



UNIVERCITY ALLIANCE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Cover photo by Travel Wisconsin

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About UniverCity Alliance

Creating Better Places Together

UniverCity Alliance (UCA) is a network of people across the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the state of Wisconsin who are inspired to improve local governments and foster innovation in communities of all sizes. With the goal of making UW–Madison more accessible and responsive to Wisconsin communities, UniverCity forms partnerships with local governments, listens to community-identified priorities, and leverages university resources to create tangible recommendations.

UniverCity Alliance’s 2022–25 partnerships through the UniverCity Year program include Eau Claire, St. Croix, and Wood counties; the cities of Marinette, Milton, River Falls, and Wausau; and the villages of Cottage Grove and Shorewood. Continuing ongoing relationships, UniverCity facilitated projects with the City of Madison and Dane County. UniverCity also engaged in a rapid response project request from the Whitewater Unified School District.

UniverCity works with and for local governments of all sizes to build strong, thriving, and sustainable communities. To advance sustainability, UniverCity frames local projects through the lens of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Throughout this report, we have included SDG icons that identify which goals align with projects in Wisconsin.

This report provides an overview of the work of hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and local government leaders. For more information on project goals, research methods, findings, and recommendations, download the final reports from individual community pages located on UniverCity’s website:

univercity.wisc.edu/univercity-year-communities.

UniverCity Alliance Advisory Board Cochairs



“UniverCity Alliance builds on the excellent history of service-learning, extension, and outreach education at UW–Madison. UniverCity is a trifecta of applied student work, work with local governments, and work that is oriented toward sustainability, equity, and economic thriving around the state. There’s this synergy where we are building something unique on the Wisconsin Idea.”

—**Lori DiPrete Brown**

*Director of Global Health and Human Ecology,
Director of 4W Initiative*



“It’s reinventing the Wisconsin Idea. That’s an evergreen idea, but it’s also one in serious need of reimagining given sweeping changes in this state and the world. UniverCity Alliance disciplines that reinvention by grounding it in real help to real communities that ask for it.”

—**Joel Rogers**

*Noam Chomsky Professor of Law, Public Affairs, and Sociology,
Director of High Road Strategy Center*



“UniverCity Alliance integrates lively educational experiences that are outside the classroom for students and meets the needs of Wisconsin communities.”

—**Paul Robbins**

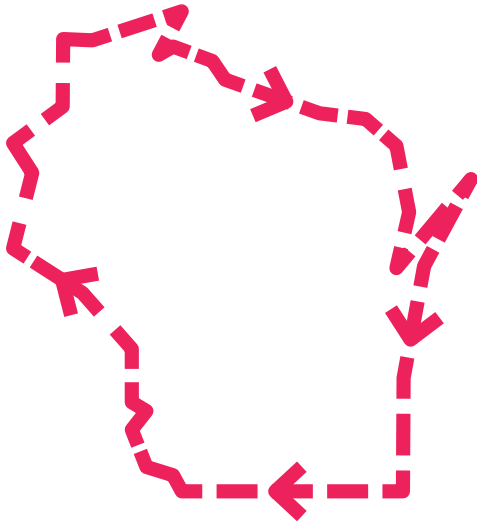
Dean, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies



L-R: Abigail Becker, senior associate for communications and outreach, UniverCity Alliance (UCA); Robbins; DiPrete Brown; Gavin Luter, managing director, UCA; Rogers; Shelly Strom, program manager, UniverCity Year

UniverCity across Wisconsin

UniverCity Alliance attended and presented at five local government conferences to learn from Wisconsin municipal and county officials and share how partnering with UW–Madison yields mutual benefits.



1. League of Wisconsin Municipalities Conference featuring Wausau Mayor Katie Rosenberg and Milton Mayor Anissa Welch | [August 24, 2023](#)
2. Wisconsin Counties Association Conference featuring Claire Johnson, communications and public information specialist for Polk County | [September 18, 2023](#)
3. American Planning Association – Wisconsin Chapter Conference featuring projects in Outagamie County and the City of Stoughton | [September 21, 2023](#)
4. Wisconsin Counties Association Executive Meeting featuring UniverCity Alliance | [February 5, 2024](#)
5. Wisconsin City/County Manager Association featuring UCA managing director Gavin Luter, Caitlin Stene (Sun Prairie), Inga Cushman (Cottage Grove), Marie Koko (UW–Madison La Follette School of Public Affairs), Emmeline Prattke (UW–Madison College of Letters & Science SuccessWorks), and Travis Coenen (Wrightstown) | [February 29, 2024](#)

UW–Madison 175th Anniversary: Summer 2023 and 2024

Showcasing partnerships around Wisconsin during the summer of 2023, UniverCity Alliance hosted community events in Pepin County, Milwaukee, and Wausau as a part of the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s 175th anniversary celebration. UniverCity is participating in the UW–Madison State Tour during summer 2024.

State Government Partnership

UniverCity partnered with Wisconsin’s Office of The Secretary of State to address improving internal efficiency and processes. The projects included modernizing and digitizing records,

including oaths of office, and updating processes for state document authentication.

LoGIC: Local Government Innovation Circles

In partnership with the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and the City of Eau Claire, UniverCity Alliance is convening local government officials who are in similar positions to facilitate data-informed discussions about best practices and explore opportunities for collaborative work. The first Local Government Innovation Circle (LoGIC) was about economic development policies and attracted participants from 15 communities. The next session will focus on fiscal stability and gathering information from Wisconsin municipal finance directors.



Creating a Ho-Chunk Nation Traveling Museum

UniverCity Alliance connected the Village of Waunakee with UW–Madison senior academic curator of anthropology Liz Leith and students in Anthropology 405: Introduction to Museum Studies in Anthropology to research what a traveling museum exhibit focusing on the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin might look like. This project, funded by a grant with Wisconsin Humanities, builds off the Village of Waunakee’s work with UniverCity from 2020–23 that focused on cultural awareness and relationship building with the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin.



Small Communities Grant-Writing Effort

UniverCity Alliance is partnering with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to connect smaller communities across Wisconsin that need grant-writing support for opportunities associated with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation. So far, students have provided grant-writing support to Peshtigo, Almena, and Marquette. The Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies within the School of Human Ecology identifies, trains, and manages the students.



Top: Pepin County partners and UniverCity celebrated their partnership during the UW–Madison State Tour. Middle: Recruiting local government’s next workforce generation was the focus of a UniverCity Alliance-led panel during the Wisconsin City/County Manager Association Conference in Elkhart Lake. Bottom: UniverCity celebrates the 50th anniversary of Mosquito Hill Nature Center in Outagamie County. Photo by Gregory T Photography

UniverCity Alliance on Campus

UniverCity Alliance supports a growing network of interdisciplinary leaders based at UW–Madison who are inspired to improve local governments and foster innovation in communities of all sizes. To build this network, UniverCity meets with campus departments, leads the Urban Futures Community of Practice, participates in campuswide conferences, and connects with students.

UniverCity Alliance Celebration:

September 8, 2023

UniverCity Alliance celebrated partnerships with Wisconsin communities and UW–Madison students, staff, and faculty.

UW–Madison Division of Extension Annual All-Colleague Conference:

November 2, 2023

A panel during Extension's annual All Colleague Conference highlighted collaboration between Extension and UniverCity Alliance in Green, Dane, and Pepin counties.

Welcome to Your Urban Future Course:

Spring 2024

Now in its fourth year, Urban and Regional Planning 215: Welcome to Your Urban Future enrolled 140 students. The course was created by UniverCity Alliance in partnership with the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture.

Wisconsin Idea Conference:

April 9, 2024

At the second annual Wisconsin Idea Conference, UniverCity led a panel discussing how to support Wisconsin communities looking for resources to make their communities welcoming to all people.

Earth Fest Kickoff: Friday, April 19

UniverCity promoted partnership opportunities during the Earth Fest Kickoff event.

Wisconsin Welcome:

September 21, 2023

UniverCity, the Morgridge Center for Public Service, and the City of Madison greeted new students at a Wisconsin Welcome event.

Wisconsin School of Business Sustainable Development Goals Poster Session: December 13, 2023

With support from UniverCity, Real Estate 420/720: Urban and Regional Economics studied the sustainable development component of Madison's comprehensive plan and aligned them with global Sustainable Development Goals, which provided frameworks for moving city priorities forward while incorporating sustainability across all projects. They shared their findings and recommendations with city leaders and staff during a poster session.

Weston Roundtable Lecture:

February 15, 2024

UniverCity Alliance hosted David Keith, a professor at the University of Chicago, on campus for a Weston Roundtable lecture on February 15. Keith, who founded the Climate Systems Engineering Initiative, introduced the audience to solar engineering and argued for a research program to reduce uncertainties.

CommUnity Conference: April 16, 2024

UniverCity helped shape a panel about civic health and local government during the CommUnity Conference hosted by the Center for Community and Nonprofit Studies.

Teaching & Learning Symposium:

May 16, 2024

At the Teaching & Learning Symposium, UniverCity led a panel discussion exploring how teaching and learning innovation in the classroom can improve relationships with the state.



The inaugural UniverCity Alliance Celebration brought together community partners from across Wisconsin and UW-Madison instructors, staff, and students. Photo by Hedi LaMarr Rudd



Wisconsin School of Business students add final touches to their posters before a poster session. Photo by Paul L. Newby, II / UW-Madison Wisconsin School of Business



Urban and Regional Planning 215: Welcome to Your Urban Future provides students with an overview of local government. Photo by Abigail Becker

Meet the UniverCity Alliance Scholars

The UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program supports Wisconsin communities — cities, counties, villages, towns, and more — by starting projects that require research, concept formation, data analysis, and other specialized skills. Open to graduate and undergraduate students at UW–Madison, the scholars gain real-world experiences and apply classroom learning to community-identified projects.

Upon completion of the project, each scholar receives a \$1,500 scholarship that is generously provided through the philanthropy of UW alumni John Bauman, Curt Fuszard, Colleen Goggins, John Holton, Jane Mandula, Bill and Karen Monfre, John Nelson, Pat Thiele, and others.

Launched in the fall 2023 semester, the inaugural cohort included nine students who worked with a total of seven communities across Wisconsin. Ultimately, the students:

- **Created a social marketing plan to boost biking and walking to work in Marinette**
- **Proposed a plan to become a bike-friendly designated community in Cottage Grove**
- **Analyzed walkability improvements to a downtown area in Wausau**
- **Explored alternatives to single use plastics in Marinette**
- **Analyzed the costs and benefits of maintaining Eau Claire and Altoona lakes**
- **Studied how to encourage youth involvement in local government in Milton**
- **Developed a historic preservation framework in Shorewood**
- **Analyzed tax incremental financing incentives in peer communities for Wausau**
- **Built a GIS map to visually display 911 calls for service in Madison**

Meet the Scholars



Samuel Adeapin



Elisabeth Bykowski



Sam Kaufmann



Anna Kleiber



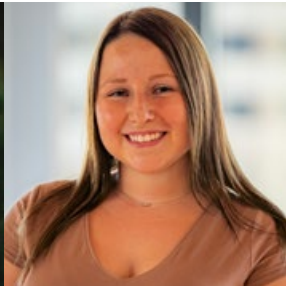
Ned Littlefield



UniverCity Alliance Scholars celebrate during an event on September 8, 2023 in Memorial Union. Photo by Hedi LaMarr Rudd



Melina Nguyen



Shealynn Wegner



Pearly Wong



Lily Yalowitz

Awards and Recognition

EPIC-N Awards (Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities - Network)

EPIC-N Partnership of the Year 2023: Waunakee

EPIC-N recognized UniverCity and the Village of Waunakee as recipients of the EPIC-N Partnership of the Year Award in 2023. Waunakee worked with UniverCity over several years to pursue social justice, racial equity, inclusion, and community civility. Students completed 16 projects over two academic years that addressed local ordinances, village employment practices, housing, relationship building with the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, education, and mental health.

