



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

CLASS NOTES

OCTOBER 2025

CLASS NOTES SUBMITTED JULY 15 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

No year listed

Erik Halverson is a machine tender for the Packaging Corporation of America in Tomahawk, Wis.

'64

Neil Duresky recently retired from the La Crosse Regional Airport Aviation Board after 11 years of membership. He is a bass player in four jazz bands.

'76

Joseph Lewis is an author based in Fredericksburg, Va. He has written 10 books in the thriller-crime-mystery genre and has received many awards for his writing. All of his work is available in Kindle, Audible and paperback format. For more on Lewis, visit www.jrlewisauthor.com.

'79

Jeff Witmer, a professor at Oberlin College in Ohio, has received a Founders Award from the American Statistical Association (ASA). This is ASA's highest honor. Witmer was recognized for his extensive service to statistics education spanning four decades; for serving as editor of Stats Magazine and editor-in-chief of the Journal of Statistics and Data Science Education; for founding and maintaining the Isolated Statisticians group; for service as chair of the Section on Statistics and Data Science Education; for co-authoring both college-level GAISE reports that have substantially influenced introductory statistics education nationwide; and for continually serving as a masterful expositor of statistical ideas through his writing, teaching, and mentoring.



Mike Strehlow

'82

Mike Strehlow, stepped down from his role as a news anchor for CBS 58 in Milwaukee, after nearly 30 years with the station. Strehlow's career as a reporter brought him everywhere from city hall to the streets of Cuba to the deck of an aircraft carrier. In 2014, he was inducted into the Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Silver Circle, recognizing individuals with 25 years of experience in television, and who have made significant contributions to their local market.

Strehlow began his career with WXOW in La Crosse in 1982, after earning a bachelor's degree in mass communications from UWL.



David Johnson

'92

David Johnson, assistant athletic director of Media Relations at UWL, was named the university's 2024-25 Student Employee Supervisor of the Year. In his role, Johnson is responsible for all aspects of the athletic program's media relations strategy. Each year, he works with a staff of four to six students who assist

in telling the story of the Eagles' teams and student-athletes. Johnson has also hired multiple interns during his time at UWL. Multiple individuals who have worked under Johnson as a student employee, practicum student or intern have gone on to work in college athletics and professional sports.

'95

John Kruger launched a new business venture, Incubation Studio, which is dedicated to helping entrepreneurs turn innovative ideas into thriving businesses. For more information, visit www.incubationstudio.com.

'00

Anastasia Opahle (Cihlar) is the director of human resources for the Manitowoc Public School District.

'06

Joe Iverson completed a cross-country bike tour with his family on the Great American Rail Trail. Iverson, a pastor for Zion Lutheran Church in Galesville, adds: "Life in ministry is going well. I got started years back with Lutheran Campus Ministry, or LuMin as it is called on campus today."

'08

Erik Larson is a supply chain specialist for Mayo Clinic.

'09

Chad Mueller is the CEO of Gillette Pepsi Companies in La Crosse.

'15

Jacqueline Hasselquist (O'Reilly) is a senior annual giving officer for the University of Minnesota Law School.

'22

Nicole Pfeffer is an occupational therapist for Champion Rehab in Sartell, Minn.

'23

Kennedy Cortes is a communications associate for the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

'25

Robin Schmoldt is a student affairs manager for UW-Madison.

Monika Scott is a food access coordinator for the La Crosse Area Family YMCA.

Biking and bonding



A group of UWL alumni, friends and Foundation board members show off their school pride during a summer bike tour the Minnesota Northwoods. Pictured from left: Kathi McGinley and Mike McGinley '82; Jeff Kessler '81, David Schield,

'83, and Rebecca Schield (Weber), '83; Sara (Schoenknecht) Kessler, '82; Keith Krumholz, '83, and Susie Krumholz (Wollin), '81; Leslie Saftig and Dan Saftig, '81. Sara Kessler says: "It was such a fun trip. We have been 'ride or

die' friends since college and have shared and supported each other through many ups and downs over these past 50 years. Our times together are precious and unforgettable!"



