

2011 UW-La Crosse Academic Staff Excellence Award

Karla Stanek is always there for students

Job helper

If you want to know how many years Karla Stanek has been on campus, just count the windows in her new Centennial Hall office. Three. One for each decade. In a few years, her office will soon need a remodel for one more.

Stanek, director of Career Services and the Academic Advising Center, has been helping students land internships and jobs since 1976. That's what she enjoys. "Being in the trenches with the students is still my most favorite part of the job," she says.

When Stanek began working in Career Services over 35 years ago, office staff helped place 80 students in internships. Last year, more than 800 students worked at internships coordinated through the office. That growth puts UW-L at the top of UW System comprehensive campuses with the largest centralized internship program.

That success, which Stanek attributes to a team effort by her staff, resulted in her involvement with the campus Academic Advising Center, which links students to careers. The center is now closely affiliated with Career Services and under Stanek's leadership.

Along with counseling and working with

many talented students, Stanek enjoys being a conduit among businesses and organizations, and campus. "I enjoy the opportunity to be able to interact with business people and others who are off campus," she notes.

Working in the community has helped her

see what it has to offer. She appreciates the wide variety of activities and services the area has provided for her husband, John, and their two children, Kasey and Kelly.

Stanek says it's only right to volunteer in service projects to keep the community strong. "I firmly believe that no matter where you work, if you enjoy your community then you should give back," she notes.

Stanek has given back. Her volunteer work is vast. She has been recognized for that. One honor she received was Mrs. Oktoberfest,

given to a woman who has impacted the community in her profession and as a volunteer.

Her dedication to community service was seen in the theme she selected for her reign in 2010-11: "Take Time to Give Back."

It's obvious she has.

— Brad Quarberg, University Communications



The Karla Stanek file

- Has worked in the UW-L Career Services Office since 1976. Career Program Specialist 1976-1999; Director of Career Services, 1999-2006; Director of Career Services and the Academic Advising Center, since 2006.
- Campus involvement: Academic Staff Council, UW-L Alumni Association Board, UW-L Foundation Board, UW-L American Cancer Society Corporate Team Co-Captain, L-Club member, Organization for Campus Women and more
- Community involvement: 2010 Mrs. Oktoberfest, Rotary, Rotary Lights, Gundersen Lutheran Women's Health Advisory Board, La Crosse School District Parents' Committee and more.
- Holds two degrees from UW-L — bachelor's in mass communications, 1975; master's of professional development, 1980.