

# UW-Green Bay: UW System President Tommy Thompson honored at UW-Green Bay

Posted on Wednesday, Mar 16, 2022

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Green Bay, Wis.—An appreciative crowd said farewell to UW System President Tommy Thompson, as he made a stop at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay on Tuesday, March 15, 2022. Thompson visited with students at the new E-Sports Lab in the University Union, before touring the yet to be dedicated Willie Davis Finance and Investment Lab, in the Cofrin School of Business. The campus community then honored Thompson in a formal program.

While representatives of UW-Green Bay's community made their way to the podium of the 1965 Room in the University Union, Thompson listened patiently. The message was clear... Thompson has made a profound impact and was an outstanding advocate for UW-Green Bay, the UW System, the region and the state, during his tenure as President.

"I wanted to visit the campuses in my final days, not to be thanked, but to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart," an emotional Thompson responded to members of the crowd, who made it a priority to visit with Thompson during the University's Spring Break. "Next to the people of Wisconsin, the UW is our greatest asset, our greatest resource," he said. "I love this University, and you have done an outstanding job."

UW-Green Bay Chancellor Michael Alexander said it is difficult to put into words what President Thompson has meant to the University, region and state.

"I have been incredibly fortunate to work for President Thompson for the entire time I have been chancellor," Alexander remarked. "He has been an amazing advocate

and leader. In our first conversation, President Thompson asked me, 'What are we going to do about enrollment?' I said, 'We are going to get to 10,000 and eventually 12,000.' He said, 'I'm not interested in 12,000, I'm interested in 15,000!'

"You want to work for someone who is going to push you," Alexander said. "You want to work for someone who cares deeply about the students, the people of Wisconsin, our region. You want to work for someone who sets very high standards and grants an amazing amount of trust."

Chancellor Alexander then presented President Thompson with the highest honor the University bestows on a member of the community—the Chancellor's Medallion and a plaque that read...

*"In recognition of inspiring service and leadership to the state, region and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, with unwavering commitment to education and The Wisconsin Idea. Your impact as UW System President has extended to every corner of the University in our great state. For being in our corner when it mattered most, the highest award bestowed by the University is presented to you on this day, March 15, 2022."*

Thompson reaffirmed in closing remarks that he isn't "retiring"... "Don't think I won't continue to be in the arena. I am going to be there for you... lobbying for you, telling everyone about UW-Green Bay."

During the event, David Brooker, district director for Congressman Mike Gallagher (WI-08) first read, and then presented Present Thompson with a hard copy of a Congressional Record which was officially read into the proceedings of the House of Representatives. It states:

**IN RECOGNITION OF the Career and Service of Retiring University of Wisconsin System President Tommy Thompson.**

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**HON. MIKE GALLAGHER**  
OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2022*

**Mr. Gallagher.** Madam Speaker. Today I rise in honor of the career and service of retiring University of Wisconsin System President, Tommy Thompson.

Throughout Mr. Thompson's long and esteemed career, he has been admired by his peers for his incredible dedication to public service. From being born and raised in Elroy, Wisconsin, to enlisting in the United States Army National Guard, to becoming the longest-serving governor in Wisconsin history, Mr. Thompson's commitment to the State of Wisconsin and our Nation never wavered. I commend Mr. Thompson's service and thank him for the enormous contributions that he has made to the State of Wisconsin and to the United States.

Mr. Thompson's successful tenure as governor was spearheaded by major initiatives like the nation's first school-choice program that Wisconsinites continue to benefit from today. His push for the parental school-choice program created unparalleled educational opportunities for students and witnessed record participation. Governor Thompson led the way on education, healthcare, and welfare reform setting the stage for decades of prosperity in Wisconsin. Given the success of his governorship, Mr. Thompson was appointed by then President George W. Bush to serve as the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary from 2001 to 2005. During his time as HHS Secretary, Mr. Thompson played a key role in projects and initiatives that resulted in greater transparency and efficiency throughout the agency.

During his almost 60-year career, Mr. Thompson has proven himself to be one of the most successful public servants in Wisconsin history. In 2019, Mr. Thompson yet again answered the call to service as he was named President of the University of Wisconsin System. Under his leadership, the UW System prioritized developing, attracting, and retaining students and educators that will benefit from the world-class education that the UW system has to offer. As President, Mr. Thompson also helped the UW System navigate the incredible challenges of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. The State of Wisconsin is grateful for Mr. Thompson's lifetime of service and dedication to our great state.

As we look back on Mr. Thompson's career, there is no doubt that he has dedicated his life to making the world around him a better place. Mr. Thompson's continued service to both the State of Wisconsin and the United States is worthy of our highest degree of recognition. I urge all of my colleagues in this body to join me in congratulating Mr. Thompson on another successful tenure in public service and on his retirement from the UW System. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.