

## NEWS RELEASE

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## Polytechnic Summit returns to campus 10 years after start

*Event June 3-5 draws attendees from 16 universities, six countries*

[Story Link](#)

### Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Menomonie, Wis. — The Polytechnic Summit is returning to its roots 10 years after it began at University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Scheduled Monday through Wednesday, June 3-5, the summit will host more than 100 academic and business leaders. The academic attendees represent 16 polytechnic universities, including from six foreign countries.

The summit was founded in 2009 by the late Chancellor Charles W. Sorensen, two years after UW-Stout was designated as [Wisconsin's Polytechnic University](#). UW-Stout also hosted the summit in 2010. Since then, universities in Georgia, Massachusetts, Indiana and Peru have held the event.

The goal of the summit is for polytechnic schools to discuss the latest applied research and trends pertinent to polytechnic education and to explore opportunities to collaborate, partner and share best practices.

Polytechnic universities combine a liberal arts education with applied learning. About 3% of universities in the U.S. are polytechnic.

Glendali Rodriguez, associate provost, and Tiffani Taggart, Outreach program manager with UW-Stout's Professional Education Programs and Services, are the summit coordinators.

"Emeritus Chancellor Sorensen had the foresight to start this forum 10 years ago, and it's exciting that participation has grown to represent 10 domestic and six international institutional partners," Rodriguez said.

Countries with universities represented will be Germany, Ireland, Nigeria, Russia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

U.S. universities with attendees include Cal Poly, Clemson, Florida Polytechnic, Kansas State Polytechnic, Oregon Institute of Technology, Purdue, Minnesota State-Mankato and Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Business representatives from 3M, Great Northern and Prent also will be attending, along with the Menomonie school district.

"The diversity of participants is echoed by the range of topics that will be discussed and shared. I'm excited to share best practices regarding topics that are critical to remaining relevant as polytechnics," Rodriguez said.

Those topics include institutional plans toward gender equity; sustainable development goals; and industry and higher education collaborations.

"Menomonie and the UW-Stout campus provide a fantastic venue for this event, and I look forward to expanding our partnerships across the globe," Rodriguez said.

The summit kicks off at 6 p.m. June 3 in the Great Hall of the Memorial Student Center with a keynote address by Chancellor Bob Meyer and alumnus Craig Yolitz, vice president of Customer Operations and Account Management for Thomson Reuters — FindLaw of the Twin Cities. They will discuss industry and higher education collaboration. UW-Stout and Thomson Reuters partnered to start a digital marketing technology undergraduate program in 2015.

The keynote speaker June 4 will be Denise Anderson, an associate dean at Clemson University, discussing gender equity.

Keynotes June 5 will feature the 2020 summit hosts from Technological University in Dublin, Ireland; and Steve Hellen, of Catholic Relief Services in Baltimore, discussing using digital technology for humanitarian aid and international development.

A postconference workshop, Design and Fabrication of Functional Parts with a Desktop 3D Printer, will be led by Vladimir Kuznetsov, fab lab director at National University of Science and Technology, Moscow, Russia. It will be at UW-Stout's [Discovery Center Fab Lab](#), which recently moved to room 120 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Building.

A research poster showcase by UW-Stout faculty and students will be from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. June 4 outside Harvey Hall Theatre.

In addition to the Memorial Student Center and Harvey Hall, summit events will be held at the Mabel Tainter Center for the Arts on Main Street.

Along with UW-Stout, the conference is sponsored by the Smart Automation Certification Alliance, of Kentucky, and by Amatrol, an interactive technical learning company from Indiana.

Learn more at the [summit website](#).

## **First summit**

Universities from eight states were represented at the inaugural summit in 2009.

Sorensen opened the forum by calling for polytechnic universities to become the national model for collaborative research. “We are different. Polytechnic universities should lead higher education change,” said Sorensen, who was chancellor at UW-Stout until 2014 and died in 2018.

Inaugural summit keynote speaker Gerald Jakubowski, former president of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology and then provost and vice president of academic affairs of California Maritime Academy, recommended that polytechnic universities cultivate innovation.

“This should be the role of polytechnics,” Jakubowski said. “Innovation can be taught to our undergraduates. This should not be left to the private sector exclusively.”

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

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## **Photos**

Technology education students Beth Rocque and Zak Kachel learn to solder electronic circuit components in the tech ed lab at UW-Stout, which is hosting the Polytechnic Summit June 3-5.

Glendali Rodriguez

Assistant Professor Taejo Kim works in UW-Stout’s food science lab.

## **Polytechnic Summit History**

2009 — University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, Wis.

2010 — University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, Wis.

2011 — Southern Polytechnic State University, Marietta, Ga.

2012 — Southern Polytechnic State University, Marietta, Ga.

2013 — Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, Mass.

2014 — Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston, Mass.

2015 — No summit

2016 — No summit

2017 — Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

2018 — University of Engineering and Technology, Lima, Peru

2019 — UW-Stout

2020 — Technological University, Dublin, Ireland

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