

# UNIVERSITY CENTERS

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*University Centers continued with Phase II of the Student Union Vinyl Photo/Signage Project in summer 2023.  
The above vinyl student photo collage is located on the first floor of the Union outside the UWL Bookstore.*

2022 - 2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

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Eagle Fest 2022 gets underway outside the Student Union on September 9, 2022 (top left). University Centers and Dining Services team at the Spring Staff Retreat on January 18, 2023 (top right). Assistant Director Dining Services-Rachel Labeots, Marketing Manager-Christy Ihrke, and Catering Supervisor-Nicole Gaunitz show off Stryker's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration cakes on October 11, 2022 (bottom right). University Centers Associate Director-Dr. Mary Beth Vahala, celebrates her retirement On April 20, 2023, after 32 years of service to UWL (middle). UWL Business Student Maddy Calarco, and Programming Intern for Drift Cycle, shown with UWL branded Drift Cycle Bike at the "Wing Wall" during the Earthapalooza celebration on April 21, 2023 (bottom left).



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## A Message from the Director...



Greetings! My name is Kyle Burke, and it is my sincere honor and privilege to serve as the Director of University Centers at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Since joining the UWL community in March 2021, I have grown to appreciate just how special this institution is. From our dedicated faculty and staff, to our passionate and committed students, UWL is a remarkable place to learn, grow, and thrive.

I continue to be in awe of the excellent programs and services that University Centers provides to our students and greater UWL community. None of this would be possible without the hard work and expertise of the University Centers team. Together we have accomplished great things over the past year and have exciting things planned during the year to come. My sincerest appreciation to each member of the University Centers team for all your hard work and dedication.

This past year we had many staff changes. One staff member has retired: Mary Beth Vahala - Associate Director. I congratulate Mary Beth on her retirement and sincerely thank her for her 32 years of dedicated service. Eight staff have moved on to other opportunities, Cody Organ-AVLS Coordinator, Rebecah Neitzel-Reservations Coordinator, Magann Dykema-Activities Coordinator, Corey Stilwell-Program Coordinator for Outreach Communications, Ashley Hanson-Dining Plan/ID Card Office Specialist, Cara Senn-Student Union Custodian, Jonathon Thao-Student Union Custodian, and Ajay Valentine-Student Union Custodian. I also thank them for their service and wish them well in their next career endeavors. We also welcomed a few new staff members including Andrew Ericson as the Sustainability Program Manager, Amanda Krafft as the Program Coordinator-Civic Engagement & Leadership, Doug Wilkin-AVLS Coordinator, Madeline Kohn as the Program Coordinator-Student Activities, and Mikaela Schneider as the University Reservations Scheduler. We also hired five new Custodians: Andrew Anderson, Kevin Goddeau, Shayna Hornbeck, Sharpray Madison, and Dmetri Radde. Welcome to the University Centers team, we are glad to have you here. Lastly, we continue to address a few current vacancies as we develop an organizational structure that will move us forward and allow us to support students as efficiently and effectively as possible. We hope to have a full team by the end of the fall semester.

Throughout this annual report you will find an overview of our goals, accomplishments, points of pride, as well as challenges that were faced during the 2022-2023 academic year. A few of our highlighted achievements over the past year include:

- Produced the second annual Eagle Fest which saw over 5,000 student, staff, faculty, and local community attendees
- Engaged 92.5% of new first-year students and 79% of second-year students in at least one activity/program/service during the first six weeks of the fall semester
- Continued to develop our signature programs, including: the Chancellor's Volunteer Service Award program and the UWL chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success
- Implemented the new residential and off-campus Dining Plans
- Students performed 16,141 volunteer service hours on campus and in the local community (a 55% increase)
- Reached a milestone of over 75,000 OZZI reusable meal containers used at the Student Union and Whitney Center
- Continued efforts to add energy and vitality to the Student Union through the installation of vinyl signage and photos

Some of our goals for the 2023-2024 academic year include: continuing our efforts to focus on the engagement of our first- and second-year students, supporting student wellness initiatives, streamlining the promotion of campus activities and events, and to build upon our initiatives to engage our students in campus activities, programs, and volunteer service. As we approach our work towards these goals, it is imperative that we keep the holistic well-being of our students and their success at the forefront of our efforts.

