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News Release

Regents announce Academic Staff Excellence Awards for 2022

Educators in Eau Claire, Milwaukee, and River Falls recognized for work to support student success

MADISON, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents will honor this year's recipients of the Academic Staff Excellence Awards at its next meeting in Milwaukee on June 10. These awards recognize exceptional service to the university and are the UW System's highest recognition bestowed on members of its academic staff.

"This year's outstanding award recipients reflect the 'many hats' worn by our academic staff across the UW System," said Regent John W. Miller, chair of the selection committee. "We are inspired by their commitment to creating vital education programs to support student success."

Award recipients are selected for superior performance resulting in significant contributions to the department and institution; use of positive personal interaction to manage work changes; and a consistently creative approach that improves productivity and work quality. Each recipient is awarded \$7,500.

The 2022 recipients include two individuals and one program:

- **Ms. Robin Jens, Assistant Dean of Student Services, College of Nursing, and Interim Student Service Director, Zilber School of Public Health, UW-Milwaukee.**

Jens has worked at UW-Milwaukee for over 16 years. As assistant dean of student services for the College of Nursing, she leads the Student Affairs staff, manages the office, and oversees the advising, recruiting, and retaining of undergraduate and graduate nursing students. Since November 2020, she has worked in a similar role for the Zilber School of Public Health. Her approach is strategic, practical, and collaborative. She holds a leadership role in the campus 2030 Strategic Plan to merge the university's three health schools/colleges into two colleges. Working with the College of Health Sciences, she is facilitating discussions with a combined 24 student affairs professional staff to identify best practices and establish new teams to serve more than 3,000 students. She recently facilitated developing the nursing program at UW-Milwaukee at Waukesha, where she identified an opportunity gap for nursing programs in southcentral Wisconsin. She serves on numerous university committees, including the Transfer Pathways Committee. Her work with the Wisconsin College Personnel Association has further broadened her relationships at the state level.

- **Ms. Ann Lawton, Violence Prevention Coordinator, Lecturer in Art, and Art Therapist, Student Health and Counseling Services, UW-River Falls.**

Lawton has served at UW-River Falls since 2011. Her positions include lecturer in the Art Department and board-certified art therapist for Student Counseling. As violence prevention coordinator, her most recent position, she implements education programs to promote healthy relationships and prevent sexual and intimate partner violence, gender-based violence, stalking, and hazing. Her creative methods to connect with and support students include online programming, outreach installations, and a new

violence prevention social media account. Her community art therapy has focused on those impacted by high trauma, including incarcerated individuals, trafficked girls, domestic abuse survivors, individuals coping with addiction, and neurodivergent children. Examples of her work include a variety of campus community art projects such as the Empty Place at the Table installation in residence halls for domestic violence awareness and Paint Yourself in the Community; training and outreach for student athletes in compliance with National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requirements; hazing prevention training for student organizations; care and consent take-and-make kits for students; and Falcon Community Foundations, a workshop designed to bring awareness to the connection between individual and communal accountability concerning healthy relationships and bystander intervention. Her violence prevention work was recognized with the UW-River Falls Chancellor's Award for Non-Instructional Academic Staff in 2021.

- **Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, UW-Eau Claire.**

Under the leadership of its director, Dr. Angie Stombaugh, UW-Eau Claire's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) carries out its core mission of supporting teaching and learning through a wide array of programming informed by research-based best practices. This work includes innovative new faculty orientation; communities of practice focused on classroom needs; and coaching for faculty in novel teaching situations. Recent key contributions of the Center include transforming the university's Liberal Education program, forging collaborations that foster an inclusive learning community, and providing online and individual support to empower faculty to deliver high-quality teaching and learning in a remote format during the COVID-19 pandemic. CETL recently built a plan to provide all faculty and instructional academic staff with professional development in transparent design, an approach to enhance student success for all students. CETL staff collaborate with UW-Eau Claire's McIntyre Library to assist faculty in using open educational resources to reduce costs for students. Staff also help faculty support students with disabilities, including offering remote American Sign Language services.

Other members of the Academic Staff Excellence Awards selection committee included Regent Robert Atwell, Regent Amy Blumenfeld Bogost, and Regent Rodney Pasch.

The committee also recognizes the important contributions of this year's other nominees:

Individual nominees included Kay Voss, UW-Green Bay; Mitchell Hayes, UW-Madison; Giovanna Gutierrez, UW-Parkside; Paul Erickson, UW-Platteville; Dr. Helen Luce, UW-Stevens Point; Angela Ruppe, UW-Stout; Harry Anderson, UW-Superior; and Krista Kim, UW-Whitewater.

Program nominees included UW-Green Bay's Student Accessibility Services and UW-Madison's TeachOnline@UW.

[Download high-resolution photos of 2022 recipients.](#)

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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 – with a median salary of more than \$66,000. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System universities also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

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