

UW-River Falls: Chancellor Gallo starts endowed scholarship for first-gen STEM students

Posted on Thursday, Apr 7, 2022

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April 5, 2022 — University of Wisconsin-River Falls Chancellor Maria Gallo kicked off the university's Giving Day week by establishing a new endowed scholarship for first-generation students interested in pursuing a degree in the sciences, technology, engineering and math.

The UWRF Foundation scholarship is named the Dr. Maria Gallo STEM Scholarship Endowment.

The \$1,000 scholarship is slated to be awarded for the first time in the 2022-23 academic year.

"I created this to seed student success," Gallo said. "A significant barrier with education can be the financial piece for students. I want to help alleviate that so they don't have to worry about the financial part quite as much so they can get their education, have extra time to spend on their studies and enjoy the college experience."

The new endowed scholarship helps kick off UWRF Foundation's Giving Day on Friday, April 8.

Giving Day supports the Falcon Annual Fund, an unrestricted fund to support the university's most pressing and immediate needs. Tax-deductible contributions to the UWRF Foundation may be made at the Giving Day website at go.uwrf.edu/givingday.

New this year is the addition of multiple matching gifts which help donors' dollars

go further and double their impact.

Gallo, a first-generation student, started as the UWRF chancellor in July 2021 after serving five years as the Delaware Valley University president in Doylestown, Penn., the university's first woman president. Gallo earned her bachelor's degree in agronomy from Cornell University and both her master's degree in crop science and Ph.D. in genetics from North Carolina State University.

Before her DelVal post, Gallo was dean and director of Research and Cooperative Extension of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa and was professor and chair of the Agronomy Department at the University of Florida where she specialized in crop improvement.

Gallo, a Fulbright Scholar, noted scholarships helped her throughout her educational experience and she wanted to help pay that forward to UWRF STEM students.

The UWRF Foundation offers about 325 endowed scholarships, said Assistant Chancellor for University Advancement Rick Foy.

"Endowed scholarships provide students with critical financial resources, opening the doors to quality educational opportunities and a premier collegiate experience at UW-River Falls," Foy said. "The availability of a scholarship is often a crucial determining factor for a student going through the college decision-making process. We work with donors to establish criteria for their scholarship awards based on financial need, merit or academic field of study. An endowed scholarship provides a donor the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy, changing the lives of UWRF students forever."

An endowed scholarship is a permanent fund. The UW-River Falls Foundation invests the fund's resources, and a specific portion of the income is spent annually on the scholarship award to the selected student. The remaining earned income is added back to the fund, ensuring the continued life of the endowed scholarship. The minimum funding needed for an endowed scholarship is \$25,000. All contributions to the endowment through the UWRF Foundation are tax deductible.

Anyone interested in establishing an endowed scholarship, contributing to the Dr. Maria Gallo STEM Scholarship Endowment, or other scholarships should contact Foy at 715-425-4291 or richard.foy@uwrf.edu.