The University Centers department, and the buildings we operate, will continue to be safe and inclusive environments. We remain dedicated to celebrating the diversity of our community in an equitable and inclusive manner.

We are excited to be hosting the third annual Eagle Fest on Friday, September 8, 2023. You won't want to miss this UWL tradition!

As always, we hope that you will get involved in the many programs and services that we provide and take time to enjoy your campus living room. I hope to see you in "The U" very soon! Take good care!

**Kyle E. Burke**  
**Director, University Centers**

## A Message from the Student Association Presidents...



The 2022-2023 academic year saw some great strides forward for the UW-La Crosse Student Association.

Fundraising for the Women of Color Scholarship was a major focus over the past year. From when we began fundraising in September until this spring, we helped to increase the scholarship fund balance by nearly \$5,300! I am hopeful that this extraordinary work provides Student Association leaders with an opportunity to get the WOC Scholarship endowed next year.

Another area of progress that Student Association became involved with in 2022-2023 was advocacy for student wage increases. UWL administrators listened to the concerns of folks all across campus (including those in Student Association leadership roles) and are taking tangible steps to better compensate student employees for their hard work in upcoming budgets.

There is still lots of work to be done, particularly with respect to ensuring that administration takes Student Association seriously and treats it as an active partner in university governance - but I am confident that President Emma Latus and Vice President Siri Flores, will do excellently. I wish them a fantastic 2023-2024 year!

### **Grant Mathu** **2022-2023 Student Association President**



As a student and a member of Student Association this past year, I have had the opportunity to recognize the issues on campus that students care about. This year, it is crucial that we improve student engagement on campus through events and increased visibility for the organization. We, as students, can accomplish so many things when we work together.

Through student engagement, Vice President Flores and I have many exciting ideas to enhance sustainability, wellness, and community on campus. We hope to continue our efforts towards eliminating single use plastics on campus as well as creating a greater sense of community for students. And perhaps most important to our students, faculty, and staff will be our efforts towards a more wellness focused campus. We look forward to working with students, faculty, staff, and administration to foster a positive and productive environment on and around campus.

### **Emma Latus** **2023-2024 Student Association President**

## **MISSION**

### ***University Centers Mission***

University Centers serves the community by providing a welcoming environment that facilitates learning opportunities, embraces inclusivity, and enriches the campus experience.

#### **COVE Mission**

A place where students gather to create, collaborate, and develop; encourages growth in a supportive and dynamic student-driven environment where all are welcome; provide resources for student organizations.

#### **Custodial Services Mission**

The University Centers Custodial Services Department enhances the UW-La Crosse experience by providing a high level of cleaning, safety, and event set-up services.

#### **Sustainability Mission**

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse will provide students, faculty, staff, and the community with the knowledge and skills to be environmentally responsible and involved citizens who understand and consider the global effects of their actions and the actions of others. The University will strive to use and implement sustainable best practices while minimizing its carbon footprint.

#### **Pride Center Mission**

The Pride Center provides education, advocacy, outreach, support, and resources for UWL LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, staff, and their allies. We work collaboratively to improve the campus climate and to foster a sense of belonging for all LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, and staff.

## **CORE VALUES**

- **Leading to Serve:** We engage in activities that serve the goals and best interest of our students, colleagues, and community – those that promote self-actualization. Our success lies in the success of others.
- **Multiculturalism:** We recognize and embrace the strength that resides in our human diversity, both culturally and intellectually. As a result, we strive to benefit from the inclusion of diverse perspectives and to become “more than the sum of our parts.”
- **Assessment:** Assessment lends direction and strength to our endeavors. It informs and motivates the effectiveness of our programming, and it supports our understanding of critical changes among the students and communities we serve and the colleagues with whom we collaborate.
- **Integrity:** We strive to model the highest level of ethical behavior in our interactions with students and colleagues as well as in our research and assessment activities.
- **Advocacy:** As agents of positive social change on campus and in the community, student development and diversity professionals empower those who lack a voice on campus.