Day of the Badger 2024

In 2023, for the first time, UniverCity Alliance participated in Day of the Badger, an annual celebration hosted by the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association. It's a spirited day of giving that unites alumni, friends, and students to strengthen the university, generate pride as a Badger community, and raise funds for work happening across UW–Madison. In 2024, UCA secured a \$20,000 participation match from four donors, which helped secure funding for the UCA Scholars Program for next academic year.

Knapp Bequest

For the second year in a row, UniverCity has received funding through an internal competition called the Kemper Knapp Bequest to support student interns with scholarship and stipends as they conduct individual projects that address City of Madison priorities.

University World News

A global higher education publication featured UniverCity in an article highlighting how UW–Madison interprets the Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Community (EPIC) model and the impacts seen across Wisconsin through local government partnerships. By being included on an international platform, UniverCity can serve as an example of a university program successfully engaging with communities. Read the article at go.wisc.edu/dtrb5h

Sustainable Development Goals

To advance sustainability in communities across the state, UniverCity frames local projects through the lens of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Created with input from communities around the globe, SDGs represent the things that matter to communities — food, education, health care, a prosperous economy, and a clean and healthy environment.

UniverCity centers its work across Wisconsin on two SDGs: SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. By incorporating the SDGs into its projects, UniverCity joins cities and universities across the globe in linking the goals to priorities of local governments.

SDG 360 Thinking: Tools

Under the leadership of Lori DiPrete Brown, Director of Global Health and Human Ecology, Director of 4W Initiative, and Cochair of UCA, the Data Science Institute created a [web-based visualization tool \(sdg360thinking.org\)](https://sdg360thinking.org) that helps users relate their work to social equity, environmental care, and economic prosperity, as well as identify best practices, solutions, and innovations. This tool codifies the [SDG 360 Thinking approach \(go.wisc.edu/360thinking\)](https://go.wisc.edu/360thinking) for local

governance and supports localization and clear communication.

UniverCity is also launching a digital badge that will train participants on how to connect local government projects with SDGs.

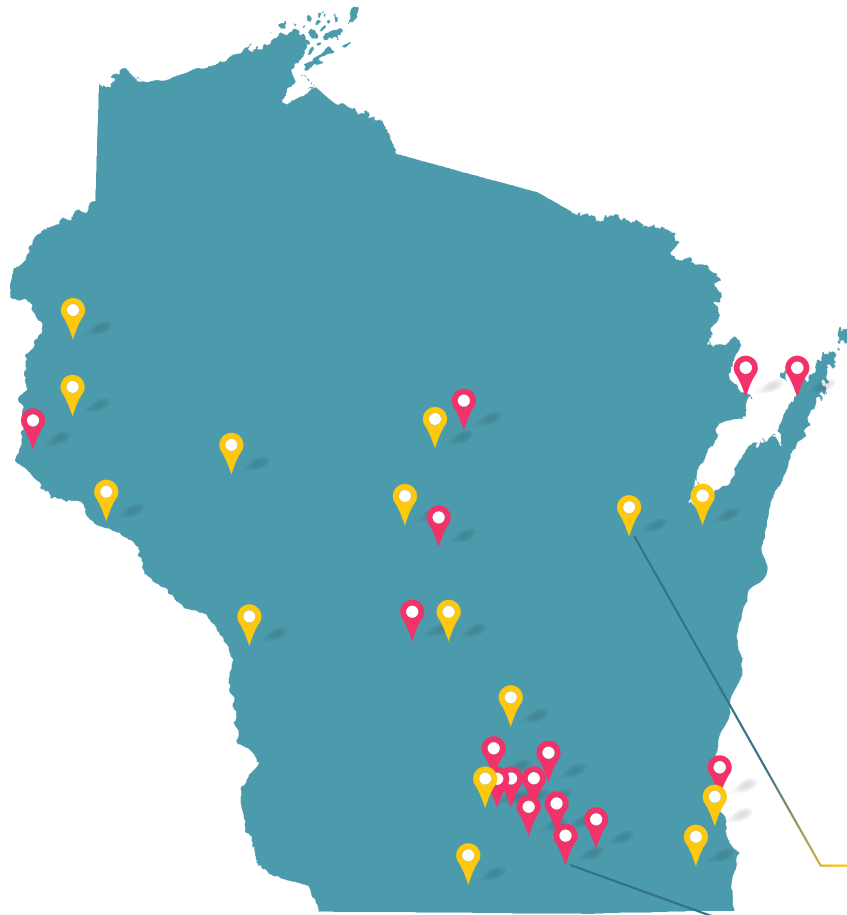
SDG360 Thinking: In the Classroom

With research support from UW–Madison students over the summer 2023 term, five cities from across the nation aligned their local strategic plans with global sustainability goals to advance wellbeing in their communities.

The cities of Fitchburg, Wisconsin; Tigard, Oregon; Cleveland, Ohio; Maplewood, Missouri; and Jonesboro, Georgia partnered with the School of Human Ecology's Civil Society and Community Studies class taught by DiPrete Brown to analyze city plans in the context of the SDGs. The connections to these cities were facilitated by the Mayors Innovation Project (MIP), a peer learning network for mayors committed to shared prosperity, environmental sustainability, and efficient democratic government. MIP is a project of UW–Madison's High Road Strategy Center, which provides support to UniverCity.



UniverCity Amplifies the Wisconsin Idea: 2016–24



2,795

students

406

projects

9

partner institutions

*data collected from 2016–24

15 Counties

16 Cities, villages, towns, and groups

Adams County
Brown County
City of Madison
City of Marinette
City of Milton
City of Monona
City of River Falls
City of Stoughton

City of Wausau
City of Wisconsin Rapids
Columbia County
Dane County
Eau Claire County
Green County
Koshkonong Creek Collaborative
La Crosse County

Marathon County
Milwaukee County
Outagamie County
Pepin County
Polk County
Racine County
St. Croix County
Town of Germantown

Village of Cottage Grove
Village of Egg Harbor
Village of Marshall
Village of Shorewood
Village of Waunakee
Whitewater Unified School District
Wood County



UniverCity 2023-26 partners are the villages of DeForest and Mount Pleasant; the city of Waupaca; and Chippewa, Jackson, and Iowa counties

By the Numbers: UniverCity 2023-24



34

faculty, instructional
staff, and researchers

37

community
project leads

342

students

81

projects

25

courses

9

UW-Madison
schools and colleges

1

partner university:
River Falls



VILLAGE OF COTTAGE GROVE
MUNICIPAL BUILDING

221



COTTAGE GROVE

Cottage Grove is working with UniverCity to address transportation, internal communication, and arts, culture, and tourism.
Photo courtesy of Cottage Grove



VILLAGE OF COTTAGE GROVE



1 Exploring Design Options for West Cottage Grove Road (CTH BB) | Jan Kucher and Derek Hungness

Civil and Environmental Engineering 578: Senior Capstone Design

This roadway redesign project addresses Cottage Grove's goals to develop a corridor that maintains traffic operations while increasing multimodal accessibility and considering future growth in the area. Plans included measures to calm traffic, improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, and address parking, transit, and streetscaping.

2 Developing a Public Art Strategy | John Surdyk

Management and Human Resources 746/747: Impact Consulting for Arts and Cultural Organizations

To position Cottage Grove as an arts and culture hub, this report recommends establishing a formal public art strategy, creating a public art commission, and collaborating with local artists and organizations.

3 Assessing Spaces for Use in Arts and Cultural Programming | John Surdyk

Management and Human Resources 746/747: Impact Consulting for Arts and Cultural Organizations

By working closely with Cottage Grove, using historical data, drawing on outside research about the nature and process of public art, and spending time in the community, graduate students recommended three sites for public art installations.

4 Pursuing the Walk & Bike Friendly Community Designation | Amy Gangl

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

To assist Cottage Grove in becoming an official bicycle-friendly community, this project includes an implementation plan with recommendations to apply for designation through the League of American Bicyclists.

5 **Designing the New “Bark Park” for Cottage Grove | James Steiner**

Landscape Architecture 399: Independent Student Research

Landscape architecture students created concept design plans for a new dog park in Cottage Grove that aims to be a fun destination for residents.

6 **Increasing Safety at Intersection of Cottage Grove Road and Main Street | Andi Bill**

Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory (TOPS)

The Wisconsin Local Technical Assistance Program offered targeted safety measures that could be implemented immediately to increase safety of the intersection.

7 **Surveying the Cottage Grove Community About Economic Development Strategies | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

To support Cottage Grove as it plans for a growing population, interdisciplinary engineering students created a visual preference survey to collect public input and encourage participation in local economic development projects. The students suggest adding more housing and entertainment options, like a movie theater, to Cottage Grove.

8 **Amplifying Green Space Connectivity in Cottage Grove | Eric Schuchardt**

Landscape Architecture 610: Landscape Architecture Seminar - Capstone I

This capstone project explored potential locations for new and accessible trails and a park redesign that will align with Cottage Grove’s 2023 Park and Open Space Plan. Implementing these goals aims to increase community connection, attract visitors, stimulate business opportunities, and enhance the community’s natural environment.

9 **Designing Park Redevelopment and Trail Connection Strategies | Eric Schuchardt**

Landscape Architecture 611: Senior Project in Landscape Architecture Studio - Capstone II

This capstone project offers Cottage Grove an Open Space and Trail Framework Plan that addresses park redevelopment and trail connection strategies. The plan identifies opportunities and constraints of RG Huston Park to make the space more engaging to community members.

A Walk in the (Dog) Park

As part of a UniverCity Alliance project, the UW–Madison Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture helps the Village of Cottage Grove make the most of a new piece of land.

By Isabella Ruder, College of Letters & Science

Put your paws together for a new potential dog park destination — Bark Park. When new housing developments began to materialize and developers granted a piece of land to Cottage Grove, the village recruited a landscape architect and two UW landscape architecture majors to design an outside space for the growing community to gather.

James Steiner, a senior lecturer in the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture, is collaborating with senior design fellow Keegan Ripley and sophomore Henry Hinchliff to create a dog park destination for the Village of Cottage Grove.

Cottage Grove’s municipal offices tasked these three team members with creating a functional dog park out of a nongeometric, hilly piece of land. The challenging prospect excites them.

“Hands-on experience is the best way to learn with design,” says Steiner. “You can talk about theory and can do academic projects, but you really have to get out into the world and find out how this process works.”

From scouting the site to designing layout concepts, both students gained important experience connecting course concepts to real-world projects.

“Having hands-on experience brings you back to reality to find a common ground of pushing innovation while staying realistic,” says Ripley. “You have limitations so you have to work with them not against them.”

