

UW-Green Bay: UW System President Jay Rothman announces Wisconsin Tuition Promise with UW-Green Bay and UW Oshkosh

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Green Bay, Wis. — University of Wisconsin System President Jay Rothman today announced the creation of the Wisconsin Tuition Promise, a new initiative starting in fall 2023 to ensure underserved Wisconsin students can attend any UW System university without paying tuition or fees.

The goal of the program is to increase the number of state residents who graduate with a bachelor's degree – especially first-generation students and those from low-to-moderate income families throughout Wisconsin – thereby improving individual lives and communities and helping meet the state's workforce needs.

“The benefits of a college education are unassailable,” Rothman said. “A college degree needs to be within reach for every Wisconsin citizen as a path to a better life, and the Wisconsin Tuition Promise will provide these opportunities. It is also how we can close the skills gap that now limits Wisconsin's potential to thrive in a global economy.”

Rothman said an estimated 8,000 students will be supported through the program once it is fully implemented over four years. Eligible students will be awarded an average of \$4,500 over four years. The UW System intends to fund the first year of the program in academic year 2023-24 at \$13.8 million and seek state investment for subsequent years.

“UW-Green Bay is excited to be a part of the Wisconsin Tuition Promise initiative,” said UW-Green Bay Chancellor Michael Alexander. “The program is a smart

investment for the future of Wisconsin. It will improve access to a UW-Green Bay education, help us retain more talent in the state, and reduce the gap in educational attainment rates for students with fewer resources.”

“This is about helping more students and families eliminate any doubt they can access and thrive in an incredible college education and experience,” said UW Oshkosh Chancellor Andrew Leavitt. “We know the Tuition Promise will be a gamechanger, launching more rewarding personal journeys at UW Oshkosh and the other UW System institutions dedicated to preparing students for lifelong success in Wisconsin and beyond. We thank President Rothman and the Board of Regents for supporting this just investment in people and in our state’s future.”

Modeled on Bucky’s Tuition Promise at UW-Madison, the Wisconsin Tuition Promise would provide up to four years of tuition and fee funding for students coming from families earning less than \$62,000 annually and enrolling at any of the other 12 public universities within the UW System. The program would be structured to provide “last dollar” financial support after federal and state grant aid is accounted for; as a result, Tuition Promise awards will vary.

Eligible students will be Wisconsin residents, first-time enrollees or transfers, and attending full-time. They will need to make sufficient academic progress each year and attest that they were employed at some point during the previous year.

Rothman said the affordability review he sought shows a UW System education is the most affordable in the Midwest and is very affordable nationally compared to peers. However, fewer low-to-moderate-income and first-generation students are attending UW System universities, suggesting that despite a tuition freeze in place since 2013, a state college education is increasingly out of reach for some, he said.

“Education unlocks success in Wisconsin,” Rothman said. “By ensuring that every Wisconsin student is given the full opportunity to get a higher education, we will improve those lives directly while building the economic engine and community prosperity that benefit all Wisconsinites.”

Students will be automatically considered for the Wisconsin Tuition Promise when they apply for federal financial aid. A full publicity campaign led by the universities will begin later this fall. Current information can be found at: wisconsin.edu/tuition-promise/