## **SMART GOALS 2022-2023**

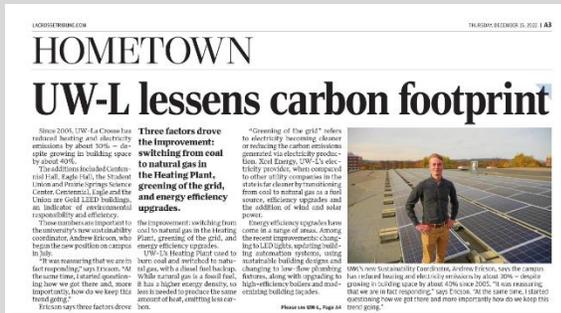
- By September 1, 2022, University Centers, in collaboration with the Divisions of Student Affairs, Diversity and Inclusion, and Academic Affairs, in effort to support first-year, second year, and transfer students’ retention will implement and assess year two of the Six-Week Engagement Plan as demonstrated by maintaining 95% of new first-year student engagement in a least one event/activity and increasing second-year engagement to 85%.  
**GOAL COMPLETED!**
- By May 1, 2023, University Centers, in an effort to support the retention and engagement of students, will develop a comprehensive student engagement strategic plan to be fully implemented in Fall 2024. **IN PROGRESS!**
- By May 1, 2023, the Leadership and Involvement Center within University Centers will enhance leadership development and service learning at UWL as demonstrated by an increase in the NSLS completion rate to 50% and increase participation in the Chancellor’s Volunteer Service Award program by 10%, with a total service hour increase of 5%. **PARTIALLY COMPLETED - IN PROGRESS!**

## **GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023**

1. **Eagle Fest 2022:** The tradition continues! The second annual Eagle Fest was held on Friday, September 9, 2022, on the Student Union Lawn, Badger Street Mall, and Eagle/Coate Field. The event was another smash hit with students and a great kick-off event to start the school year. Eagle Fest featured Cover Band Fly Casual, a Trivia Hour, Pop Trio Running Lights, Drag Queen Bingo, Headliner Concert Artist Payton Smith, and a Student After Party: Headphone Disco. The event also featured: a BBQ dinner hosted by University Dining, food trucks, popcorn, cotton candy, booths by student organizations and departments, as well as Speed Sketchers presented by CAB. Total attendance exceeded 5,000. Eagle Fest 2022 is proudly sponsored by University Centers and is presented through the generous support of Gillette Pepsi of La Crosse! *Five Star Eggrolls and Apothik food trucks (top right). Crowds of students begin to flow down the mall to celebrate Eagle Fest (bottom right).*



2. **Sustainability:** The future looks green as UWL has its very first Sustainability Program Manager, Andrew Ericson! Andrew joined University Centers in July 2022 after graduating from UWL with a bachelor's degree in chemistry with an environmental science concentration. Andrew plans to engage students and other campus stakeholders to identify and respond to key environmental issues. He also hopes to promote UWL's current sustainability work on campus and in the community. Existing sustainability projects such as composting, OZZI, and Drift Cycle need continued support to maintain success. Sustainability is ever evolving, and there is always work to be done. It's important that projects and programs continue to be implemented and completed. The Sustainability Program Manager directly oversees a singular student staff and less formally works with the Student Association Sustainability Director. *The La Crosse Tribune*



*features UW-La Crosse's reduction in carbon emissions (above left).*

3. **Sustainability Projects:** Jonathan Foley, executive director of Project Drawdown and a world-renowned climate scientist, visited UWL as the year's Prairie Springs Lecturer. His lecture in Graff Main Hall drew roughly 300 attendees (in person/virtual). Earthapalooza, a student-led Earth Day celebration, was held on campus on April 21 in the Student Union E Café which featured activities, prizes and a free vegan dinner. Drift Cycle launched their third season with an event on the Student Union lawn. UWL also opened their second cycle station on campus near Whitney Center. *Andrew Ericson, Sustainability Program Manager, was the lead organizer and MC for the Jonathan Foley lecture (top right). The new Whitney Center Drift Cycle station (bottom right).*
4. **"Did You Know" Series:** This was the fifth year of the Diversity and Inclusion initiative that is permanently displayed on the north entry of The U. The series was updated in fall semester with Multicultural Student Organizations, and in spring semester with Black History Month.



## GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED

5. **Six-Week Engagement-SOAR/Involvement:** The Six-Week Engagement Program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is a collaborative effort between the Divisions of Student Affairs, Diversity & Inclusion, and Academic Affairs that tracks participation of first-year and second-year students in a number of events and activities during the first six weeks of the fall semester. Students engaged during the first six weeks of the semester are achieving higher GPAs and are retained at higher rates than those students who are not engaged during the same time period.

In fall 2022, over 4,000 first-year and second-year students attended at least one event or activity. 92.5% of first-year students and 79.2% of second-year students were “engaged” in at least one event/activity. We also discovered that on average, engaged students are members of two (2) Recognized Student Organizations.

### Comparison of Academic Outcomes:

Average Semester GPA			
		“Engaged” Students	“Not Engaged” Students
Fall 2022	First-Year Students	3.13	2.64
	Second-Year Students	3.25	2.98
	Overall	3.18	2.88
Fall 2021	First-Year Students	3.35	3.19
	Second-Year Students	3.22	3.06
	Overall	3.27	3.16

Table above shows mean GPA of “engaged” and “not engaged” students after the fall semester. Data from both the Fall 2022 and Fall 2021 cohorts are reflected. For both cohorts, average GPA is slightly higher in the group of “engaged” students.

### Comparison of Retention Rates:

Retention to Fall 2022			
		“Engaged” Students	“Not Engaged” Students
First-Year Students	Retained to Fall 2022	88.9%	76.8%
	Not Retained	11.1%	23.2%
Second-Year Students	Retained to Fall 2022	84.6%	75.2%
	Not Retained	15.4%	24.8%
Overall	Retained to Fall 2022	86.3%	76.5%
	Not Retained	13.7%	23.5%

Table above shows retention rates for students who were part of the Fall 2021 engagement analysis. For both first-year and second-year students, those who were engaged in Fall 2021 were more likely to be retained to Fall 2022.

Notably, 88.9% of first-year “engaged” students were retained to Fall 2022, compared to only 76.8% of first-year “not engaged” students.

6. **Chancellor’s Volunteer Service Award:** This year, 120 students participated in the Chancellor’s Volunteer Service Award program. Of these students, 69 students completed service hour requirements to receive awards. This reflects an increase in participation of 52% as well as an 18% increase in completion from our 2021-2022 academic year numbers. These students collectively completed a total of 4,353 hours of volunteer service to our local community! *The Leadership and Involvement Center Staff: Amanda Krafft (Advisor), Kaytlin Nething, Chloe Hart, Macy Carty, Emily Babcock, and Rachel Diede (right).*



**GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED**

- 7. **National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS):** This academic year, 94 students joined the UWL Chapter of the National Society for Leadership and Success. 38% of current NSLS members completed the program (this includes students who signed up last year and completed the program this year). Last year, 42% of members completed the program. The NSLS National rep shared that most campuses experience a dip in both participation and competition. So, while we did not meet our goal of 50% completion, we only dropped by 4%. Over the two years of this program, we now have 422 current students participating in the program and have inducted a total of 281 members.
- 8. **Election Engagement Team:** This year the Election Engagement Team completed eight voter registration drives and promoted three elections (Midterms, Spring Primary, and Spring General). In the Spring General Election, 1,294 ballots were cast at the Student Union. *Matthew Gast and Abi Reiter, Campus Vote Project Fellows, assisting with voter registration at Eagle Fest (right).*
- 9. **TrafSys Union Traffic Data:** Comparisons of traffic into The U during 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 display a 14% increase in usage with over 950,000 visits to the Union (*below top chart*). WIAA State Track Meet building traffic reflects a 54% increase. See traffic count in comparison between this past year, Period 2-June 2023, and the previous year, Period 1-June 2022 (*below bottom chart*).