When first seeing the site, one obstacle was immediately obvious — a steep hill. Bulldozing an entire hill would not be feasible. In classes, keeping a budget or managing the length of a project may not be a student’s first thought. But working with professionals allows the students to find realistic solutions to problems. They worked on transforming potential weaknesses into must-see, “Instagrammable” moments.

Everyone deserves to experience the picture-worthy view, but as all Bascom Hill walkers know, hills can be physically taxing. Incorporating features in the landing area brings the

ultimate dog-park adventure without walking up the hill.

Although a final design hasn’t been chosen, several features are guaranteed to be present in the park. From a pavilion for gatherings and an abundance of shade trees for comfort during all seasons to large and small dog areas with graphic signs or sculptures, there will be something for everyone to enjoy once a final design has been approved and the park is completed. The design team’s goal of everyone accessing the space and experiencing features of the park remained at the forefront of their thoughts while designing layout concepts.

While working to put the pieces together, the team is working closely with the village. From visiting the site and meeting with Cottage Grove representatives to presenting concept designs at public meetings, the community will be providing feedback once the final conceptual designs are completed.



Photo by iStock / skrasil

“A dog park fills a void that the village currently has. In the coming years, I think this unique space will allow for dog owners to come together and enjoy a new amenity in Cottage Grove,” says Sean Brusegar, the director of parks, recreation, and forestry for the village.

According to the three team members, that’s the goal of any green space — to bring people together in nature and create happy moments.

“I want to look back when I retire and be able to bring my kids, family and friends to spaces I designed 50 years ago and show them this is my legacy,” says Ripley. “This is how we’ve impacted the community by bringing them outdoors and into nature.”

Read an extended version of this story at go.wisc.edu/19xyx6



DANE CO.

The forest of the UW Arboretum and Lake Wingra make up the foreground of this image featuring the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus and the downtown Madison isthmus. Photo by Jeff Miller / UW-Madison

Dane County

SDGs:



The Dane County Board of Supervisors partnered with UniverCity Alliance from 2017–19. Starting in 2022, UniverCity has supported Dane County by pairing two students each semester to work on policy analysis projects.

1 **Researching Sustainability Measures for the Alliant Energy Center | Amy Gangl**

Dane County Policy Analysis Program

This policy research report explores sustainability and community engagement strategies for convention centers that the Dane County Alliant Energy Center could implement to become an appealing venue for event planners and to become a better neighbor.

2 **Exploring the Scope of Pay for Success and Social Impact Bond Interventions in Dane County | Amy Gangl**

Dane County Policy Analysis Program

This report analyzes two programs — Pay for Success (PFS) and Social Impact Bonds (SIB) — that are considered methods for tackling complex social issues with the backing of private capital, outcomes-based financing, and comprehensive evaluation.

3 **Reviewing Dane County’s Water Recreation Opportunities | Amy Gangl**

Dane County Policy Analysis Program

Students reviewed the Dane County Land and Water Resources’ Water Recreation Study of Lakes from 2012, created a survey, and conducted community outreach to help shape the next iteration of the plan.

Dane County Collaboration Creates Research Opportunities for UW–Madison Students

UW–Madison students can engage in applied research as policy analysis interns through a collaboration between UniverCity Alliance, the Department of Political Science, and Dane County.

By Abigail Becker

Through a partnership with Dane County, University of Wisconsin–Madison students are gaining policy analysis experiences and building a stronger connection to their community.

Four students worked with the Dane County Board of

Supervisors as policy analysis interns during the 2023–24 academic year, addressing expansive topics like sustainability measures at the Alliant Energy Center, financing and social services delivery models, and water recreation.

“It’s very easy to be a student at the UW and be in your own campus bubble,” said Cuauhtemoc Guizar, who graduated in May 2024 with degrees in community and nonprofit leadership and political science, as well as certificates in Chicano and Latino studies and public policy. “This experience gave me more of an understanding of the political landscape of Dane County, the people who live here, and the policies and programs that impact them.”

Guizar, Vanessa Gardner, Samantha Givich, and Anna Jonckheer worked for Dane County as policy analysis interns through UniverCity Alliance and the Department of Political Science.

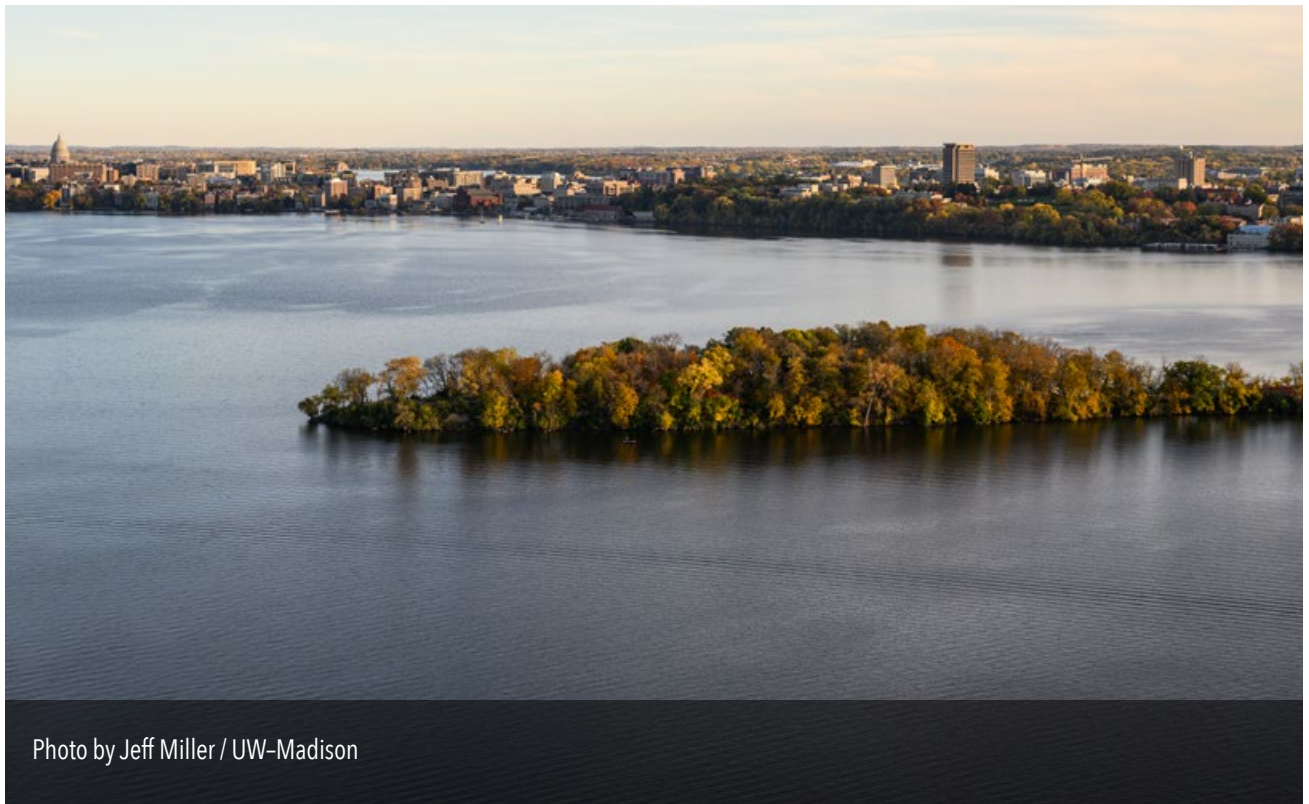


Photo by Jeff Miller / UW–Madison

The Dane County Board of Supervisors was a UniverCity partner from 2017–19, and starting in 2022, UniverCity has supported the county by pairing two students each semester to work on policy analysis projects. Dane County Board Chair Patrick Miles said the partnership provides an opportunity for the county and UW–Madison to learn from and support one another.

“The county board uses innovative ideas in policy-making, and the partnership with UniverCity Alliance supports this effort while also providing a chance for students to learn from experienced public policy analysts and understand the impact of local county government,” Miles said.

For Guizar’s project, he analyzed two programs — Pay for Success and Social Impact Bonds — that are considered methods for tackling complex social issues with the backing of private capital, outcomes-based financing, and comprehensive evaluation.

Gardner, who graduated in May 2024 with degrees in community and environmental sociology and a certificate in gender and women’s studies, and Givich are putting together the beginning pieces of a survey that will ask county residents about their water recreation use. Their work will provide the first steps in future analysis and inform the update of the existing water recreation plan from 2012.

Givich plans to graduate in December with degrees in political science and environmental studies and certificates in public policy and gender and women’s studies.

Givich and Gardner described feeling more confident creating surveys after their experience and being excited to work with real dataset and not sample information for coursework. Additionally, Gardner said the experience connected her more to her local community.

“As a transfer student, it was hard to get involved,” Gardner said. “It’s been really nice to find something that I can get involved in and feel really at home and really

welcomed by [Dane County and UW–Madison staff]. It’s been really fun.”

Jonckheer, who graduated in May with a degree in political science, explored sustainability and community engagement strategies for convention centers that the Dane County Alliant Energy Center could implement to become an appealing venue for event planners and to become a better neighbor.

“It was exciting for me to have the opportunity to explore the local governance here a little bit more,” Jonckheer said. Being from California, this experience also fostered a closer tie to the place she’s called home for the past four years. “Being able to actually connect with the people who have lived here all their lives who are really doing great work in the community made me feel a lot more connected to Madison in a greater capacity.”

Amy Gangl, director of undergraduate studies in the Department of Political Science, emphasized the value in students engaging in applied research and on-the-ground policy problems.

“Students are always looking for hands-on opportunities and research, and this was applied research where you actually can feel like you are making a difference,” Gangl said.

For more information about UniverCity and Dane County visit university.wisc.edu/danecounty.



EAU CLAIRE CO.

A view of the Chippewa River in downtown Eau Claire. Photo by Megan Zabel Holmes / Visit Eau Claire



EAU CLAIRE COUNTY

SDGs:



1 **Developing a Sustainable Fleet Vehicle Strategy for Eau Claire County | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

This strategic roadmap includes recommendations to improve cost-effectiveness, right-size Eau Claire County's fleet, reduce rotation times, increase overall utilization, and foster collaboration across departments for more efficient operations. Students also created an optimization model that could be used to help the county determine when to sell fleet vehicles.

2 **Developing Strategies for Riverbank Stabilization | Jan Kucher and Derek Hungness**

Civil and Environmental Engineering 578: Senior Capstone Design

Erosion along the Eau Claire River leads to an estimated 40,000 cubic yards of annual transported sediment, threatening recreational activities on Lake Altoona. Students analyzed three approaches to dealing with sediment management and erosion control. Implementing bank stabilization strategies that are recommended in this report targets the root cause of sedimentation by preventing erosion.

3 **Analyzing the Costs and Benefits of Sediment Removal from the Eau Claire River | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

This report addresses sediment accumulation in Eau Claire River lake impoundments and assesses the benefits and costs of four different options. The recommended strategy allows the county to maintain the health and presence of Lakes Altoona and Eau Claire while also considering the recreational and aesthetic benefits of these lakes.

4 **Developing a Conservation Plan for Lake Altoona | Arlyne Johnson and Nathan Schulfer**

Environmental Studies 972: Conservation Planning

Lake Altoona experiences recurring algae blooms that can be harmful to human and animal health. This conservation plan recommended implementing a sustainable landscaping awareness campaign and hiring an Eau Claire watershed coordinator with the goals of reducing the number of days when beaches are closed and the amount of sedimentation that builds up in the lake.



