

Mo knows

McAlpine advocates a lifetime appreciation of recreation

Mo McAlpine remembers the first day she stepped into Mitchell Hall. The Division I basketball player and collegiate assistant coach was pursuing a master's degree for a career in coaching.

But during her UW-La Crosse visit in July 1990 she was offered a graduate assistantship in campus recreation. She's been on campus since, working with the Recreational Sports Department.

McAlpine says her day-to-day work with students and colleagues is what has kept her on campus. "They motivate me, they energize me and they make me smile," she says.

During the past two decades, McAlpine says recreational programming expanded with a move to its own building, the Recreational Eagle Center, in 1997.

Recreational Sports now has nine programming areas to help students nurture a lifetime appreciation of recreation. "We're 100 percent focused on students," she explains.

McAlpine says standard activities like softball, volleyball and basketball remain popular, but new ones such as futsal and stand-up paddle boarding get attention too. "It's challenging to keep up with the times and meet students' needs," she says. "But, that's the benefit of having an active student body."



The Mo McAlpine file

- **UW-L Recreational Sports Department, Associate Director 1997-present; Assistant Director, 1992-97.**
- **UW-L National Youth Sports Program, Activity Director, 1992-2003.**
- **UW-L Exercise and Sport Science Department, instructor, 1991-96.**
- **Awards: Rochester Lourdes High School Sports Hall of Fame; Rochester Quarterbacks Club Sports Hall of Fame; Volunteer of the Year for Tri-Quest Charities; UW-L Outstanding Adviser Honoree.**
- **Bachelor of science in physical education and recreation education, University of Iowa, 1987; master of science in physical education-human performance, UW-L, 1991.**

UW-L students are active. More than 90 percent of the student body swipes their ID to use REC facilities at least once during an academic year, notes McAlpine.

"We've always maintained a high level of participation in our programming," she says.

McAlpine also molds future rec leaders. She's a key player in hiring and training approximately 80 of the 250 students who work at the REC each year. "We're fortunate to have the student staff we have year after year," she says. "It's very rewarding."

McAlpine says it an honor to be recognized by her peers for excellence. She attributes her success to those who surround her.

"I'm so humbled and honored to receive this award and

to represent the excellence that happens on campus," says McAlpine. "There is truth to the statement 'surround yourself with UW-La Crosse' as it's the people around me, both past and present, who have helped my personal and professional development — and share in this recognition and I cherish the many relationships that have continued with former staff members upon graduation."

— Brad Quarberg, University Communications