STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

UW System Board of Regents: Announce University Staff Excellence Awards for 2021

Posted on Monday, Oct 4, 2021

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.

MADISON, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents today announced the recipients of the inaugural University Staff Excellence Awards. These awards recognize exceptional service to the university and are the UW System's highest recognition bestowed on members of its university staff. The 2021 recipients will be honored at the next Regents meeting, October 8.

The awards join a family of awards that the Regents sponsor, including the Regents Teaching Excellence Awards, the Regents Academic Staff Excellence Awards, and the Regents Diversity Awards.

"The Board of Regents is proud to recognize the first recipients of the University Staff Excellence Awards," said Regent Michael M. Grebe, chair of the selection committee. "Their outstanding work helps to strengthen not only our UW campuses but also the communities in which they serve, and we are pleased to shine a spotlight on their contributions to fulfilling the UW System mission."

Award recipients are selected for superior performance resulting in significant contributions to the department and university; use of positive personal interaction to manage work changes; and a consistently innovative approach that improves productivity and work quality. Each recipient is awarded $7,500 to support professional development or program enhancements.

The 2021 recipients include two individuals and one program:

Monika Pynaker, Network Services Manager and Interim Manager of Client

Services, Division of Information Technology, UW-Green Bay.
Pynaker has worked at UW-Green Bay's Division of Information Technology for over 20 years. She is currently responsible for ensuring the university's computer network runs smoothly without interruption. In summer 2019, her leadership and vision enabled the university to integrate three additional campus locations' computing and network systems when UW-Green Bay merged with the former UW-Manitowoc, UW-Marinette, and UW-Sheboygan campuses. Soon after, the COVID-19 pandemic required her team to transition a network built primarily for in-house teaching and learning to one that could support virtual instruction, telecommuting, and conferencing, all in one week's time. Pynaker has formed critical partnerships with outside agencies, such as Brown County Infrastructure Services, which enabled coordination of wired and wireless connectivity and other services for the Brown County STEM Innovation Center constructed on campus. She has been elected or appointed to numerous committees, including the University Staff Committee, Professional Development Committee, and University Planning and Innovation Council.

Brenda Cullin, Academic Department Associate/Office Manager, Department of Economics, UW-Milwaukee.
Cullin has served UW-Milwaukee for 42 years and has enhanced the Department of Economics' sense of community and equity since joining the department in 2011. Her cost-saving suggestions supported faculty research and the creation of a Graduate Student Lounge to provide space for economics students to study and get to know one another. She became the inaugural chair of the University Staff Grievance Committee, completing additional leadership training for the role. She has served on executive-level search-and-screen committees for UW-Milwaukee as well as the Chancellor's Best Place to Work Coordinating Team. As co-chair of the African Diaspora Council, an employee resource group she was integral in helping to revive, Cullin was instrumental in establishing the council's scholarship program to support more African American students. Over the last four years, the council awarded $38,000 to 21 scholars, and, to date, 19 of the students have graduated from UW-Milwaukee. She also spearheaded the council's fundraising that provides school supplies to two Milwaukee Public Schools, offering much-needed support that became even more important during the pandemic.

You Have Options Program, UW-Parkside.
The UW-Parkside Police Department earned its official You Have Options Program (YHOP) certification in August 2020, making it the first police department in

Wisconsin to add this specialized approach for working with survivors of sexual assault—and only the second university police department in the nation to earn such a distinction. In 2017 and over the next three years, Officer Kelly Andrichik began the successful implementation of YHOP through research, training, and collaboration with campus and community partners in Kenosha. YHOP officer engagement strengthens the trust between police and survivors and helps create a positive, healthier relationship both on campus and with the criminal justice system. YHOP was originally created by Detective Carrie Hull from the Ashland, Oregon, police department to help survivors of sexual assault collaborate with law enforcement, offer them nontraditional options of how victim-centered sexual assault investigations are handled, and to assist in their control of their investigation throughout the entire process. YHOP is continually updated and reviewed by a core group of nationally recognized experts in the field of sexual assault response. The program – including its implementation, standards, options, accountability, and trauma-informed response – is helping UW-Parkside and its partners better support and respond to survivors of sexual violence.

Other members of the University Staff Excellence Awards selection committee included Regent Scott Beightol, Regent Andrew S. Petersen, and Regent Kyle M. Weatherly.

The committee also recognizes the important contributions of this year's other nominees:

Individual nominees included Nicole Owen, UW-Eau Claire; Britney Heineman, UW-La Crosse; Micah Roberts, UW-Madison; Tyler Klaver, UW Oshkosh; Heather Spencer, UW-Parkside; Patti Mitch, UW-Platteville; Jason Winget, UW-River Falls; Becky Konkol, UW-Stevens Point; Jolanda Johnson, UW-Stout; Brenda Dalpiaz, UW-Superior; and Nick Ciesinski, UW-Whitewater.

Program nominees included the UW-Eau Claire Commencement Office; UW-Green Bay Police Department; UW-La Crosse Custodial Services; UW-River Falls Central Stores, Receiving, and Postal Services; UW-Stevens Point Dining and Summer Conferences; UW-Stout University Dining Service; and UW-Whitewater Sustainability Office.