center Completion Project is crucial to growing the science-based economy of the La Crosse area and in helping our businesses and industries find the talented workers they need now and in the future. We strongly urge support for the completion of this project at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse.

Thank you,

*Beth Franklin*

Beth Franklin

Chief Executive Officer

[beth@lacrossechamber.com](mailto:beth@lacrossechamber.com)

608-784-4880 x 102