Eau Claire is studying how sand moves down the river, and how sediment affects Eau Claire and Altoona lakes. Photo by Gavin Luter

5 **Protecting Lake Health from Harmful Algae Blooms through Public Engagement and Education** | *Jessica Hua*

Forest and Wildlife Ecology 599: Wildlife Research Capstone

To support Eau Claire County's efforts to protect lake health from harmful algae blooms, forest and wildlife ecology students generated educational resources for elementary schools and public libraries and designed a community science kit to support county efforts at measuring lake health.

6 **Conducting an Energy Audit of Three Eau Claire County Facilities** | *Jim Tinjum*

Engineering Professional Development 669: Sustainable Systems Engineering Capstone

For this report, students conducted an energy audit of the government center, jail, and maintenance building and recommended energy efficiency measures and renewable energy options.

7 **Charting the Path to Carbon Neutrality: Sustainable Energy Recommendations for Eau Claire County** | *Scott Williams*

Environmental Studies 810: Energy Analysis and Policy Capstone

To assist Eau Claire County in meeting energy goals, this report includes a strategic plan to achieve carbon neutrality initiatives for county facilities.

8 **Exploring Green Tech Solutions to Prevent Blue-Green Algae** | *Andrea Hicks*

Civil and Environmental Engineering 420: Environmental Sustainability Engineering

Undergraduate engineering students researched eight possible strategies utilizing sustainable technology to prevent blue-green algae from growing in Lake Altoona.

Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies Students Offer Action Plan for Lake Altoona

Environmental conservation MS students partnered with Eau Claire County through UniverCity Alliance to develop a conservation action plan for Lake Altoona.

By Abigail Becker

Located at the nexus of the Eau Claire River watershed, Lake Altoona is a destination attraction for swimming, boating, and fishing. But in 2023, there were 71 days when bacteria or algae affected the beach.

A group of Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies students in an accelerated project-based master's program aims to change that by implementing environmental conservation strategies they recommended after holistically studying Lake Altoona.

"The process involves looking at all of the contributing factors that impact the water quality," said Shannon Roznoski, who is in the environmental conservation MS program. "We mapped out all the threats, which include nutrient runoff, sedimentation, bacteria levels, and harmful bacteria that comes from various sources and does lead to algae blooms."

Additionally, the students worked in collaboration with

representatives of the Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition (ECRWC) to create a conservation action plan for Lake Altoona.

Matt Steinbach, the environmental sciences division manager at the Eau Claire City-County Health Department, said the students were "very eager to learn about the situation and provide practical solutions for Eau Claire County to implement."

"This partnership provided a unique opportunity for the county to prioritize this project and for the students to gain collaborative experience working on a complex problem," Steinbach said.

While environmental issues can be "spoken of on a grand, existential level," program coordinator Meghan Kautzer said the opportunity to work with Eau Claire County focused the students' work.

"By working with Eau Claire County, students are steeped in the importance and direct impact of focusing on the local, community level," Kautzer said.

The environmental conservation program, which includes a total of 22 students who will complete the program in August, fits well with UniverCity's model of pairing a community-based project with coursework because it "embraces putting science to action," Kautzer said.

Read an extended version of this story at go.wisc.edu/4136j2



A woman balances on a stand up paddleboard on Half Moon Lake in Eau Claire County. Photo by Megan Zabel Holmes / Visit Eau Claire

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CITY OF MADISON



When the City of Madison — and local Wisconsin governments in general — have a research question, they come to UniverCity Alliance. As an entry point for the community to UW–Madison, UniverCity is equipped to address the emerging needs of Madison.

1 **Creating a Publicly Searchable 911 Database | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

This GIS project resulted in a publicly searchable database for 911 calls of service that would make data more accessible and save Madison Police Department data analysts time when fielding public data requests.

2 **Wisconsin Heat Health Network**

The Wisconsin Heat Health Network is working to collect and analyze data that will inform a warning system in Madison and Milwaukee based on health outcomes that considers mortality and weather data. The project continues to evolve by working collaboratively with the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI).

This network includes collaborators from UW–Madison’s campus, including UCA, WICCI, and the Global Health Institute, in addition to Dane County, the cities of Madison and Milwaukee, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and climatologist Larry Kalkstein of Applied Climatologists, Inc.

3 **Analyzing Madison’s Culture Collective Program | Amy Washbush**

The Center for Community & Nonprofit Studies’ (the CommNS) Co-Create team interviewed participants of Madison’s pop-up shop program to learn about strengths and challenges of the new initiative and determine future recommendations and lessons learned for other communities.

4 **Conducting Student Affordable Housing Study**

UniverCity Alliance secured funding from Madison to support a student affordable housing study. This launched an effort to secure partners on campus and has resulted in the university contracting with an outside firm to conduct a market study and comprehensive survey of students about their housing experiences.

5 **Building Logic Models to Create Capacity within Community Development** | Sara Lindberg

Public Health 786: Planning and Management to Promote Health

This project aims to build the city's capacity for working with nonprofit partners by creating logic models that ensure city departments are driven by results-based frameworks.



A view of Madison's State Street pedestrian mall, just east of the UW-Madison's campus. Photo by Jeff Miller

UniverCity Alliance Matches Madison Priorities with Student Interns

Continuing financial support from the Knapp Bequest allows UniverCity Alliance to pair student interns with projects that address priorities of the City of Madison.

By Abigail Becker

When the City of Madison has a research question, UniverCity Alliance wants to help find the answer.

Now, with continuing support from the Knapp Bequest, UniverCity Alliance (UCA) is prepared to support student interns with scholarship and stipends to conduct individual projects that address Madison priorities.

“As a program of UW–Madison — an anchor institution in the city — we feel it’s important to be responsive to our own local leaders,” UniverCity Alliance managing director Gavin Luter said. “We’re grateful for the Knapp Bequest and the ability to be a part of creating solutions to local challenges in Madison.”

With previous support from the Knapp Bequest, UniverCity has funded projects like an analysis of Culture Collectives, Madison’s pop-up shop program that launched in 2021 to support small-scale businesses of entrepreneurs of color.

Also, UniverCity supported research into Madison’s sick leave and gender equity to inform the city’s Human Resources Department rewrite of wage and life insurance plans. The analysis showed that women more often take sick leave and consequently have less

money available in retirement because sick leave funds subsidize the cost of insurance in retirement.

“This knowledge will now inform how the city proceeds with scoping the request for proposal for our next vendor to design equity considerations into service provision goals — an example of the Wisconsin Idea in action,” said City of Madison performance excellence specialist Karalyn Kratowicz.

These opportunities also provide UW with opportunities to put their skills into practice and learn alongside local government professionals.

Ben Koss, a recent UW graduate, worked on the data analysis project and appreciated the opportunity to become more proficient at using Excel and AI-powered tools like Dataiku. He said the experience solidified his interest in working with data and helped him transition to his current role as a business analyst in the customer billing department at Madison Gas and Electric.

“A hands-on experience is great, especially if you’re somebody who’s purpose driven [and] mission driven,” Koss said about the internship opportunity with UniverCity. “It’s a really good opportunity to help out within your local community.”

Read an extended version of this story at
go.wisc.edu/sj1j76



MARINETTE

The Marinette Community REC center features a turf center for baseball, softball, and soccer games; a walking track, courts for pickleball, tennis, and basketball; and an indoor and outdoor ice rink. Photo courtesy of City of Marinette

CITY OF MARINETTE

SDGs:



1 **Improving Housing Options for the Next Generation of Marinette residents | Liz Bush**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Marinette's housing stock is not keeping pace with population growth and leads to many local employees living outside city limits. This project recommends three evidence-based approaches to improve housing in Marinette: create a survey for top employers about their employees' attitudes and needs for housing, collect data on barriers to accessing housing and what makes Marinette attractive to residents; and create an infographic describing health benefits of employees living in the community targeted to employers.

2 **Attracting Young People to the City of Marinette | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

To attract new and younger residents to Marinette, this project recommends consistently gathering feedback from youth, building a presence on social media, and emphasizing quality of life measures like affordable housing, accessible healthcare and transportation, and recreational opportunities.

3 **Improving Micro-Mobility in the City of Marinette | Liz Bush**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Promoting the culture and increasing utilization of micro-mobility in Marinette will lead to economic, environmental, and health benefits. This report recommends community and company engagement strategies in addition to safety changes to promote a properly functioning micro-mobility environment.

4 **Reducing Single-Use Plastic Grocery Bags in Marinette, Wisconsin | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

Although Marinette cannot implement a ban on plastic bags due to state law, this report outlines policy tools and strategies that city officials can leverage to reduce the consumption of single-use plastic bags and encourage behavior shifts toward pro-environmental behaviors.

5 **Assessing Soft Mobility and Micro Mobility in Marinette, Wisconsin | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

Marinette seeks to build a more connected network of bicycling and pedestrian routes in an effort to provide transportation alternatives to cars. This micro-mobility assessment provided Marinette with strategies to improve non-motorized transportation options through social marketing strategies.

6 **Implementing a Railroad Quiet Zone to Improve Community Health in Marinette | Liz Bush**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Multiple railways in Marinette cause noise pollution that disrupts residents' health and quality of life. This report outlines the benefits of establishing a Quiet Zone. It also includes resources to pursue funding that would upgrade safety measures at an individual crossing to achieve official Quiet Zone designation.

7 **Connecting the City of Marinette via a Trail and Path System | Eric Schuchardt**

Landscape Architecture 610: Landscape Architecture Seminar - Capstone 1

This design framework proposes to improve connectivity between outdoor recreational areas and green spaces through pedestrian and cycling paths, connecting Marinette to nearby communities through pedestrian-oriented infrastructure, and increase usability of existing green spaces.

8 **Amplifying Outdoor Connectivity for a Thriving Community | Eric Schuchardt**

Landscape Architecture 611: Senior Project in Landscape Architecture Studio - Capstone 2

This urban bike path network and green space design plan aims to bridge the gap between businesses and the natural areas that surround them through design solutions that bring new modes of transportation to the city.

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Reflect on Marinette Projects

By Abigail Becker

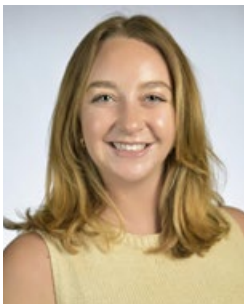
University of Wisconsin–Madison students Melina Nguyen and Lily Yalowitz worked on projects in partnership with Marinette as members of the inaugural UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program.



Melina Nguyen

Nguyen researched how Marinette could encourage reducing the use of single-use plastic, and Yalowitz assessed micro-mobility and offered strategies to improve non-motorized transportation options through social marketing strategies.

Nguyen is pursuing degrees in political science, people-environment geography, and environmental studies and a certificate in public policy. She expects to graduate in 2025. Yalowitz, who graduated in May 2024, received a degree in landscape architecture and urban studies and certificates in integrative design and environmental studies.



Lily Yalowitz

Why were you interested in applying for the UniverCity Alliance Scholars program?

Nguyen: I was excited [to use] what I've learned in my political science, public policy, and environmental studies classes toward a real-world project. This was a great opportunity for me to give back to the wider Wisconsin community.