A walk down memory lane

A group of friends from the classes of 1973 and 1974 recently visited UWL to reflect on their college experience and see how campus has changed. The seven alumni first met as roommates in 1969

and now meet every few years to reconnect. "While we were together, (we were) reminded of how important UW-La Crosse has been to all of us," says Pam Garman (Anderson), '73. Pictured from left: Pam

Garman (Anderson), Janet Amann (Adell), Debbie Legro (Diercks), Carol Pearce (Sullivan), Nancy Farnham (Wirth), Kay Doyle (Hensel) and Barb Johnson (Pinter).

In Remembrance

Alumni

- 1956** — Chuck Deeth, Onalaska
1958 — Dave Schiessl, Fredonia, Wis.
1960 — Ted Ledman, West Salem
1964 — Barb Graw (Jenks), La Crosse
1966 — Paul Cuta, La Crosse
1967 — Sue Lunenschloss (Keefe), Appleton
1968 — Jim Paulus, La Crosse
1971 — William Crothers, Onalaska
1971 — Cinda Todd (Dingledien), La Crosse
1972 — Garry Hayes, Cape Coral, Fla.
1972 — Pat Poehling (Kurowski), Winston-Salem, N.C.
- 1973** — David Rorge, Cambridge, Wis.
1974 — Jerome Runice, Onalaska
1977 — John Ernster, La Crescent
1979 — David Dregne, Readstown, Wis.
1979 — Ed Watson, La Crosse
1990 — Carole Wieland (Dey), Arcadia
1995 — Peter McCartney, La Crosse
1997 — John Kirst, West Salem
No year listed — Peggy Ziemann, La Crosse
No year listed — Jessica McHugh (Keppy), Rochester



Faculty & Staff

Cheryl L. Hanson

Cheryl L. Hanson died Aug. 28 at age 77. Hanson was the development director for WLSU Radio at UWL, in addition to her career as a teacher and her time as a La Crosse County Board supervisor. She was active in many La Crosse community organizations, including First Congregational Church, La Crosse sister city projects, the Riverside International Friendship Gardens, the Rotary Club of La Crosse and the Bethany St. Joseph Corporation Board.

Elsie M. Patterson

Elsie M. Patterson died Aug. 3 at age 86. Patterson taught speech communications at UWL from 1961 to her retirement in 2003 as professor emerita. She was a member of First Presbyterian Church, where she served as a deacon and elder. Patterson was also a member of the American Association of University Women. Locally, she

served as chair of the Art Fair on the Green for several years.

Annette White-Parks

Annette White-Parks died at age 89. She was a professor emerita at UWL.

Jeffrey "Ranger" B. Nestingen

Jeffrey "Ranger" B. Nestingen died June 8 at age 71. Nestingen worked for many years at G. Heileman Brewing Company, followed by stints at Xcel Energy and UWL.

Philip K. Wilson

Philip K. Wilson died June 21 at age 85. Wilson spent 30 years as a faculty member at UWL, teaching courses in exercise and health. He also founded the university's Cardiac Rehab Graduate & Exercise Program. Under Wilson's leadership, the program grew significantly and helped countless individuals return to active lives fol-

lowing cardiac events. He was an active member of the American College of Sports Medicine, serving in multiple leadership positions, including a term as vice president. In addition, he was the founding president of the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, an organization that continues to thrive as a professional association.

Dirk Gasterland

Dirk Gasterland died July 1 at age 81. Gasterland spent his career in banking and served as president and CEO of Coulee Bank. Gasterland was heavily engaged in the community. He served on the UWL Foundation Board, as well as on the boards of the Riverland Girl Scouts, Gateway Boy Scouts, the La Crosse Family & Children's Center, the La Crosse Chamber of Commerce, La Crosse Rotary East and Great Rivers United Way.



Submit UWL Class Notes

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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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