

UW-Stout: Dedicates Robert F. Cervenka School of Engineering

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CONTACT: Doug Mell
Executive Director of Communications and External Relations
715-232- 1198
mell@d@uwstout.edu

Menomonie, Wis. — The life and impact of the late plastics pioneer Robert F. Cervenka were celebrated Friday, Oct. 27, as University of Wisconsin-Stout dedicated its new School of Engineering in Cervenka's name.

On a snowy day that prevented Cervenka's wife, Debbie, from traveling to campus, Chancellor Bob Meyer hailed the founder of Phillips Plastics as a visionary who cared deeply for his employees and who shared many similarities with James Huff Stout, who founded UW-Stout in 1891.

"What a thrill it would have been to have had a conversation with the person who invested his wealth to the benefit of so many people," Meyer said of James Stout. "But in many ways, I think many of us had the good fortune of meeting a modern-day version of James Huff Stout when we had a chance to work with Bob Cervenka."

Cervenka founded Phillips Plastics in his hometown of Phillips in 1964. It now has 15 facilities in Wisconsin and one in California, with annual sales of \$300 million and 1,600 employees. The company was sold in 2010.

Cervenka died two years ago at the age of 79.

The Robert F. Cervenka School of Engineering, approved by the UW System Board of Regents earlier this year, is in Fryklund Hall and was named in Cervenka's honor

to recognize his lifetime of philanthropy to UW-Stout, which totals \$5.5 million, including a memorial gift of \$2.5 million from Cervenka's family.