



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

CLASS NOTES

OCTOBER 2024

CLASS NOTES SUBMITTED JULY 15 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

'60

Mary (Fiebig) Panke says: "I was delighted to read the "Carrying the Torch" article in the recent Lantern featuring Sharon (Foote) Evers '60 & '65. Surprised, too, since there is rarely news of our '60s era. Kudos to her Olympic fever, donations and passion for sports. I, too, was instilled with a strong value of sports while at UWL and still enjoy biweekly tennis and occasional snow skiing, as well as the more frequent hiking, swimming, etc. Now in my "bonus decades," the UWL experience is still influencing good health and quality of life. Thank you, UWL!"

'79

Jeff Witmer, professor of statistics for Oberlin College in Ohio, was awarded the Chauvenet Prize by the Mathematical Association of America. The award

recognizes authors of outstanding expository articles on mathematical topics.

'02

Todd Novotny has been named vice president of commercial banking for Forte Bank in southeast Wisconsin. In this role, Novotny will establish, develop and manage commercial banking relationships with local business owners and investors to drive financial success. Novotny brings over 20 years of banking experience, having previously served as vice president and business banker for Horicon Bank and Cornerstone Bank in the greater Milwaukee area.

'09

Karyn (Ruhl) Rowe is the foundation marketing director for Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

'14

Melissa Gilbert is an artist with a passion for sharing faith, hope and love through welding metal sculptures and creating paintings in various mediums.

'19

Shannan Hartel is an executive assistant for Lawrence University in Appleton.

Ntxhee Xiong is the Health Professions Pathways Program assistant manager for the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in the Pre-Health Student Resource Center.

'21

Devyn Korish, a senior associate for Hawkins Ash, CPAs in La Crosse, recently passed the CPA exams and obtained his Wisconsin license.

'22

Corianne Johnson received her Master of Public Health degree from Vanderbilt University with a concentration in Epidemiology in May. Her thesis focused on "The Influence of Residential Segregation, Urbanicity, and Population Density on Hepatocellular Carcinoma Incidence among a Low Socioeconomic Population," and she completed her practicum at the Tennessee Department of Health. Johnson will be continu-

ing her epidemiological career at Cumberland Heights, a nonprofit alcohol and drug treatment center, working as a research associate.

'23

Emma Eslinger is a teaching assistant and graduate student (master's and PhD) in the Communication Studies Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Eslinger says, "I am pursuing the career of communication studies professor, and I am thrilled to begin this new chapter!"

'24

Andrew Weber is the guest relations manager at Hotel Indigo in downtown Kansas City. He says he is excited to grow his hospitality management experience within the Great Lakes Management Group, where he began as a part-time front desk agent for the Hampton Inn & Suites in downtown La Crosse.

An Eagle making waves



Natalie Sims, '21, represented her alma mater and her country as a member of Team USA during the Paralympic Games in Paris this summer. A swimmer competing in her third Paralympic Games, Sims advanced to the finals in two events, placing fifth in the S9 100-meter freestyle and sixth in the SM9 200-meter individual medley. In addition to her Paralympic appearances, Sims earned four medals at the Lima 2019 Para Pan American Games, including a gold in the 100-meter freestyle. Sims also recorded a pair of top-four finishes at the Copenhagen 2018 World Para Swimming World Series in Denmark. She credits her time at UWL – especially her final months on campus – for helping her reach new heights. "I was training for Tokyo at that time," she says, "so it challenged me in a lot of ways because I was training with my able-bodied teammates, and so that helped push me a lot.

In Remembrance

Alumni

- 1946 – Ida (Martin) Lowe, Viroqua
 1955 – Gail (Kumm) Cleary, La Crosse
 1955 – Sylvia (Bangsberg) Uber, West Salem
 1956 – Garnet (Viner) Fleming, North Fort Myers, Fla.
 1960 – Ron Patros, Milwaukee
 1961 – Bonne (Fidika) Olson, Onalaska
 1962 – Marilyn Spieth, Sherwood, Wis.
 1964 – Bruce Decheine, Baxter, Minn.
 1964 – Jim Strasser, Pearland, Texas
 1967 – Paul Jacobson, Eau Claire
 1968 – Merlin Ellefson, Onalaska
 1969 – Bill Martell, West Salem
 1971 – Richard Uhler, Federal Way, Wash.
 1972 – Peder Swanson, Viroqua
 1973 – James Michuta, La Crosse
 1974 – Gary Ekern, Holmen
- 1975 – Marilyn (Marketty) Houle, La Crosse
 1975 – Bruce Volden, Tomah
 1976 – John Wieczorek, La Crosse
 1977 – Nancy (Poehling) Haggerty, La Crosse
 1977 – Arthur Mikkelson, Las Vegas
 1979 – Jeff Steindl, Willis, Texas
 1980 – Don Fritsch, La Crosse
 1980 – Leon Shepard, Onalaska
 1993 – Ruth Baker, Baraboo
 2000 – Jason Williams, Verona, Wis.
 2004 – Cyndi (Page) Anliker, Baraboo
 2005 – Julie (Hopper) Holton, Camp Douglas, Wis.
No year listed: Doris (Giemza) Davis, Blair, Wis.
No year listed: Ann Kohl-Re, La Crosse
No year listed: Donald Lee, Wauwatosa, Wis.

Faculty & Staff



Don Fritsch

Don Fritsch died Sept. 6 at age 70, following a six-month battle with glioblastoma. Fritsch, a 1980 and 1993 alumnus of UWL, coached the university's men's cross-country team for 14 seasons, leading the team to NCAA Division II championships in 2001 and 2005. He ended his coaching career at Viterbo University, leading the men's and women's cross-country teams and serving as associate men's and women's track and field coach. Fritsch was inducted into the UWL Wall of Fame in 2015. He is survived by his wife, Sue.



Nancy Haggerty

Nancy Haggerty died Aug. 30. She earned a master's degree in public health from UWL in 1977 and went on to serve as a nurse at the UWL Student Health Center, along with other local health care providers. Haggerty battled health issues most of her life, due in part to a rheumatic fever she had during childhood, which damaged her heart valves. Friends and family say Haggerty never let her medical needs diminish her spirit or her willingness to help others. She is survived by her husband, Tim, two daughters and four grandchildren.



Reid F. Horle

Reid F. Horle died May 14 at age 95. Horle, who received his bachelor's degree in physical education from UWL in 1952, had a long career in higher education. Much of it was spent at UWL, where he served as director of admissions, director of housing, director of placement and career advising, and dean of students. Horle was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce, after almost 70 years of marriage. The couple had three daughters, seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.





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Class Notes Policy:

Class notes and obituaries are published online in January, April, July and October.
The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the month of quarterly posting.

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