

UW-Green Bay: Receives \$275,402 from Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin to train next generation of water scientists

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Green Bay, Wis—The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay will receive \$275,402 in support from the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin this year to enhance its water-related academic programs. The funding is part of a statewide initiative, backed by the Wisconsin State Legislature and Gov. Tony Evers, to tackle 10 grand water challenges and support curriculum development, undergraduate research opportunities, career development, and field-training experiences for students interested in studying water-related fields at the 13 UW Schools.

Funding includes support for the following projects at UW-Green Bay:

- \$9,843 Course Development, “Human Interactions with Lake Michigan Coastal Ecosystems) (Joint UW-Green Bay, UW-Parkside and UW-Milwaukee)
 - \$72,338 UW-Green Bay Career Development (Freshwater Collaborative Student Internships through Collaborative Partnerships)
 - \$193,221 UW-Green Bay Student Experience (Educators and Students Rise to Freshwater Challenges)
- \$275,402 Total

“These projects will attract, prepare and train students to address freshwater challenges in Northeast Wisconsin and throughout the state,” said professor and researcher Kevin Fermanich, the campus Freshwater Collaborative Steering Committee member. “This investment in the UW System Freshwater Collaborative lays the foundation for our students and communities to connect with and learn from water experts and students across the UW System. Although these initial projects target students and educators from communities stretching from Marinette to Sheboygan, I’m really excited about making connections to water programs across the UW System via the Freshwater Collaborative.”

Overall, the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin will support 42 grants to further develop UW System-wide water science programs, internships and research opportunities. High school and undergraduate students will have opportunities to participate in hands-on field and research experiences with faculty throughout the state, allowing them to develop a diverse range of skills. The Collaborative is also partnering with industry, nonprofits and community organizations to increase career development opportunities for students. Grant descriptions available at freshwater.wisconsin.edu.

“Water is one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy,” said Marissa Jablonski, executive director for the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin. “With these funds, the 13 UW Universities can expand training opportunities for students and prepare them to meet the needs of Wisconsin’s workforce and address our state’s biggest water challenges.”

Wisconsin has abundant water resources; however, factors such as invasive species, pollution and climate change could significantly impact water safety and economic growth. The State of Wisconsin and the Freshwater Collaborative have identified 10 grand water challenges facing the state and are currently focusing research efforts on the top two: Agricultural Water Management and Water Quality Safety/Emerging Contaminants.

“The Freshwater Collaborative demonstrates how UW System works to protect one of the state’s most valuable assets, with projects at UW-Green Bay enhancing the curriculum, providing internship opportunities for students, and training educators on the importance of this resource and the career pathways that exist,” said UW-Green Bay’s Dean of the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, John Katers.

The research and field opportunities will be led by faculty and touch students at all four UW-Green Bay campuses (Green Bay, Marinette, Manitowoc and Sheboygan). Collaborators include Fermanich, Professors Richard Hein and Rebecca Abler, (Manitowoc Campus); Lynn Terrien, Watershed Education coordinator, UW-Green Bay’s Natural & Applied Sciences; Amy Carrozzino-Lyon, Green Bay Restoration Project coordinator/scientist, Natural and Applied Sciences; Samantha Betancur, Camps and Outreach coordinator, College of Science, Engineering, & Technology; and Emily Tyner, director of Freshwater Strategies. Director of the Environmental Management Business Institute John Arendt; Prof. John Luczaj (chair of Water Science); Director of Career Services Linda Peacock-Landrum; and researcher Chris Houghton, will be leading the internship and Lake Michigan course development.

Startup funding for the Freshwater Collaborative was provided in 2019 by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the UW System. In July 2021, the Wisconsin State Legislature and Gov. Evers approved \$5 million in the current biennial budget to expand the Collaboration’s ability to train water professionals and establish Wisconsin as a leader in water-related science and economic growth.

About the Freshwater Collaborative

The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin is a partnership of Wisconsin’s 13 public universities, connecting with industry partners, local communities, policymakers and advocacy groups. Its mission is to establish Wisconsin as a world leader in freshwater science, technology, entrepreneurship and economic growth. The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin is training the next generation of scientists to solve global water resource problems through academic programs, collaborative research and career development across the UW System. Learn more at freshwater.wisconsin.edu.

About the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Established in 1965, UW-Green Bay is a public institution serving 9,276 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students and 95,000 continuing education learners each year. We educate students from pre-college through retirement and offer 200+ degrees, programs and certificates. UW-Green Bay graduates are resilient, inclusive, sustaining and engaged members of their communities, ready to rise to fearlessly face challenges, solve problems and embrace diverse ideas and people. With four campus locations, the University welcomes students from every corner of the world. UW-Green Bay is the fastest-growing school in the UW. For more information, visit www.uwgb.edu.