Yalowitz: It was exciting to work on a project that felt meaningful and rather obtainable for a city to implement.

How did working with a community partner enhance your work?

Nguyen: Working with a community partner helped me feel connected to that community and better contextualize the research I was doing to fit in the scope of what was feasible for that city.

Yalowitz: Working with Tayla Carlson from the City of Marinette was a helpful element to the project because she was able to inform me of some of the citizens' concerns and opinions surrounding soft mobility in the city.

What did you learn from this experience?

Nguyen: My favorite aspect about my project through UCA was thinking through how I could apply academic research and case studies to the city I was working with. In other classes, I'd performed literature reviews but never with the intention of actually producing a deliverable that may inform future policies. I enjoyed crafting a detailed proposal using the knowledge that I had about my community and providing concrete suggestions for what could be learned from the data. I felt like a real social scientist!

Yalowitz: I enjoyed the creative process of discovering how and what I wanted to present for my project. I ran into a few dilemmas throughout my work, but it ended up teaching me a lot about working with a community partner on a timeframe. This experience taught me how to lead a self-directed project from the bottom-up, something I had never experienced before.

Has this work influenced or informed your post-graduation plans?

Nguyen: In my future career, I hope to work in local government on environmental regulations or policy, so this inside view of sustainability work within a local Wisconsin community was invaluable to me.

Yalowitz: My UCA experience has taught me that I am interested in improving access to soft-mobility commute alternatives and equitable transit-oriented development.

MILTON HOUSE MILTON


MILTON HOUSE
Erected in 1844 by Joseph Goodrich, this frontier inn is constructed of grout -- a mixture of gravel, lime, and water. An important stagecoach stop and transfer point, it was also a pre-Civil War station in the underground railroad, and is still connected by a secret escape tunnel to the old log cabin. In 1949 the Goodrich family donated the inn to the Milton Historical Society for a museum.
ERECTOR 1961

Milton House is a historic building that functioned as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Photo courtesy of City of Milton



City of Milton

SDGs:



1 **Surveying Public Perceptions of Belonging among Milton Community Members | Jennifer Dykema**

Undergraduate Research Scholars Program and UW Survey Research Center

A research team is working alongside the city of Milton to create a survey to measure public perceptions of belonging. This team is in the process of working with Milton through 2024 to collect data and analyze it.

2 **Measuring Youth Attitudes of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Milton | Joel Rogers**

Sociology 320: Community engaged research for solving urban problems, a high road practicum

Undergraduate sociology students researched the history of Milton to inform a survey designed to learn how Milton youth think about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

3 **Surveying Organizational Effectiveness through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging | Markus Brauer**

Brauer Group Lab: Independent Student Research

This project included creating a survey that was distributed to employees about their perceptions of belonging in Milton, analyzing data, and issuing recommendations based on the results.

4 **Developing a Social Media Toolkit for the Milton Youth Coalition | Ben Fisher**

Civil Society & Community Studies 812: Mixed-Methods in Community-Based Research

To continue engaging the community, the Substance Prevention Society and the Milton Youth Coalition are interested in using social media. This toolkit offers tools and strategies to navigate the social media landscape for youth.

5 **Measuring Effectiveness of Milton-Based Youth Organization | Ben Fisher**

Civil Society & Community Studies 812: Mixed-Methods in Community-Based Research

Using a qualitative research method called Photovoice, graduate students worked with Milton youth to gather data about the effectiveness of the Substance Prevention Society student group and its impact on local youth

6 **Decreasing Substance Use among LGBTQ Youth in Milton by Creating Community Safe Spaces | Liz Bush**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

This report highlights three evidence-based interventions for reducing substance use among LGBTQ youth in Milton: designating safe spaces for LGBTQ youth in communities, increasing community events focused on youth inclusivity, and identifying supportive adults in community settings.

7 **Encouraging Youth Involvement in Local Government | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

To better understand how to engage youth in local government, this report considers potential barriers, opportunities, and models for youth participation in local governance.

8 **Designing the Milton Public Library Pet Celebration Garden | Alfonso Morales**

Planning and Landscape Architecture 590: Landscape and Urban Studies Capstone Preparation

A conceptual site design was created to celebrate and honor pets that would be located in the Story Garden at the Milton Public Library.



School of Human Ecology students are working with the Milton Youth Coalition to address the goals of Milton High School students involved in the Substance Prevention Society. Photo by Abigail Becker

Milton Meet-Up: Community Visit Informs UniverCity Alliance Projects

During the visit, the University of Wisconsin–Madison group visited the Milton Public Library, connected with each other during lunch at city hall, and toured Milton House.

By Abigail Becker

Just before the second semester of project collaboration between University of Wisconsin–Madison and the City of Milton, Mayor Anissa Welch invited faculty, instructors, staff, and students to spend a day in the city getting to know the community.

Welch said the visit to Milton on January 19 created a “shared, lived experience” and fostered “thoughtful and dynamic discussions” between the students, faculty, and city project leaders.

“Students got a feeling for the history, culture, and overall nature of a small town in Wisconsin,” Welch said. “In addition, the visit demonstrated an appreciation and value for the mutually beneficial relationships local governments and the University of Wisconsin–Madison create through collaborative efforts.”

Milton is working with UniverCity to enhance communications, strengthen community connection, and create a culture of diversity, inclusion, belonging and lifelong learning; and build a resilient city. During the visit, the group visited the Milton Public Library, connected with each other during lunch at city hall, and toured Milton House — a historic building that was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Welch said it was really important to her that the students get a sense of the community that they are going to be impacting through their work.

“I want the students to know they will always have an imprint on our city forever going forward and that Milton is their community, too,” Welch said. “The relationships formed enrich all our lives both personally and professionally.”

Likewise, it is important to UniverCity Alliance managing director Gavin Luter that UW–Madison is also affected by Wisconsin communities.

“The visit to Milton allowed us to meet people face-to-face, learn from their experience, and understand how we can better meet their needs,” Luter said. “When we make it easy to facilitate relationships between UW–Madison and Wisconsin communities, like Milton, both are strengthened.”

This is the ethos of UniverCity. Through this partnership, both the university and Milton are learning from each other. Milton receives tangible recommendations, while students gain practical experiences – a “mutually advantageous” partnership, Welch said.

“The efforts drive innovation and build resilient communities that are making better informed decisions to provide high-quality services and standards of living for their residents,” Welch said. “Collaborations create an environment that fosters cross-cultural understanding, trust, new and fresh perspectives, and rejuvenates and motivates local government leaders.”

Read an extended version of this story at go.wisc.edu/87uyyc



CITY OF RIVER FALLS

RIVER FALLS

Community members gather outside the River Falls City Hall. Photo courtesy of City of River Falls



CITY OF RIVER FALLS



1 **Developing an Eco-Site and Business Plan for Community Compost Site | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

River Falls is looking for a business plan to relocate the community compost site to another city property. This project analyzed two options: hiring a full time employee to work at the front of the eco-site or implementing a fully automated system.

2 **Designing the Eco-Site Engineering Plan | Jan Kucher and Derek Hungness**

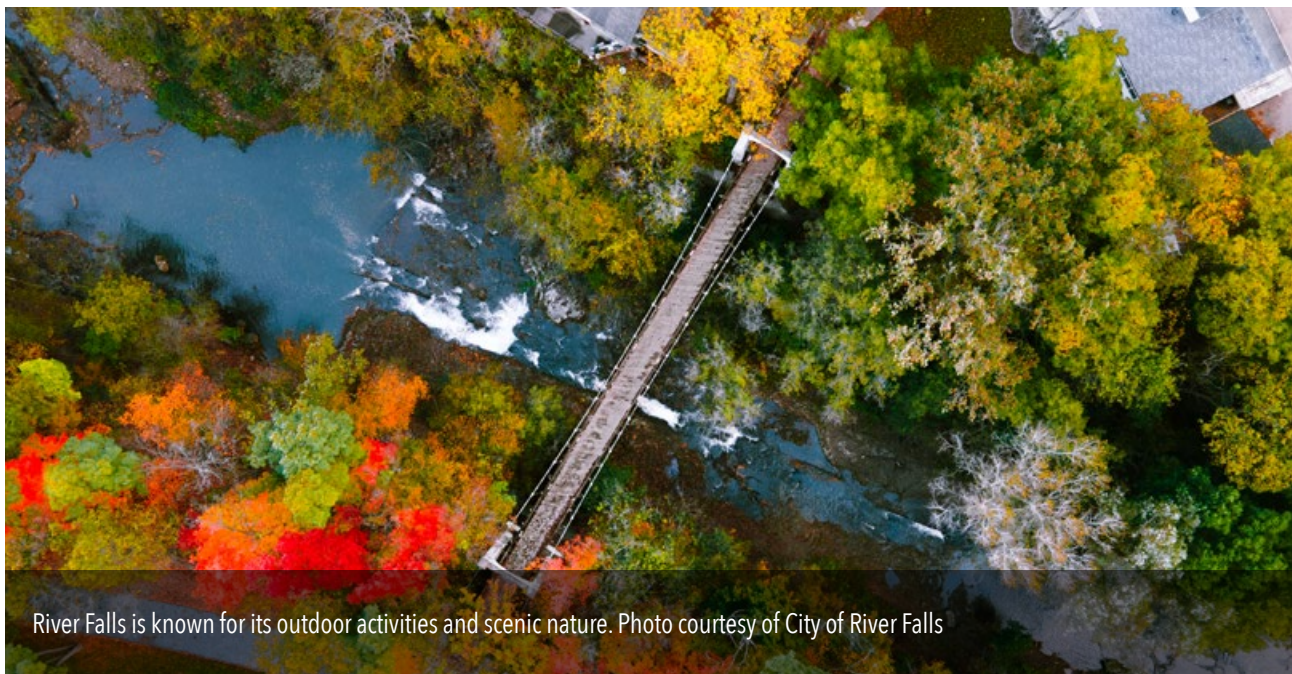
Civil and Environmental Engineering 578: Senior Capstone Design

As River Falls looks to relocate its composting facility, engineering students designed plans for a site with added services like electronic waste recycling and residential organic waste collection.

3 **Understanding and Acknowledging the History of River Falls | Kacie Lucchini Butcher**

History and Educational Policy Studies: Independent Student Research

This project researched key questions about the founding of River Falls and who owned and originally inhabited the land. Additionally, the report provides an updated historical narrative for the city to include on its website and in other communication materials.



River Falls is known for its outdoor activities and scenic nature. Photo courtesy of City of River Falls

4 **Creating a Sustainability Plan for Park Maintenance in De Sanctis Park | Doug Soldat**

Plant Pathology/Horticulture 262: Turfgrass Management Laboratory

This work will be completed in Fall 2024.

5 **Improving the Main and Cascade Intersection in River Falls | Andi Bill**

Traffic Operations and Safety Laboratory (TOPS)

This work is in progress and will be completed in Fall 2024.

6 **Developing Membership Engagement Strategies for Boards, Committees, Councils, Commissions | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

Interdisciplinary engineering students offered recommendations for reaching a wider audience of people and encouraging them to participate in official city boards, committees, commissions, and councils. They created a flyer, offered website improvements, and suggested creating youth positions.

