

UW-Green Bay: Names Dr. Dhanansayan “Dhanu” Shanmuganayagam as first Salm Professor of Nutritional Sciences

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Trailblazing hire positions UW-Green Bay as a regional leader in nutrition, brain health and translational research

Green Bay, WI—The University of Wisconsin–Green Bay proudly announces the appointment of Dr. Dhanansayan (“Dhanu”) Shanmuganayagam as the University’s inaugural Salm Professor of Nutritional Sciences, marking a historic milestone for the institution and the region’s growing research ecosystem.

The Salm Professorship, made possible through a \$2 million gift from Christopher and Susan Salm, establishes the University’s first full-time research professor dedicated solely to advancing nutrition science (within both the [bachelor’s in Human Biology, emphasis in Nutrition and Dietetics](#) and graduate program [MS Nutrition & Integrated Health - UW-Green Bay](#)) and its impact on early childhood cognitive development. This role is the first of its kind at UW-Green Bay and positions the University to lead translational research at the intersection of nutrition, brain health and community wellbeing.

“I am excited to join UW-Green Bay at a time when nutrition and brain health are increasingly recognized as foundational to lifelong well-being. I look forward to building a nationally visible translational program that advances discovery, engages students in meaningful research and works alongside healthcare and industry partners to translate scientific insight into real-world solutions,” said Shanmuganayagam. “Together, we can strengthen community

health and position this region as a leader in science-driven innovation.”

Professor Shanmuganayagam joins UW–Green Bay as a Founding Executive Director and Research Professor in the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology. A nationally and internationally recognized translational biomedical scientist, he brings decades of multidisciplinary research leadership from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where his work spanned animal sciences, biotechnology, surgery and human health.

“This work is essential to advancing early childhood development, and we are proud to welcome Professor Shanmuganayagam to drive this research at UW–Green Bay,” said John Katers, dean of the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. “His national leadership will give our students unparalleled access to groundbreaking, real-world health research. We’re ready to move forward with purpose and momentum.”

Prof. Shanmuganayagam built and led expansive research enterprises at UW–Madison, including co-founding the Center for Biomedical Swine Research & Innovation (CBSRI)—the first interdisciplinary center in the U.S. dedicated to porcine models in translational medicine. His pioneering work in next-generation porcine cloning and genome editing has supported major scientific milestones, including collaborative contributions to the world’s first successful pig-to-human kidney transplantation. His portfolio includes more than \$30 million in secured research funding, over 60 peer-reviewed publications (including *Nature* and *Nature Aging*), and multiple patents that have advanced toward commercialization.

A Bold New Chapter for UW–Green Bay and the Region

In his new role, Prof. Shanmuganayagam will lead an ambitious initiative to transform UW–Green Bay’s research capacity by advancing scientific discovery while creating high-impact learning opportunities for students across undergraduate, graduate and pre-professional programs.

The Salm Professorship enables the University to expand in unprecedented ways:

- Driving research on the role of nutrition in early childhood brain development
- Building partnerships across the region’s agriculture, food and nutrition industries

- Fueling innovation aligned with Phoenix Innovation Park's emerging research corridor
- Serving community health needs with applied, real-world research outcomes

Wisconsin's agricultural and food industries are central to the regional economy, making nutritional sciences a high-impact research focus for UW-Green Bay. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in nutrition and dietetics continues to grow, creating new workforce opportunities for students who will now gain direct experience in applied research through the professorship.

A hallmark of Dr. Shanmuganayagam's career is his commitment to building people, programs and institutions. His leadership at UW-Green Bay will emphasize:

- Interdisciplinary collaboration across the sciences and health fields
- Experiential student learning through hands-on, real-world research
- Strategic partnerships with industry, healthcare systems and community organizations
- Translational science that accelerates discovery into clinical and societal impact

Photo available upon request.

About UW-Green Bay

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay is a school of resilient problem solvers who dare to reach higher with the power of education that ignites growth and answers the biggest challenges. Serving 11,519 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students as well as 101,000 continuing education learners annually, UW-Green Bay offers 200 academic degrees, programs, and certificates. With campus locations in Green Bay, Manitowoc, Sheboygan and a theatre in Marinette, the University's access mission welcomes all students who want to learn, from every corner of the world. Championing bold thinking since opening its doors in 1965, it is a university on the rise - Wisconsin's fastest growing UW. For more information, visit www.uwgb.edu.