

UW-Stout: Alumni admissions counselors bring compassion, perspective to their careers

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Menomonie, Wis. – When it comes to helping precollege students decide on a university or degree program that best fits their interests, career goals and learning styles, the first-year admissions counselors at University of Wisconsin-Stout have students' interests at heart.

And three of the counselors know firsthand what UW-Stout offers – hands-on lab and studio opportunities, career exploration with co-ops and internships, collaboration on projects across disciplines and more.

Jeanie Albricht, Nou Lor and Lacey Seefeldt are UW-Stout alumni who returned to their alma mater and joined the [Admissions Office](#) team to encourage others to become Blue Devils.

With diverse backgrounds and degrees, they bring compassion to their careers and believe that connecting with students and student supporters is the best part of their day. And as first-generation college graduates, they bring a unique perspective to their counseling.

[First-Year Registration and Orientation](#) is underway for first-year students attending UW-Stout this fall. During FYRO, students work with their adviser, select their classes, pick up their UW-Stout laptop and BlueCard, and learn ways to get involved at the university.

Enrollment is still open. In-person and virtual FYRO dates are available in July and August:

- On-campus orientation dates: Friday, July 8; or Friday, Aug. 5
- Virtual orientation dates: Wednesday, July 27; Friday, July 29, or Wednesday, Aug. 3.

Students and student supporters may contact orientation@uwstout.edu or [715-232-1465](tel:715-232-1465) for assistance.

A first-generation perspective

Albricht grew up in Colfax and graduated with her [degree in hotel, restaurant and tourism management](#) in 2003, knowing that she wanted to work in restaurants. But COVID-19 changed her career path and led her to find a better life-balance for family time working with Admissions. Albricht has been with Admissions for nine months.

“UW-Stout had my program. And it was the best in the state and at that time, number four in the country,” she said. She still helps a friend with a catering business now and then to continue part of her passion.

Seefeldt, from Spencer, graduated in 2008 with her [degree in psychology](#). She has been with Admissions for three years. As a high school student, when she was first looking at colleges, she chose UW-Stout because of the campus size, calling it the best of both worlds.

“It is such a wonderful, supportive community,” Seefeldt said. “I was a first-generation student and at times didn’t think I could do it – or didn’t think I was worthy of a college education. So, it is incredibly fulfilling in my career to help someone pursue their passion and start that huge, life-changing step of higher education.”

She is thankful for the faculty and staff who were there for her as a student, who advocated for her to receive scholarships, invited her to participate in research and supported her goals beyond college.

“Thank you to those professors that took interest in personally getting to know me and whom I considered friends,” Seefeldt said. “I cannot express how much you changed my life.”

Lor grew up in Wausau and transferred to UW-Stout for the [human development and family studies program](#) after hearing positive feedback from students and

alumni.

She interned with UW-Stout Human Resources and later graduated that summer of 2021. She continued to work in HR as a limited-term assistant through the fall and began her career as an Admissions counselor last November.

“I took a shot,” Lor said. “I wanted to stay in higher education. I value education and can relate to high school students.

“Starting college, I had a lack of knowledge about higher education,” Lor said. “As an admissions counselor, I enjoy talking about my own learning experiences and sharing tips and advice with students about higher education. I encourage students to do their research about each institution that they are interested in or, best of all, visit the campus if you can.”

Admissions Director Joan Ebnet was also a first-generation student and knows how important it is to meet students where they are and to create an open and inclusive environment.

“We need to think in our day-to-day work of how we can provide services and support to those students, and all students, in ways that weren’t available when we were in college,” she said.

Ask questions and get involved

The number one piece of advice that Albricht, Lor and Seefeldt give to students is to ask questions and don’t be afraid to ask for help.

“College is an investment in time and money – so don’t be afraid to ask questions,” Lor said. “It is okay to not know what you want to do for the rest of your life. You are not alone. Surround yourself in a community where you feel you belong and are safe and welcomed.”

They also like to remind students to get involved in and outside of the classroom.

“The hands-on approach is huge, and there are so many networking opportunities on campus that it’s easy to find a job within your passion,” Albricht said. “Yes, it’s college. But you are supposed to enjoy it too.”

Lor agreed. She likes to ask students, “Do you learn better by doing? Stout is a

polytechnic institution with three times more labs than classrooms. You will get that hands-on experience through activities, being in labs, studios, and using similar machines and equipment like what industries are using.”

Seefeldt thinks that first-year students who get involved can maximize their college experience by taking every opportunity that comes their way – from the performing arts to studying abroad, collaborating on faculty research to joining student organizations.

“Step outside of your comfort zone and do things you’ve never done before, because in 10 years from now those are the things you’re going to remember most,” she said.

Other alumni in the Admissions Office include Associate Director Linda Young, and specialists Sarah Klick and Samantha Secraw.

UW-Stout is [Wisconsin's Polytechnic University](#), with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes.