

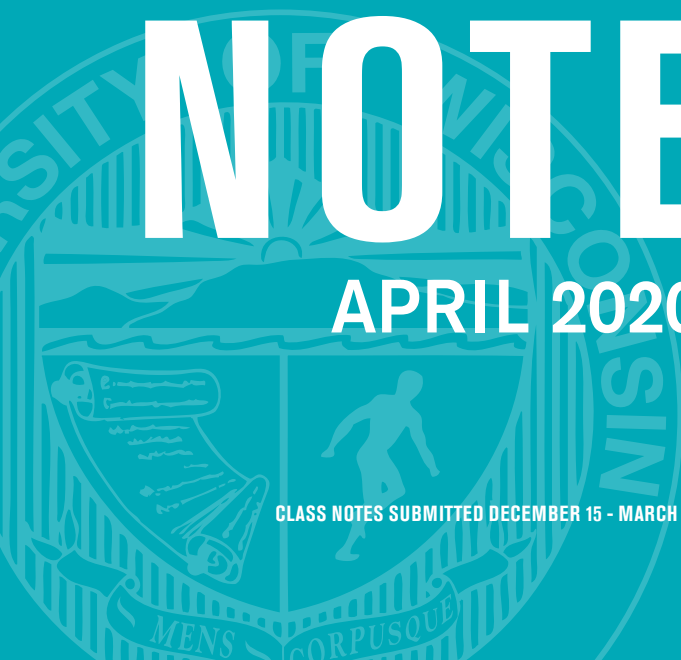


UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

CLASS NOTES

APRIL 2020

CLASS NOTES SUBMITTED DECEMBER 15 - MARCH 15, 2020



'64

Ellen Kreighbaum, Bozeman, Montana, retired in 2004 as professor, department head and associate dean for Research and Creative Activities at Montana State University. She has been awarded the Blue and Gold Award from Montana State University, one of the highest awards given friends of the university. Also, Kreighbaum was selected as one of the 125 Ordinary Extraordinary Women for Montana State University's 125th anniversary. Having started the women's athletics program in the late '60s, Kreighbaum continues to support and follow the teams. She recently returned from a trip to Puerto Rico with the team and staff for a two-game tournament.

'66

Dennis Stannard, '66 & '67, was inducted into the Fort Atkinson (Wis.) High School Wall of Fame Jan. 31, 2020.



Margaret Ewert

'70

Margaret Ewert, New Port Richey, Florida, has started new endowment scholarship funds in the arts at UWL after teaching 50 years as an art teacher. Ewert is retired and living in both the Tampa area and colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. She enjoys travel to Belize and Roatan from the port of Tampa. "Life is good as a UWL grad," she says.

'71

Jerome Stremcha, who is retired, has moved from Florida to Chattanooga, Tennessee.

'74

Mike Engan, Okemos, Michigan, has been named an inaugural recipient of the Inspiration Award from Michigan State Parks and Recreation.

'76

Loren Caulum, Loren Caulum, '76 & '88, La Crosse, retired as an information technology instructor and department head from Western Technical College after 35 years in January 2015. Caulum reports "34 great years of learning something every day from every one of my students." He also notes that he's getting better at furniture building and golf.

'79

Gary Dunn, Andover, Minnesota, reports that in June, he will have been retired for seven years "and loving it."

'82

David Deming, Afton, Minnesota, has been named chief investment officer for Business Broker Investment Corp., based in Minneapolis.



Louise Janke

'84

Louise Janke, '84 & '87, Trempealeau, received the 2019 UWL Academic Staff Excellence Award, given to a university academic staff member who has excelled in performance and service. Janke has worked in the Financial Aid Office since 2001, currently serving as director. [See more.](#)

'92

Sadie (Winneshiek) Garvin, Black River Falls, is general manager of the Ho-Chunk Nation's District 1 Community Center in Black River Falls.

'93

Lisa K. Parshall, Amherst, New York, serves as the president of the Northeastern Political Science Association (NPSA) and is a public policy fellow at the Rockefeller Institute of Government. Parshall is a full professor of political science and pre-law advisor at Daemen College in Amherst, where she received the 2019 Outstanding Faculty Award.

Debra (Hoffmann) Umlauf, Slinger, is director of product management for Symphony iNtuition AI. Over several years, Umlauf has been combining clinical and product development experience to help develop AI-derived key workflows that are driving radiology

efficiency. "It is humbling to work with healthcare innovators, medical key opinion leaders and professional societies to drive medical imaging in ways I never imagined when I started off as a nuclear medicine technologist back in '93," she says.



Corey Mensink

'94

Corey Mensink, Owatonna, Minnesota, serves in a regional leadership position with U.S. Bank as bank president for the Owatonna market, as well as the regional team lead responsible for supporting commercial and wealth management client groups in southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse. Mensink is very proud that two of his children attend UWL. Daughter Peyton, who

graduated in 2019 with a degree in elementary education, is currently teaching 4th grade in Sparta and enjoying the start to her career. Son Zach is a sophomore working toward a degree in finance and is on the football team.



Lisa Hurda

'97

Lisa (Ehret) Hurda, Janesville, was named Blackhawk Technical College's Foundation and Community Relations Director on Jan. 27, 2020.

'99

Michael T. Beck and his wife live in Shakopee, Minnesota, where he is the senior director of commercial marketing at Wright Medical in Bloomington. Beck has always thought of his

kids someday going to UWL. Their first child of three, Tyler, is graduating from Shakopee Senior High school this spring and recently decided to attend UWL. "It's a very proud moment for both my wife (a Viterbo 2000 graduate) and me," says Beck. "I cannot wait for move-in day fall 2020."

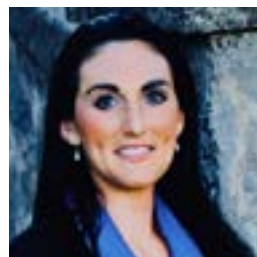


Kevin Frey

'00

Kevin Frey, Fond du Lac, been named a partner in the firm Laner Muchin based in Chicago and representing clients throughout the country. Frey focuses his practice on representing public and private sector employers before federal and state courts and administrative agencies in all types of employment litigation. Ryan

Natzke, Middleton, has joined the Madison Radicals ownership group. He joins current owners Tim DeByl, David Martin and Chad Coopmans. The team with the second most wins in American Ultimate Disc League history will begin its eighth season as a franchise in 2020.



Kristina Navarro

'06

Kristina Navarro has been named director of athletics and assistant chancellor for sports administration at UW-Platteville, effective June 1. Navarro most recently served as senior associate athletic director for leadership development and strategic partnerships at Rutgers University in Piscataway, New Jersey.



Tracy Littlejohn

'07

Tracy Littlejohn, La Crosse, received the 2020 Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award at La Crosse's King Community Holiday Celebration Jan. 20. Littlejohn is the Home-School Coordinator for the Ho-Chunk Nation La Crosse Youth and Learning Center, along with co-adviser of the UWL Native American Student Association.

'12

Gretchen Gerrard has moved back to La Crosse after law school. Gerrard is an attorney with Lawyers at Work and looks forward to getting involved at UWL again.

'10

Corinn Ploessl, Oregon, was named to this year's 40 Under 40 Class in Madison. "40 Under 40" annually recognizes 40 of the most successful and civic-minded young professionals under the age of 40 in the Greater Madison area. Every year, In Business magazine's editorial department selects 40 business professionals or nonprofit leaders under the age of 40 on which to bestow this honor. The final selection comprises the top 40 based on demonstrated success in their industry, an active role and commitment to furthering their industry, and volunteer or board membership which enhances the Greater Madison community. Here is the write up from the publication:

Corinn Ploessl, Organizational Events Manager at Destination Madison (Age 31)

By all accounts, Corinn Ploessl is having a blast! If she's not planning an event, she's likely at

one. Last year, Ploessl planned and produced the Destination Madison Awards, or DMAs, from nominations to celebration. The awards recognized people in the hospitality and tourism industry who went over and beyond to make a visitor's experience great. She's led Young Professionals Week for the past five years; chaired United Way of Dane County's Rosenberry Society in 2018; and presided over Madison Magnet; not to mention all of the fundraising she's accomplished through the years. Ploessl's proudest moments, though, were three specific events she planned around the Bucky on Parade event in 2018. The finale event she helped coordinate raised nearly \$850,000 of the \$1 million total dollars generated by Bucky on Parade. At home, she loves to bake, saying the precision and accuracy required to follow recipes suits her Type A personality perfectly.

'15

Whitney Hedge, Chicago, accepted a position with the University of Chicago in February 2019, working in College Programming and Orientation. Last fall, Hedge presented “Leveraging WISR for Peer Mentorship and a New Orientation Approach” at the annual WISR User Conference on a new mentoring program that she developed and launched during summer with the class of 2023 at the University of Chicago. [See it at.](#)

'17

Emily Ender, Mankato, Minnesota, recently began a new position as an area director for Residence Life at Minnesota State University-Mankato. Ender supervises five professional staff members and indirectly supervises two graduate students, along with more than 40 student staff members.

Chris Favour, Mankato, Minnesota, has transitioned to a new position at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He left Western Technical College to return to residence life beginning Jan. 13.

Adam Szalacinski, Moorhead, Minnesota, has accepted the position of area director at the Minnesota State University-Moorhead and started Jan. 2, 2020.

'18

Jessa Lounsbrough, La Crosse, started a HRIS position with Festival Foods after graduation and recently accepted became a benefits specialist at Western Technical College.

'19

Julie Maahs, Fargo, North Dakota, received the “Rookie Award” for outstanding contributions during the initial three years of membership in the Minnesota

College & University Career Services Association (MCUCSA).

Nicole Nettel, Milwaukee, started as a major account manager at Noble Diagnostics. Nettel is missing UWL friends and professors

Sarah R. Wanek, moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, in April 2019 and started new job/first professional job as a success coach at Catawba College in Salisbury.



Brian Whitmore

Brian Whitmore, Madison, is working as a career coach at the UW-Madison School of Business with 1,200 finance majors. Whitmore has started new career services education class work and teaching career readiness.



An Eagle endorser

Tim Devine, '84, always encourages his Colfax High School students to continue their educational journeys after they graduate. And being a proud UWL alum, he tries his best to persuade — “coerce” — his students to visit La Crosse.

“Those who do typically fall in love with the

campus,” notes Devine, an English teacher and distance learning coordinator. “Those who do not and are accepted elsewhere, I will congratulate them and then say something like, ‘That’s a nice school. Too bad you couldn’t get into UWL.’”

This year, five seniors have announced intentions to attend UWL in fall 2020. Devine is in his 36th year in the Colfax School District — a position that legendary UWL instructors Bill Terry, '61, and Rollo Taylor, '56, helped him secure.

In Remembrance

1944 — Bernice Roellich, Onalaska.

1945 — Marcella Austin, Tomah.

1945 — Betty Sieckman, Newburg.

1949 — Donald Brown, Round Rock, Texas.

1956 — Carol Walcker, Stoddard.

1960 — William “Bill” Brehm, Jim Falls.

1962 — Norma Vinger, La Crosse.

1966 — Gay Wiebe, Madison.

1967 — Thomas Kerrigan, Kahului, Hawaii.

1980 — Sara M. Slayton, La Crosse.

1990 — Robert Storbakken, Chaseburg.

1995 — Faith Esser, Alma Center.

1999 — Dennis Alton, DeForest.

2003 — Brenda Szefflinski, Tomah.

2018 — Natalie Schaefer, Janesville.

Faculty & Staff

Jean M. Helliesen

Jean M. Helliesen, 93, died Feb. 16, 2020, in La Crosse. Once her husband, Pelle, completed his residency in Boston in 1958, they moved to La Crosse. Soon after, she began graduate school at UW-Madison, earning a doctorate in classics in 1968. Helliesen taught Roman, Greek and Medieval history on campus from 1963-89. During that time, she received two National Endowment for the Humanities Resident Fellowships, helped found the Wisconsin

Copenhagen Program, and was resident director there in 1977-78. Helliesen was also a leader in state Democratic politics. She is survived by nieces and nephews.

Sara M. Slayton

Sara Mae Slayton, 66, died of lung cancer March 12, 2020, in hospice care in La Crosse surrounded by family, friends and fans. It was her fifth bout with cancer, which included recovering from pancreatic cancer. Slayton, '80, was a

member of the Educational Studies Department from 1983 until retiring in 2003. She was the founder and first director of the Campus Child Center and recreated the Marian Hammes Early Childhood Resource Center on campus. In 2000, Slayton received the UWL Academic Staff Excellence Award. She was an extraordinary teacher and master storyteller who inspired many education majors during her tenure. [See more about Slayton's Academic Staff Excellence Award:](#)

Submit UWL Class Notes

Online

www.uwlax.edu/alumni/contact/whats-new-with-you

Phone /email

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Class Notes Policy:

Class notes and obituaries are published online in January, April, July and October.

The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the month of quarterly posting.



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