

UW-Madison: Alumni take novel philanthropic approach to support student centers

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Contact: Nathan Barker, SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science

Phone: 608-265-9841

Email: npbarker@wisc.edu

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UW Alumni Phillip Gross and George Hamel, Jr. underwrite benefit concert featuring Grammy Award Winner Bruce Hornsby, and multi-course food and wine dinner.

MADISON, Wisconsin – From leading Fortune 500 companies to making scientific discoveries to serving communities through public service, University of Wisconsin-Madison graduates have gone on to accomplish many great things for the State, the country, and the world. We can now add to that list a creative approach to philanthropy.

Two UW-Madison alumni and their wives have decided to leverage their giving in a new way. Phillip Gross and George Hamel Jr. are underwriting a concert featuring [three-time Grammy winner Bruce Hornsby with his band The Noisemakers](#), Eau Claire native Phil Cook and his band the Guitarheels, and a multi-course wine dinner featuring an all-star list of Madison chefs and four California wineries — all with UW connections.

In doing so, they are ensuring that 100 percent of proceeds from ticket sales and event donations support the undergraduate career-readiness mission of SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science, which is emerging as a national

leader in career services. Moreover, the concert and dinner are serving to raise the profile of SuccessWorks while simultaneously attracting new donors supportive of the SuccessWorks mission.

“SuccessWorks is already making a meaningful impact on students’ futures. While it certainly might have been simpler for both of us to make a direct donation to the center, we thought this would be a fun way to get more people aware of the great work this center is doing. The end result of the concert and dinner should mean increased awareness and positive visibility for SuccessWorks, more potential donors, and result in more funding over the long term, enabling us to scale the important work of SuccessWorks even faster than its current impressive growth trajectory,” says George Hamel Jr.

John Karl Scholz, Dean of the College of Letters & Science, adds “We’re eager to elevate SuccessWorks to send strong messages to students and their families that we’re actively supporting our students’ career development. We hope to attract more alumni who can mentor students and open doors for them and engage more employers in hiring them. This concert and wine dinner are helping get the word out in fun, new ways. We’re so grateful for Phill and George’s support.”

What better time to host a concert that brings together students, alumni, and local employers than on Homecoming weekend? SuccessWorks Rocks! headliner Bruce Hornsby & The Noisemakers will perform on Oct. 18 in the Wisconsin Union Theater. Eau Claire native Phil Cook joins the Guitarheels to open the show. The multi-course, multi-winery dinner is an invitation-only event, which will be held on Friday, Oct. 19 at The Edgewater.

General tickets for the SuccessWorks Rocks! concert are [available online from the Wisconsin Union Theater](#), or at 608-265-2787. All proceeds from ticket sales and additional donations support [SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science](#).