Period 1: 5/31/2021 to 5/30/2022		YEARLY TRAFFIC DATA		
Period 2: 5/31/2022 to 5/30/2023		Period 1	Period 2	Gain/Loss
Location				
East Entrance		201,575	276,926	37%
North Entrance		238,467	225,324	-6%
West Entrance		396,031	449,457	13%
Total		836,073	951,707	14%

Period 1: 6/2/2022 to 6/4/2022		WIAA STATE TRACK MEET DATA		
Period 2: 6/1/2023 to 6/3/2023		Period 1	Period 2	Gain/Loss
Location				
East Entrance		4,168	6,942	67%
North Entrance		1,655	2,390	44%
West Entrance		1,527	2,001	31%
Total		7,350	11,333	54%

- 10. **Student Union Vinyl Photo/Signage Phase II:** Program Coordinator Corey Stilwell has continued to develop large signage for open walls throughout the Student Union. As part of phase II, new vinyl signs were installed in May-June 2023, in locations throughout the building. Several of these vinyl pieces include an Eagle Fest save-the-date window cling, Commuter Lounge signage, as well as a large vinyl collage photo outside the UWL Bookstore (*see front cover and right*). In addition to the vinyl artwork, approximately 35 oversized Gatorboard photo prints went up in various areas of the building. Some of these areas include, The Game Room on the Lower Level, the front entrance of *The COVE*, as well as throughout the University Centers third floor suite. We hope to continue with phase III of this initiative in the coming year. *See pages 19-20 for the new images.*



## GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED

11. **Campus Activities Board (CAB):** CAB continued to develop their Instagram and Facebook presence to ensure students knew what events were happening as well as other ways to publicize such as hanging posters. All Craft Nights (in-person and Grab n’ Go) were very well attended. CAB also looked into other ways to bring more people to contracted nights, by publicizing earlier as well as adding posters. CAB continued partnerships with other organizations, departments, and initiatives: Sample the City and Volunteer Fair with the Leadership and Involvement Center, Eagle Fest, Feast of the East the Asian Student Organization and Office of Multicultural Student Services, Spring Break Send Off with Wellness and Health Advocacy, Student Support Services, Residence Life, Office of Multicultural Student Services, Violence Prevention, Pride Center, and Hayden Kristal with DREAM and The Pride Center. *CAB at Gay ASL Event in the E-Café (right): second row left Maddy Atkinson, Olivia Mussa, Kyler Miller, Megann Roszak, front row left Ros Filippelli, Hayden Kristal, Camryn Severson, Rachel Diede.*



12. **Recognized Student Organizations:** The entire COVE Staff played a role in supporting Recognized Student Organizations and learned the “ins and outs” of MyOrgs. The COVE Programming Team successfully implemented the Fall 2022 All Recognized Student Organization Meeting with a new presentation covering all the resources and important student organizations privileges and benefits. Other Student Organization statistics:

- **16,141** Hours of Service approved on My Orgs and Ugetconnected (an increase of 55% from the 2021-2022 academic year)
- **57** Fundraiser Registrations approved
- **8** new Student Organizations were recognized
- **85** printing projects were approved (t-shirts, miscellaneous apparel, and merchandise/swag)
- **41** applications were received for a Student Organization Grant, **24** were approved for a total of **\$35,031** in grants



*Recognized Student Organizations tabling on the mall at Eagle Fest, September 2022: Asian Latinx African Native America + Womxn (ALANA), American Marketing Associations (AMA), and American Chemical Society Student affiliate (ACS).*

13. **The COVE Graphics Garage:** The COVE Graphics Garage officially took over running the @uwlthecove Instagram page this year and helped considerably with creating content for the @uwlacrossstudentunion Instagram page as well. The COVE Graphics Garage has worked with EFAC to receive funding for social media giveaways, which included a camping tent, blanket, and multiple hammocks. The team also deposited 169 invoices for the academic year, totaling \$2,922.97 in sales on posters, flyers, and buttons. *Creative Communications Designers: Corey Stilwell (Advisor), Merrie Thao, Kristen Wendtland, Kenzie McCoy, Madison Vaillant (right).*



## GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED

14. **Union Social Media/Instagram:** Over the past year, we have grown our social media following considerably. Our @uwlacrossstudentunion Instagram page grew from 913 followers to 1,154 followers, and our @uwlthecove



*Administrative Assistant (top right), and Stryker's birthday cake made by University Dining (bottom right).*

Instagram page grew from 813 followers to 1,115 followers. We are also working purposefully to help build an affinity to Stryker, the school mascot. This year we created a series of videos titled "What Stryker Does..." in which we gave character and backstory to Stryker, and how he chooses to spend his days here at UWL. We created 5 videos in this series focusing on the activities Stryker does for Winter Break, Valentine's Day, Spring Break, April Fool's Day, and Spring Spectacular. The videos have been very well received, gaining the most popularity on Instagram. Stryker also celebrated his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday this year with a birthday bash on the Student Union lawn, which was heavily promoted on the Student Union social media! Stryker's birthday included music, cake, and photos with Stryker. *Stryker's Birthday Bash Announcement (top left), Emily Babcock-Leadership & Involvement Center Program Advisor (bottom left), Karen Daniel-University Centers*



15. **Fraternity & Sorority Community:** FSL hosted a successful Greek Life Block Party, Greek Week, and Fall Recruitment, resulting in an increase of membership in each of our 5 social fraternities/sororities. Interfraternity Council participated in a leadership retreat to discuss priorities for Fraternity Life, challenges, and goals for the community. Panhellenic Council successfully transitioned to a semi-structured recruitment model.

16. **Campus Food Pantry:** The Campus Food Pantry received 436 requests for access during the year. A total of 491 individuals swiped into the Food Pantry 5,140 times. The Leadership & Involvement Center hosted three food drives in addition to the monthly department drives, collecting over 5,000 items. *Officer Brian Oyen, McKenna Foster, and Chancellor Joe Gow assisting with the Fill the Truck event on April 9, 2023 (right).*



17. **Pride Center:** The Pride Center led 27 classroom panels, 27 workshop/training for the campus community, and led or co-led 34 programs this year. We had 400 people attend the 19th Annual Drag and Art Show April 1, 2023. *The Annual Drag Show cast (below right).* A total of \$3,475.38 was raised at the show for the student's THRIVE account. THRIVE was created for students by students and the intention is to offer trans and nonbinary student grants to be able to purchase the items they need to feel more like their true selves. This might be binders, clothes, make-up, or it can go towards hormones, electrolysis, or for a doctor's visit. Peer Educators and Graduate Assistants worked diligently to update the website this year making it more user friendly and interactive. The Pride Center Facebook page currently has 864 followers, and their Instagram page has 809 followers. Scholarships awarded by office include: three Eagle Pride Scholarships: 1) Olivia George \$500 (New/Transfer Students), 2) Maya Blashka \$1,000 (Current Student), 3) Caleb Bekkum \$1,000 (QTBIPOC Students); The Dr. Sara Sullivan



## **GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED**

LGBTQ+Study Abroad Scholarship: Mara Steinweber \$500. The Pride Center raised \$1,430 toward the Scholarship Fund from UWL Giving Day!

18. **University Reservations:** University Reservations was challenged by a vacancy at the end of the fall semester which impacted the department. Two staff took on the shared responsibility of daily Reservation requests and support for event functions. Mikaela Schneider was hired as the new University Reservation Scheduler in June 2023. Many typical UWL events were hosted in the Student Union: CAB movies in The U Theatre, Multicultural Student Organization banquets, Campus Close-Up, START, and many awards and end-of-year celebrations. External groups that returned include Mrs. Oktoberfest, Mathey Construction training, Dance for Hope, and the International Death, Grief, and Bereavement Conference.

Reservations revenue collected was \$39,292, a 27% increase from 2021-2022.

