

UW-Stout: Community partnership offers COVID-19 vaccine opportunities to university employees

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Menomonie, Wis. – With the support of Dunn County Public Health, University of Wisconsin-Stout employees are now able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through the [Mayo Clinic Health System](#). And through a partnership with [the Medicine Shoppe](#), a local pharmacy, 255 university employees received the first dose of the vaccine at an on-site pop-up clinic on March 9.

On March 1, employees in an educational setting became eligible to receive vaccinations as part of Phase 1B in the [COVID-19 Vaccine Plan in Wisconsin](#). With Public Health focusing on K-12 educators, Mayo Clinic and the Medicine Shoppe reached out to UW-Stout administrators to offer their assistance and support in vaccinating employees.

Sara Carstens, director of Community Engagement and Wellness for Mayo Clinic, worked with the campus to arrange for the vaccinations at Mayo. [Dean of Students](#) Sandi Scott worked with the Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy Manager Chad Rindy to coordinate the clinic, held in the Memorial Student Center ballrooms.

Employees who received vaccinations included those from facilities, housing, dining, student centers, child center and athletics.

Nine Medicine Shoppe employees were on site: three support staff, including Rindy; and three nurses, one pharmacy intern and two vaccine certified technicians administering vaccines.

Associate Director of Facilities Management Zenon Smolarek and Kirk Miller, facilities repair worker advanced, received their first inoculation. They work in all buildings across campus, including residence halls, classrooms, labs and offices, and support campus facilities wherever they're needed.

"I think this is a privilege to have this opportunity as an essential worker. Since I work truly everywhere on campus, I want to be safe and I want to keep our students safe," Smolarek said.

"Whatever I can do to help us get back to normal, to keep our campus and my family safe and help slow the spread," Miller added.

The Medicine Shoppe has vaccinated about 10,000 people at its locations and at its long-term care pharmacy in Chippewa Falls.

"Collaborations with our community institutions like UW-Stout are invaluable," Rindy said. "These site visits are a more efficient process to get larger numbers of patients vaccinated, help keep our communities safe and help guide our path out of the pandemic."

Scott is grateful for the partnership as it works together to ensure the Menomonie community is vaccinated as soon as possible.

"I'm uncertain if other UW schools have had this same opportunity for an on-site clinic with a local pharmacy to expeditiously vaccinate 255 people in two hours. We feel incredibly fortunate that the Medicine Shoppe reached out to us and for this community partnership," Scott said.

A second clinic will be held on April 6 for employees to receive their second dose.

Vaccines available to all UW-Stout employees through Mayo

Effective March 5, all UW-Stout faculty and staff are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through the Mayo Clinic Health System. The vaccine is paid for by the federal government, and the administrative cost is billed to the patient's insurance. There is no cost to an individual who receives the vaccine.

"We are grateful to our local public health department for their support of the Mayo Clinic Health System providing Stout employees with this opportunity. Thank you to Mayo Clinic Health System for serving as our partner in providing our employees

with the opportunity to help reduce the spread of COVID-19,” Scott said.

UW-Stout is [Wisconsin's Polytechnic University](#), with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes.