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UW-Stevens Point: Alumnus and professional sports administrator to address UW-Stevens Point graduates

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Contact:
(715) 346-2490
urc@uwsp.edu

An alumnus who managed several professional sports teams will address University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point graduates and their families at the spring commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 20.

Robert Whitsitt, a 1977 graduate and former president of the Seattle Seahawks, Portland Trailblazers and Seattle Supersonics, will speak to nearly 1,300 graduates who will earn associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the UW-Stevens Point Health Enhancement Center.

The student speaker at 9:30 a.m. will be Apoorva Sarmal, a French and business administration major from New Delhi, India. Welcoming the new alumni will be Diane Pleuss, a 1974 alumna from Concord, Calif., and Mary Gruenewald, a 1973 and 1978 alumna from Plover.

The 2 p.m. speaker will be Lucy Woerfel, a doctor of audiology graduate from Neenah who also earned her undergraduate degree in communication sciences and disorders at UW-Stevens Point. Kathy and Jerry Trachte, respectively 1985 and 1973 alumni from Plover, will lead the alumni ceremony.

Graduating senior Kristen Pfluger, a music education major from Green Bay, will sing the national anthem and UW-Stevens Point's alma mater. She will be

accompanied by the UW-Stevens Point Orchestra, directed by Andy Moran, assistant professor of music.

Guests may park in any campus lot (for free) except Lot F West, which will be used for handicap access.

Whitsitt has been called “the most influential figure in northwest professional sports” by Washington CEO magazine. In addition to his work as president of one football and two basketball teams in the northwest, he was also assistant general manager of the Kansas City/Sacramento Kings and Indiana Pacers basketball teams. He won the 1994 NBA’s Executive of the Year award.

While at UW-Stevens Point, Whitsitt played football, basketball and baseball. He then earned a master’s degree in sports administration at Ohio State University. In 1998 he was honored by UW-Stevens Point with a permanent plaque in the lobby of the Quandt Gym as one of four alumni associated with the NBA.

Whitsitt is currently the founder and CEO of Whitsitt Enterprises, a consultant firm that provides services in negotiation, sports franchise acquisitions and management and development of business, marketing and media relations. He also serves as a public speaker and teaches college courses in sports administration.