7 **Assessing Feasibility and Planning Regional Shared-Ride Taxi Services | Manny Teodoro**

Public Affairs & Public Policy 869: Workshop in Public Affairs

Graduate students researched the feasibility of regionalizing a shared-ride taxi service that would provide riders more options. The cities of Hudson and New Richmond in addition to River Falls participated in the analysis.

Eco-Site Focus

As River Falls considers how to redesign its eco-site and add services for residents, UW–Madison students created a business and engineering plan to help move the city's project forward. River Falls public works manager Erica Ellefson shares more about the vision for the project and how it would benefit the River Falls community in this Q & A.

What is the vision for the River Falls eco-site?

The vision for the eco-site is to be an area where residents can dispose of their yard waste and pick up materials like compost and mulch for their gardens on their own schedule and not be dictated on day or time.



Erica Ellefson

Why does the community need an eco-site?

The community and surrounding communities depend on this site to drop off their tree limbs, grass clippings, and leaves.

Historically the site was open 24/7 and anyone could access the site. In 2022, the site was closed to nonresident use and an attendant was hired to verify eligibility. The residents want the site to be open at their convenience and not on a schedule and also want a location to drop their organic food waste.

How would an eco-site benefit River Falls?

The city already has an eco-site that accepts yard debris. The site is adjacent to a new housing development,

and there's a need to add [an entryway to] the housing development for emergency situations. The new eco-site design would be to move the site to the southern part of the city, adjacent to the dog park. To add a benefit, the new eco-site design would add organic food waste that could be dropped off by residents (not trucked or picked up at this time).

How will the two UniverCity projects support the River Falls eco-site?

One study was to optimize operations of the site (staffed vs technology) to have it be a revenue generating site and allow non-residents to use the site for a fee. The second study is looking at the feasibility to move the site to the location adjacent to the dog park, add food organics composting, and overall optimal design/layout of the site for efficiency.

What are the next steps on the eco-site project?

We will be designing the new street in 2025 that will require the current compost site to move. Since we have started the design/study now, it may allow us to phase to the new location over time instead of at a date on the calendar. Adding additional services and hours, times, and ease of use may reduce the community's being upset from moving from a centralized location to south of town where it may be a further drive to access.



ST. CROIX CO.

St. Croix County's Community Justice Collaborating Council approached UniverCity to work on increasing access to residential substance use treatment and researching opportunities for creating a sober living facility for women. Photo courtesy of St. Croix County



ST. CROIX COUNTY

SDGs:



1 **Improving Wraparound Substance Use Treatment for St. Croix County Treatment Court Participants** | Jess Link Reeve

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To address substance use among St. Croix County Treatment Court participants, this report recommends that St. Croix County implement an internal process improvement tool, make a policy change to allow treatment court participants access Minnesota treatment facilities, and develop collaborative relationships with local treatment providers.

2 **Creating a Sober Living Facility for Women Involved in the Justice System in St. Croix County** | Jess Link Reeve

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Currently, St. Croix County does not have a sober living facility for women to recover. This report provides researched practices for implementing a sober living facility that include the importance of siting a facility in a residential neighborhood with access to services, integrating services within the housing facility, and a four-month stay policy.

3 **Identifying Best Practices for Sober Living Housing (SLH) in St. Croix County** | Patti Coffey

Psychology 601: Issues in Prisoner Reentry

Informed by the lived experiences of individuals in St. Croix County and an evidence-based framework from empirical data, the strategies outlined in this report provide the best approaches for creating successful sober living housing for justice-involved women in St. Croix County.

4 **Mapping and Reviewing St. Croix County Jail Health Care Policies for Inmates** | Danielle Smith

Public Health 787: Applied Practice Experience (APEX)

This project reviewed St. Croix County Jail policies related to access to health care, emergency health care, medical screening, mental health services, and suicide prevention and intervention and offered recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of those housed in the facility.

5 **Reviewing Carceral Health Care Obligations in Wisconsin** | Danielle Smith

Public Health 787: Applied Practice Experience (APEX)

In this report of Wisconsin Department of Correction health care obligations, public health graduate students recommend the state evaluate existing procedures and to determine if they match legal requirements, best practices, and strategic priorities.

Issues in Prisoner Reentry Course Partners Students with Wisconsin Communities to Solve Local Challenges

By Mary Anderson, Department of Psychology

Just 230 miles from UW–Madison’s campus, St. Croix County’s Community Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) is reviewing a report provided by students in Psych 601: Issues in Prisoner Reentry. The report, Identifying best practices in sober living housing in St. Croix County, provides a framework based on data and interviews with individuals in the county.

Students who register for the class expect this kind of hands-on learning. As stated in her syllabus, Patti Coffey intends for students to gain a real world understanding of how psychology can contribute in a meaningful way to addressing the needs of formerly incarcerated individuals reentering communities.

So when the CJCC applied to UniverCity Alliance asking for help with their goals, Coffey’s students were ideal partners, excited to research ways to increase access to residential substance use treatment and explore opportunities for sober living facilities.

In preparation for their community-based learning experience, Coffey encouraged students to embrace the principle that decisions concerning a particular group of people should not be made without that group’s full and direct participation. In other words, she reminds them, “Nothing about them without them is for them.”

With that charge, students worked directly with the county’s justice-impacted individuals and council members

via phone, video conference, email, and text. A particular highlight for the students was a two-day site visit, offering them the opportunity to sit in on a drug treatment court session, as well as a chance to interview people with lived experience and tour a sober living house.

“Working with the students was enriching,” says Phil Galli, the county’s director of justice support services. “I was very impressed with their thoughtfulness in asking questions and their sense of responsibility in interviewing justice-involved persons. This includes giving these individuals a voice and elevating what they have to say.”

The report includes 14 recommendations for creating successful sober living housing for women, including offering life skills education programs, using already existing buildings with built-in privacy, and advocating for at least a six-month residency. Galli says the students’ report will inform policy and serve as discussion points for the CJCC’s work.

Adds Galli, “The partnership with UniverCity and UW–Madison has been rewarding for our county to gain an outside and fresh perspective to challenges we’ve been facing internally for quite some time.”

The partnership provided a fresh perspective for students as well. “This project and class opened my eyes to the challenges that individuals reintegrating from prison face and how difficult the process is,” says senior Dillon Rickaby. “I think there is a lot that we as a society could do to make the transition easier. Taking this class has impacted my view of our criminal justice system and the individuals that are affected by it.”

Read an extended version of this story at
go.wisc.edu/ydmpqh

Supporting justice-involved communities in St. Croix County

St. Croix County's Community Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) applied to UniverCity focus on increasing access to residential substance use treatment and researching opportunities for creating a sober living facility for women. Learn more about how the project will support the CJCC's goals in this Q&A from Phil Galli, the county's director of justice support services.

What was St. Croix County's goal for the project?

Continue exploring options for increased access to sober living housing for justice-involved individuals, specifically for women.

How will the Psych 601 report support these goals?

This research provides further options and information for our stakeholders to consider as we plan for how best

to address this deficiency in our county.

How did their visit inform the final report?

Students were able to meet with and interview several justice-involved individuals and hear from them first-hand how a lack of available and affordable housing affects their lives.

What did you appreciate about working with the UW-Madison students throughout this partnership?

The students took a genuine and concerned interest in not only the project but the impacted individuals they were interviewing.

How do you think this partnership will impact St. Croix County?

My hope is that our county will continue to acknowledge the feedback from impacted individuals and move to incorporate this into policy.



Psychology students traveled to St. Croix County to research options for sober living housing for justice-involved people. Photo courtesy of Patti Coffey



SHOREWOOD

UW-Madison journalism students visited the Village of Shorewood on October 24, 2023 to assess the village's communications needs. The group toured scenic and notable areas in Shorewood, starting at Atwater Park and Beach, shown here. Photo by Abigail Becker

VILLAGE OF SHOREWOOD

SDGs:



1 **Surveying the Community to Inform a Historic Preservation Framework | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

Informed by a survey of community residents about historic preservation, this report recommends partnering with the Shorewood Historical Society to organize community presentations on topics of interest.

2 **Improving Outreach Communication to Grow Community Engagement in the Village of Shorewood | Doug McLeod**

Journalism and Mass Communication 455: Creative Marketing Campaigns

Journalism students proposed a suite of new communications materials to provide tools to Shorewood that can help the village build community pride, distinguish it from surrounding localities, and communicate with current residents.

3 **Studying the Feasibility of Electrifying the Police Fleet in Shorewood, WI | Carey McAndrews**

Urban and Regional Planning: Professional Project

The Shorewood Police Department wanted to know if electrifying the police would be a sound fiscal decision. A master's student conducted simulations and a cost-benefit analysis and ultimately recommended that the village not electrify the fleet at this time.

Shorewood Visit Brings UW–Madison Strategic Communications Project to Life

During a visit to the village of Shorewood, a University of Wisconsin–Madison journalism class assessed the village’s communications needs.

By Abigail Becker

While strolling in Atwater Park along Lake Michigan and exploring the downtown central business district, University of Wisconsin–Madison journalism students experienced life in the village of Shorewood firsthand during a site visit.

These students partnered with Shorewood during the fall 2023 semester to create informational and persuasive campaign messages. Touring the community in person on October 24, 2023, provided the students with greater insight into how their work can meet Shorewood’s communication needs.

“Personally, I feel like Shorewood is best experienced for oneself rather than described,” assistant village manager Chris Anderson said. “I hope the essence of our community, one that is walkable, friendly, and ‘At the Edge of the City’ and the heart of everything’ was felt while they toured the village.”

Shorewood is partnering with UniverCity Alliance from 2022 through 2025. Through this partnership, the village connected with Evjue Centennial Professor Doug McLeod and his Journalism 455: Creative Campaign Messages class.

“UniverCity Alliance is always excited to make community site visits happen because they facilitate two-way learning between the students and local government partners,” UCA managing director Gavin Luter said. “Visiting Shorewood made the project come to life.”

‘New and Exciting Challenge’

While Shorewood uses a variety of communication tools to connect with the community, officials want to make sure they’re staying at the forefront of the ever-changing communications field. The students were tasked with reviewing the village’s current strategies and metrics and understanding if new platforms can be leveraged.

“My students get hands-on learning working with real clients, and in turn, we bring out knowledge and skills to Wisconsin communities: the epitome of the Wisconsin Idea,” McLeod said.

During the site visit, McLeod and his students met with village staff for a two-hour conversation about Shorewood’s current communications practices, a digital tour of the website, an overview of the village, and a question-and-answer session that will inform the students’ work.

“I thought the questions students asked about our internal and external audiences, the goals of the project, and associated deliverables were thoughtful and helped us reflect even beyond what we initially provided in our 2022 proposal [to work with UniverCity Year],” Anderson said.

Luter emphasized that the process of clarifying community issues and challenges is part of the benefit that UniverCity brings to Wisconsin local governments.

Following the discussion, the group toured scenic and notable areas in Shorewood. Starting at Atwater Park and Beach, the students took in the sweeping expanse of Lake Michigan and a public art piece created by Jaume Plensa. Then, the group walked along Oakland Avenue in the central business district, saw Shorewood High School, and explored Hubbard Park Lodge and Beer Garden along the bank of the Milwaukee River.

Visiting these local sites gave the students a greater understanding of how Shorewood residents interact within their community, which informed their communications campaigns.

“When working with our community partners, it is imperative that students meet those partners in person and experience life in their communities,” McLeod said.

The students ultimately presented several sets of ideas for new logos, social media posts, promotional videos and flyers, and merchandise designs. With these materials, the students aimed to provide tools to Shorewood that could help the village build community pride, distinguish it from surrounding localities, and communicate with current residents.

“The students have really benefited from working on this really challenging project that took us in a new direction from where we typically go during the course,” McLeod said.

For the students, the opportunities to work with a community partner and conduct a site visit were first-time experiences that will not only inform their project but also

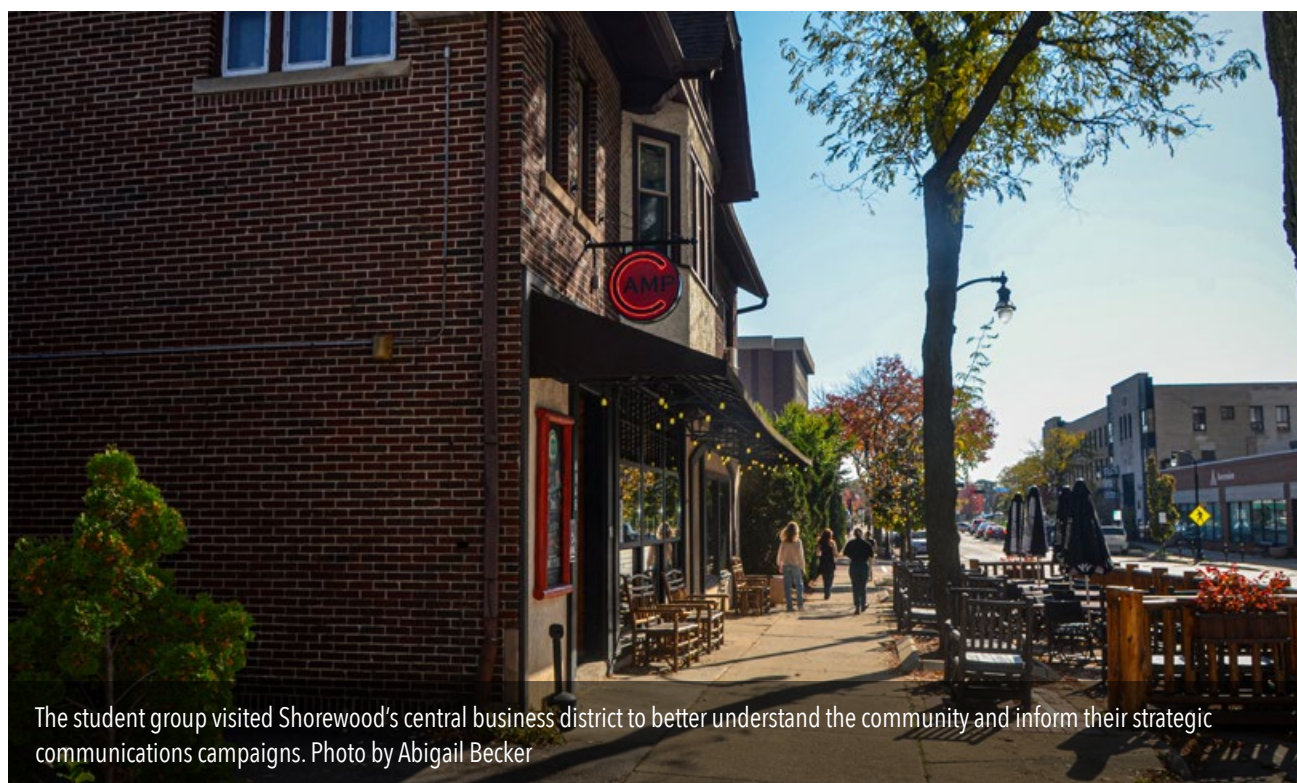
be beneficial as the students prepare to graduate and seek employment.

“It’s cool especially for us as seniors when we’re asked in job interviews, I can say that I’ve worked with real clients,” Sofia de la Vega said.

Olivia Moffitt, a senior majoring in journalism, said the in-person visit provided a different perspective to the assignment, and she appreciated being able to work with Shorewood for several weeks.

“Having this hands-on experience is against the norm of what we usually do,” said Moffitt, noting the added benefit of feeling more comfortable following up with village staff throughout the project after meeting them on site. “It was definitely worth it to come to Shorewood in person.”

Read an extended version of this story at go.wisc.edu/531q38



The student group visited Shorewood’s central business district to better understand the community and inform their strategic communications campaigns. Photo by Abigail Becker



WAUSAU

During late summer and early fall, hundreds of umbrellas form a colorful canopy over 3rd Street in downtown Wausau. Photo courtesy of City of Wausau



CITY OF WAUSAU

SDGs:



1 **Granting Developer Incentives on TIF Projects: How Wausau Compares with Peer Cities | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

This analysis compares Wausau with nine peer cities to determine how Wisconsin municipalities use developer incentives on Tax Increment Financing (TIF) projects and how that use changed with the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 **Analyzing Affordable Housing Options and Developing Recommendations for Wausau | Tom Landgraf**

Real Estate 611: Residential Housing Development

Real estate students developed affordable housing proposals and determined their financial feasibility after analyzing two properties in Wausau.

3 **Evaluating the ByBlock Plastic Waste Program for Wausau | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

Engineering students researched case studies to determine the feasibility of Wausau using a new product manufactured by a startup company called ByFusion that turns plastic waste into a material called ByBlocks that can replace cinder blocks in construction projects.

4 **Analyzing the Costs and Benefits of the Wausau ByBlock Project | Jordan Van Rijn**

Agricultural and Applied Economics 724: Practicum for Applied Economists

A cost-benefit analysis provides information that will help Wausau decide if partnering with a company that creates building material out of plastic waste is financially feasible.

5 **Designing Public Health Solutions to Connect Refugees to Viable Employment** | *Liz Bush*

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To address barriers to employment for refugees in Wausau, public health graduate students identified three interventions that target language proficiency, employment opportunities, and cultural understanding. They include employer engagement surveys, informational handouts promoting the benefits of employing refugees, and a Duolingo subscription program.

6 **Fostering a Sense of Belonging in Wausau through Design Programming** | *Uchita Vaid*

Design Studies 321: Design Programming

Four groups of design students created design programs for a community space that is welcoming, inclusive, inviting, and collaborative. They include a recreation center, multicultural youth center, indoor market, and a “village hearth” community hub.



Wausau Events hosts Concerts on the Square on the 400 Block. Photo courtesy of City of Wausau

7 **Becoming a More Pedestrian-Friendly City: Wausau, Wisconsin | Amy Gangl**

UniverCity Alliance Scholars Program: Independent Student Research

Aiming to be more friendly to pedestrians, this project identified accessibility gaps that exist to help Wausau plan for future pedestrian infrastructure projects. This work included surveying 148 people, 29 of whom took a version translated into Hmong.

8 **Developing a Regional Transit Action Plan for MetroRide Coverage Expansion | Carey McAndrews**

Urban and Regional Planning 721: Methods of Planning Analysis

In a 2022 plan, Wausau called for the expansion of MetroRide to serve surrounding municipalities. Urban and regional planning graduate students conducted precedent, demographic, economic, and quality-of-life analyses to determine strategies to improve the long-term viability of the transit system.

9 **Upgrading the Transit Department Facility | Jan Kucher and Derek Hungess**

Civil and Environmental Engineering 578: Senior Capstone Design

As Wausau MetroRide looks to update its facilities, engineering students created three designs that provide storage space for a bus fleet of 30 vehicles, introduce diesel-hybrid and electric bus charging and service capabilities, and expand office spaces for staff.

10 **Exploring Wausau Police Station Improvements | Jan Kucher and Derek Hungness**

Civil and Environmental Engineering 578: Senior Capstone Design

The project produced different engineering design plans for an improved police facility to address Wausau Police Department goals of providing increased space, improving space functionality, updating the HVAC system, and improving residents' experience.

11 **Emergency Planning for Special Events | Angela Kita**

Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

Interdisciplinary engineering students constructed a staffing matrix for the Wausau Police Department to use as leaders consider the best strategies for responding to events in the city. The matrix establishes a safety baseline that aligns with national safety staffing standards and projects budgets for event staffing.

12 Attracting and Retaining Public Sector Employees | Angela Kita
Interdisciplinary Engineering 303: Applied Leadership Competencies in Engineering

Wausau expressed a need to recruit and retain employees in the city. Inter-disciplinary engineering students created an Instagram page and example advertisements to reach a younger audience. Additionally, the students recommended and designed stay interviews and a data collection system, and a 30-60-90 day employee onboarding plan as strategies to retain workers.

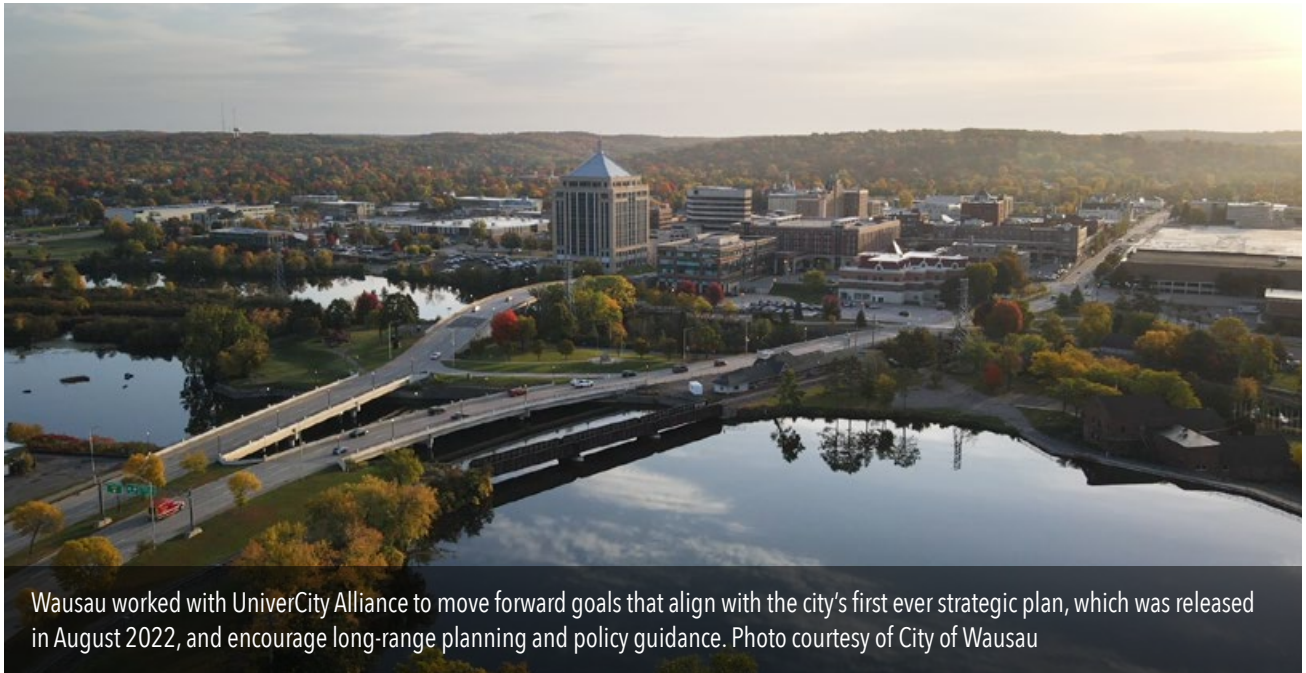
13 Creating a “Welcoming Wausau” Strategic Plan for the Welcoming America Designation | Joel Rogers

Sociology 320: Community Engaged Research for Solving Urban Problems, a High Road Practicum

Wausau aims to become a Certified Welcoming Community endorsed by Welcoming America. This report provides a strategic plan to accomplish three pillars — civic engagement, connected communities, and safe communities — of the Certified Welcoming Standard Framework.

14 Addressing Equitable Access in Welcoming Wausau Strategic Plan | Revel Sims

Urban and Regional Planning: Professional Project
This project will be completed in Summer 2024.



Wausau worked with UniverCity Alliance to move forward goals that align with the city's first ever strategic plan, which was released in August 2022, and encourage long-range planning and policy guidance. Photo courtesy of City of Wausau

“Ready to Innovate”

Former Wausau mayor Katie Rosenberg recaps her experience working with UW–Madison students through UniverCity.

By Abigail Becker

After watching how UniverCity worked with Marathon County from 2020–23, former mayor Katie Rosenberg was inspired to pursue working with the program to move forward goals that align with the city’s first strategic plan and encourage long-range planning and policy guidance.

Rosenberg said it was wonderful to see the students look at issues Wausau faces every day with “fresh eyes,” and that their perspectives challenged “preconceived notions” about the problems.

“The students were not subject to decades of conventional wisdom, which also meant they didn’t have conventional biases about solutions,” Rosenberg said. “We struggle sometimes in government to reimagine our opportunities, but the students were ready to innovate.”

What were your goals for the partnership?

Our goals were to bring focus to some of the projects our team would like to work on but haven’t been able to prioritize. But I also wanted the students to see what it was like working with local government and hope they catch the bug too.

What project or set of projects are you most excited to see implemented in Wausau?

I’m excited about the work on employee recruiting and retention work because we’ve seen a large decline in folks

applying to be a part of local government. I’m also excited about the work related to economic development projects that helps us understand the development landscape a little better.

What impacts have you seen so far in Wausau?

The teams have already begun using some of the work in proposals and reports. The team that compiled the state-wide Tax Increment Financing (TIF) data has probably already seen their efforts in a variety of presentations!

What did you and Wausau city staff enjoy about working with students?

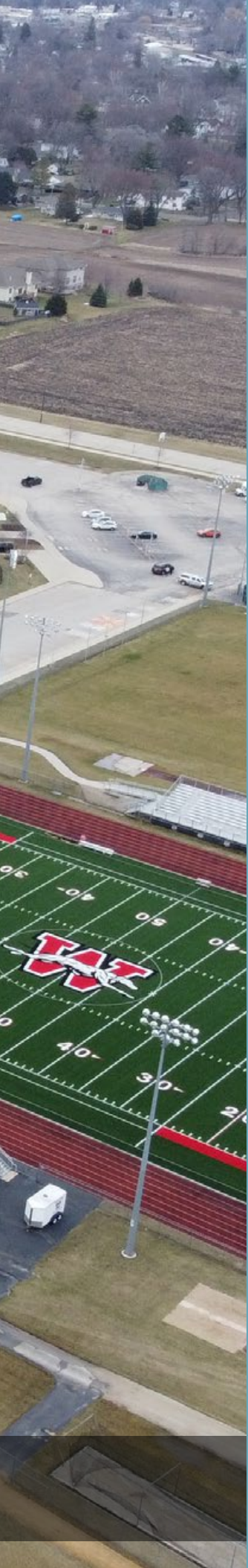
The students brought in both a refreshing optimism and a time-based deliverable. I loved watching their final presentations and hearing the kinds of questions their professors and colleagues asked as well. We all ended up learning quite a bit through this process.

How do you think this partnership strengthens the relationship between UW–Madison and Wausau?

Students who will eventually graduate and think about what’s next for them will already have some great professional connections with the City of Wausau and the city’s partners. They will also have an idea of what living and working in Wausau is all about. I hope they also see that the skills they learned and the talents they honed in school have real world applications. Lastly, we have so many UW graduates living and working in Wausau too. Connecting the dots between alumni and current students was a big hit.



The Whitewater Unified School District sought out UniverCity to assess the long-term viability of building a childcare center that serves low-income families. Photo courtesy of Whitewater Unified School District



WHITEWATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SDGs:



1 Assessing the Long-Term Viability of Building a Childcare Center in Whitewater, Wisconsin

Badger Consulting: A student-run consulting group at UW–Madison

Students researched the childcare industry for the Whitewater Unified School District to help them assess the long-term viability of building a childcare center based at the school district catering to low-income families

The Whitewater Unified School District reached out to UniverCity Alliance for help in assessing the long-term viability of building a childcare center that serves low-income families based at the school district. UniverCity paired this project with Badger Consulting, a student-run consulting group at UW–Madison, to determine key questions about the city’s childcare needs, financial considerations, and regulations.

The primary questions the student consulting group sought to answer include:

- What key demographics of Whitewater will impact the success of the childcare facility?
- What are the operating costs associated with running a childcare center? Can a rolling tuition structure cover these costs?
- What are the regulations that must be followed when operating a childcare center?

The students ultimately concluded that the project is not financially viable without outside funding. However, they reported it could be possible with financial assistance from an endowment and government grants along with careful planning and budgeting.



WOOD CO.

The Wood County Health Department partnered with UniverCity to improve health outcomes in rural communities using creative strategies.
Photo courtesy of Wood County

WOOD COUNTY

SDGs:



1 **Increasing Childcare Access and Childcare Staff Retention in Wood County | Jess Link Reeve**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To address an insufficient number of childcare providers in Wood County, public health students recommend implementing a subsidy program for some families, sharing administrative duties among facilities, and providing on-site child care at local businesses.

2 **Encouraging the Use of Wood County Outdoor Recreational Trails through Technology | Jess Link Reeve**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To increase outdoor recreation in Wood County, public health students recommended three interventions: create a smartphone app that promotes outdoor recreation, partner with existing apps focused on outdoor recreation, and pursue additional funding sources to continue partnering with a bike-sharing platform.

3 **Sustaining Wood County Health Department's Parents as Teachers Program | Liz Bush**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Parents as Teachers is an evidence-based program that provides a valuable service to Wood County families but requires outside funding to grow and be sustainable. This report recommends pursuing three options to reach their funding goals.

4 **Improving Wood County Health Equity via Employee Policies, Hiring Practices, and Tribal Partnerships | Jess Link Reeve**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Revising Wood County's employee handbook policies, creating a hiring bias manual, and building a relationship with the Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Health are three recommended interventions to improve health equity among government employees and underrepresented populations.

5 **Improving Housing Affordability, Quality, and Access in Wisconsin Rapids | Jess Link Reeve**

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision Making

Housing affordability and quality are major health needs in Wisconsin Rapids. This report recommends a voluntary rental registration program, a strategic rental inspection program, and tax increment financing as interventions that can help the city meet its housing goals.

6 Evaluating the Return on Investment of the Providers and Teens Communicating for Health (PATCH) Program in Wood County | Jess Link Reeve

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

This public health report recommends using a cost-benefit analysis to communicate the value of the Providers and Teens Communicating for Health (PATCH) program in Wood County. With the analysis, PATCH stakeholders can determine the impact of the program and possibly secure future funding sources.

7 Creating a More Equitable Workplace and Incorporating Health Equity Principles at Work | Liz Bush

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To help the Wood County Health Department set the groundwork for a workforce development plan and a process that continues to adapt to employee needs, public health graduate students recommended changes to an employee engagement survey and performance reviews.

8 Evaluating Health Equity of Programs in Wood County | Liz Bush

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

To address identified disparities in community health outcomes in Wood County, public health students created a toolkit that outlines opportunities to improve health equity within community programming.

9 Improving the Success of the Wood County Jail Electronic Monitoring Program | Liz Bush

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Public health students created an evaluation plan to assess Wood County's current electronic monitoring program and provided resources to help the county increase program enrollment, decrease the rate of recidivism, and increase health equity among incarcerated individuals.

10 Supporting Successful Reentry into the Community: A Statewide Resource Guide for Recently Released Individuals | Liz Bush

Public Health 780: Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Students created a list of resources that support incarcerated individuals or previously incarcerated individuals with needs like food assistance, housing, health care, mental health, substance abuse, education, and employment.

Wisconsin Area Health Education Center Program Director Liz Bush Reflects on Wood County Public Health Projects

By Abigail Becker

Wood County partnered with UniverCity to improve health outcomes in rural communities using creative strategies.

All of the community projects were matched with a School of Medicine and Public Health course called Evidence-Based Decision-Making.



Liz Bush

Wisconsin Area Health Education Center Program Director Liz Bush oversaw several of these public health projects. As an instructor, Bush said she saw firsthand how community- and project-based learning

advanced students' learning and better prepared them for their future careers.

What was it like working with a community partner on multiple projects?

Having multiple projects with a community partner created opportunities for collaboration across student project teams.

How does the range of topics prepare your students for what they might come across in their future careers?

The range of projects mirrors the ubiquitous-ness of public health! Each project challenged student teams to think about the broader public health issue and how it was impacting or could impact the overall health of the community or population.

How did this experience enhance your students' academic experiences?

Community-based project learning allows students to see and experience concepts and theories, such as social determinants of health and community coalitions, discussed in class and other courses in the Masters of Public Health curriculum.

I think my students can better answer this question! Sharing a few anonymous student responses to this question from my course evaluation: How did this class influence your goals or skills as an emerging public health professional?

- [I have a] better understanding of how to work with community partners in a realistic and collaborative way
- I feel better prepared to work with communities and let them guide my work. I also gained familiarity working with logic models which I had never done before, [and I] improved my academic writing skills.
- This class confirmed and strengthened my desire to work at the community level. I was able to share some of the learnings with individuals I am working with in my neighborhood.

Is there a project or outcome from Wood County that particularly stands out to you?

What I loved about each project from Wood County is the diversity. Student project teams each focused on different end users/audiences of the interventions they were proposing.

Could you describe how this work connects you to the Wisconsin Idea? How did this experience impact you as an instructor?

This work is the Wisconsin Idea. We are supporting community needs by leveraging the best resources we have at the UW — our students! In turn, our students are learning through their service and building meaningful connections in our communities.

Thank You

Thank you to representatives from the partner communities, University of Wisconsin–Madison, and other Wisconsin campuses who were essential to the success of these projects.

Staff and community members from Cottage Grove, Dane County, Eau Claire County, Madison, Marinette, Milton, River Falls, St. Croix County, Shorewood, Wausau, Whitewater Unified School District, and Wood County provided resources, advice, and feedback essential to UniverCity’s success. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and wisdom.

On campus, faculty, staff, researchers, and extension specialists embodied the Wisconsin Idea by incorporating community priorities into their courses and research programs. They helped address local challenges in collaboration with local government leaders, community members, and students. Their innovative work continues to impact the Universities of Wisconsin, the state, and the world.

To UniverCity Alliance donors, thank you for your generosity. Your support strengthens communities across Wisconsin and invests in UW–Madison students — the Wisconsin Idea in action.

Thank you, all!

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