

NEWS RELEASE

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Minnesota student and alum discover home away from home, polytechnic fit

Friendly atmosphere, industry connections, other advantages contribute to positive experiences

[Story Link](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 26, 2022

Menomonie, Wis. — Growing up north of the Twin Cities in St. Michael, Megan Copeland is a Minnesotan through and through, right down to her love for the Minnesota Vikings football team.

Yet, when it came time to choose a university, Copeland didn't hesitate for a moment to go across the border to Wisconsin once she discovered University of Wisconsin-Stout.

“When I came here for a tour, I thought that the campus was so pretty, and it made me feel like I was in a Hallmark movie,” said Copeland, a second-year student majoring in [marketing and business education](#). “Menomonie has so many coffee shops and fun things to do. I couldn't imagine going anywhere else.”

Along with the university's location in the heart of Menomonie, population 16,600, near Lake Menomin and the Red Cedar River, Copeland was attracted to the polytechnic, applied learning approach. “Hands-on is the way I learn best,” she said.

The [polytechnic aspect](#) also appealed to Josh Carr, a Minneapolis native who graduated in 2017 with a degree in construction. He returned to Minneapolis and is a project manager for commercial general contractor [Kraus-Anderson](#).

“I really liked the focus on labs. They gave me a feeling that I could learn hands-on knowledge that would help me be successful in the industry,” Carr said.

Copeland and Carr are part of a decadeslong migration of Minnesota high school students to UW-Stout, thanks in part to a reciprocity agreement between the states that allows Minnesota students to pay their resident tuition rate, not the higher Wisconsin nonresident rate.

In recent years, including fall 2021, an average of 2,000 to 2,500 Minnesota students a year have attended UW-Stout, or 20% to 25% of total enrollment.

Copeland often gets the chance to tell fellow Minnesotans, and others, about the benefits of UW-Stout in her part-time job as an [Admissions Office](#) tour guide. She stresses the labs, career-focused majors, free laptop computer, friendly atmosphere, caring professors and short drive home.

“I add that they most likely will be enjoying school and meeting people so much that they won’t even want to go home,” Copeland said.

“I am only about an hour and a half from home, which is not terrible for me. I enjoy being here so I go home very rarely. I met a ton of people from Minnesota at Stout,” said Copeland, who used the campus [Rideshare](#) program to help get home her first year.

UW-Stout [offers many services to support student success](#) and is committed to [equity, diversity and inclusion](#).

“The professors are extremely helpful and flexible if you need extra help. There are so many resources on campus to help with tutoring or writing,” she said.

UW-Stout also prides itself in maintaining strong connections with business and industry in Minnesota. The upcoming [Spring Career Conference](#) will feature dozens of Minnesota-based companies.

The university has a longstanding [employment and continuing education rate](#) at or above 97% for recent graduates. About one-third of recent graduates found work in Minnesota, including at Target, 3M, Mayo Clinic, General Mills, ACIST Medical, Graco, Hormel, Andersen Windows, Polaris, Best Buy, Boston Scientific, Medtronic and Kraus-Anderson.

Carr interned at Kraus-Anderson for three summers, part of the [Cooperative Education and Internship Program](#). He started full time immediately after graduation, receiving a job offer before he had his diploma. About 200 UW-Stout students a year have co-ops and internships in Minnesota.

Carr, [who recently received](#) a 2021 Minnesota Finance and Commerce Rising Young Professional award, is glad he chose UW-Stout. At Kraus-Anderson he has worked on more than \$75 million worth of developments in the health care and K-12 school markets.

“I was really wanting to find a place where I could do more than just school. I wanted to be involved in organizations and clubs. UW-Stout did that for me. I will remember forever all of the great relationships that I built here,” he said.

Copeland also has enjoyed opportunities outside of class. Along with being a tour guide, she is a Stout Ambassador, belongs to a student association for her major and is in a sorority, Alpha Phi.

She met a group of people her first year who have become good friends. “We all still hang out and do everything together, about 10 of us guys and girls. It really is just so much fun to have those people in your life,” she said, noting they enjoy numerous activities on campus, like karaoke, and off campus.

“The school pride is top tier, and I absolutely love it. I can’t wait for what the next couple of years bring for me,” Copeland said.

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

Megan Copeland, of St. Michael, Minn., is a second-year student at UW-Stout majoring in marketing and business education.

Josh Carr, of Minneapolis, a 2017 UW-Stout graduate, receives a 2021 Minnesota Finance and Commerce Rising Young Professional award recently along with another UW-Stout alum, Addie Kubitz.

Josh Carr, a project manager for general contractor Kraus-Anderson in Minneapolis, works in a UW-Stout lab while an undergraduate in UW-Stout’s construction program.