

# University of Wisconsin System: UW System Board of Regents announces 2022 Diversity Awards

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MADISON, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents will honor the recipients of the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Regents' Diversity Awards on February 11 in Madison at the next Regents meeting. These awards recognize individuals and programs that foster access and success for students who are members of historically underrepresented populations. Each recipient is awarded \$7,500 to support professional development or continue the program being honored.

“We are pleased to recognize three outstanding awardees for making a lasting impact on their UW communities and beyond,” said Regent Héctor Colón, who chaired the special Regents' committee to determine the recipients. “Their exceptional dedication to expanding opportunity supports success for students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds.”

Award recipients were selected using the following criteria:

- Sustainable positive impact on equity and diversity, leading to positive institutional change.
- Accountability demonstrated through routine assessment and feedback to promote forward movement on equity and diversity goals.
- Intersections across multiple dimensions of diversity.
- Collaborations with other units, departments, or communities - within the university and beyond.

The 2022 recipients are:

- **Dr. Rose-Marie Avin, Professor of Economics and Director of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, UW-Eau Claire.**

Avin has devoted her 35-year career at UW-Eau Claire to being a teacher, mentor, and activist, with a goal to promote an environment free from bias and discrimination. Through her courses and immersion programs, she has taught students to advocate for gender, racial, and economic justice in the United States and other nations. She developed study abroad programs in Argentina and Nicaragua and received two Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Awards for work in Brazil and India. She served on UW-Eau Claire's Commission on the Status of Women and co-chaired the Rapid Action Task Force Implementation Team. Avin earned UW-Eau Claire's Excellence in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award in 2021 and the Martin Luther King Social Justice Leadership Award in 2019.

- **Barbara Stewart, Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion, UW-La Crosse.**

Stewart has forged strong collaborations on and off campus over 22-plus years at UW-La Crosse, sharing her leadership skills in equity, diversity, and inclusion work. As the inaugural Vice Chancellor of the new Division of Diversity and Inclusion, she is credited with bringing diversity-related offices together to increase student success and retention. Stewart co-wrote a Closing the Achievement Gap Grant, which provided funding for the Eagle Mentoring Program to retain second-year multicultural students. She was instrumental in creating a precollege coordinator position that allowed UW-La Crosse to strengthen its ties with youth in the community. She also received a precollege grant through the Department of Public Instruction that enabled free precollege services and supported after-school programs. Her awards include selection by *Madison365* as one of Wisconsin's Most Influential Black Leaders in 2020 and La Crosse's Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Leadership in 2015.

### **Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant Program, UW-Platteville.**

The Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant Program provides essential emergency financial assistance to UW-Platteville students in need. While UW-Platteville has provided emergency grants to students since 2017, in spring 2020, the university created the Pioneers Helping Pioneers Emergency Grant using \$2.55 million from federal Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding, as well as \$428,000 in donations through the UW-Platteville Foundation. Through the leadership of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Executive Director Laura Franklin and the program's staff, UW-Platteville has helped more than 3,500 unique

students over the past two years, providing an average of \$1,600 per student, relieving these students of financial burdens that could hinder their education. Students receiving these grants are retained or graduate at rates consistently above 90 percent. Top areas for which students seek emergency assistance include tuition, housing, food, transportation, and utilities.

Other members of the selection committee included Regent Tracey L. Klein, Regent Ashok Rai, and Regent Brianna Tucker.

The committee also recognizes the important contributions of this year's other nominees. Individual nominees included Dr. Preston Cherry, UW-Green Bay; Kellen Wells-Mangold, UW-River Falls; and Dominique Vargas, UW-Stout.

Program nominees included the Summer Bridge Program, UW-Green Bay; Equity Liaison Initiative, UW-La Crosse; Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work, UW-Madison; African Diaspora Council, UW-Milwaukee; Upward Bound, UW-River Falls; and Disability Services, UW-Stout.

**To download high-resolution photos of recipients, see [online news release](#).**