



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2021

News Release

UW System targets new funds to help incoming freshmen prepare for university with summer bridge programs

MADISON, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin System will provide summer learning assistance to 1,400 additional incoming freshmen this year, more than doubling the number of admitted students receiving help through campus-based summer bridge programs.

Summer bridge programs are critical to ensuring that high school graduates make a successful transition to university. While program details and offerings differ at each university, many of them have core areas in common, including academic skill-building, career exploration, mentoring, and student health and wellness.

Summer bridge programs are now even more important for incoming students who have had to endure academic, financial, and emotional challenges because of the COVID-19 pandemic. UW System is seeding the expansion of summer bridge programs across the state with an initial \$1.3 million investment in these important campus programs. The UW System will be seeking reimbursement with state revenue or federal COVID-19 relief funds and ongoing support for this expanded program.

“Student success is critical to the UW System, and our work starts even before students step foot on campus,” said UW System President Tommy Thompson. “Wisconsin’s high school seniors have demonstrated remarkable resilience as the pandemic has presented additional challenges. We will be there to help those who need it this fall and in the coming years.”

In 2020, Wisconsin’s public universities assisted 1,189 students in their transitions to college. The proposed expansion would provide support to an additional 1,410 students. In addition to the UW System contribution, universities are providing additional financial support with the UW System seeking \$2.7 million over all to support the program.

“As we return to a more traditional semester this fall and beyond, we need to build programs that will help all of our students find success, especially those whose academic progress was slowed by the pandemic,” Thompson said. “This expansion of our summer bridge programs will help position our universities to help students who need it over the next several years.”

###

The University of Wisconsin System serves approximately 165,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin’s talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. Nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness

of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Mark Pitsch, UW System

608-265-3419

mpitsch@uwsa.edu

universityrelations@uwsa.edu