- Number of bookings in The U: 5,410
  - Number of Event Hours in The U: 17,309
  - Number of bookings rest of campus (EMS): 7,146
  - Number of event hours rest of campus (EMS): 25,080
  - Number of bookings per group type (EMS):
    - Academic depts: 5,018
    - Non-Academic depts: 3,176
    - Student Organizations: 1,814
    - External Groups: 40
  - Number of bookings in academic spaces: 1,329
19. **Audio Visual Lighting Support:** Doug Wilken was hired as the new AVLS Coordinator. In coordination with ITS and Chartwells Staff, 19 digital menu boards, digital signage, and cable TVs were replaced in Whitney Center. AVLS also replaced antennae, batteries, and transceivers for University Centers two-way radios used by Custodial, AVLS, Info Center, Building Managers, and UC Staff. Completed installation of PTZ Camera in 2310 Student Senate Chambers. Beginning a three-phase computer replacement cycle. Phase 1 machines are next for purchase. Purchased 2 Atlona WAVE 101 devices to allow multiple devices to connect to HDMI in rooms, specifically MACs. Purchased 5 OWL USB cameras to improve remote event inclusivity.
20. **Custodial Services:** This winter was challenging with the many snowfalls, but the team maintained a high standard around the Union and Whitney facilities. Lift Training Certification was completed for all staff. New carpet extractors and a new riding floor scrubber were purchased. The Union is back to pre-COVID business levels, and newer employees are adjusting well to the busy schedule. The team put in overtime to maintain standards and a high level of customer service during staff shortages in the Union. Three custodians resigned their positions, and five new custodians were hired: Andrew Anderson, Kevin Goddeau, Shayna Hornbeck, Sharpray Madison, and Dmetri Radde.
21. **Student Employment:** University Centers employed 80 students. No survey was conducted this year due to staffing shortages. We will deploy a student employment survey in 2024.
22. **NEW Dining Plans:** The NEW Dining Plans were implemented in the fall 2023; The Stryker Classic and The Stryker Deluxe. The Stryker Classic offers 19 meal swipes per week and \$115.00 Dining Dollars per semester. The Stryker Deluxe offers 21 meal swipes per week, plus \$150.00 Dining Dollars and 30 Block Meals per semester. Approximately 80% of the students participating in our board meal plans are on the Stryker Classic plan. Simplifying the Dining Plans has helped increase student understanding of the Dining Program and student participation is up from last year. Over 15,000 more meals were served at Whitney Center Main Dining this academic year compared to last year. The Off-Campus Talon Block Meal Plans were also upgraded this year. We started offering the Talon 40 Block Plan in addition to the Talon 60 and Talon 20 Plans. We also added an incentive for students to purchase the bigger plans by offering additional free block meals with the purchase of the Talon 60. *See Number of Students on each Dining Plan (top next page).*

**GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED**

Number of Students on Each Dining Plan											
	Fall 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Spring 2023		Fall 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Spring 2022		Average
	Week	Week	Week	Week	Average	Week	Week	Week	Week	Average	for year
	2 of Class	2 of Class	2 of Class	2 of Class	for year	2 of Class	2 of Class	2 of Class	2 of Class	for year	for year
Stryker Classic	2293	2270		2208	2247	Eagle	2213	2193	2147	2121	2169
Stryker Deluxe	700	692	558	552	626	Big Eagle	343	340	313	306	326
Reuter	273	271	289	288	280	Mega Eagle	117	115	91	88	103
Total	3266	3233	3065	3048	3153	Eaglet	149	143	139	135	142
						Reuter Flex	218	219	219	216	218
						Reuter Block	77	74	68	65	71
						Total	3117	3084	2977	2931	3027

23. **Dining Services:** We introduced a couple of exciting additions to the campus dining options this year. ‘Just Baked Bistro’ self-service kiosks (run by Canteen) were implemented in spring 2023 in Reuter and Eagle Halls. These bistro kiosks feature a rotating menu of hot, fresh food like White Castle Sliders, pizza, brownies, cinnamon rolls, and breakfast sandwiches. Customers order by selecting items from the touch screen and the selection is ready within one minute. Machines accept credit/debit, Dining Dollars, and Campus Cash. To-Go Breakfast packages were introduced in the Badger Street Sub Shop and quickly became very popular. Dining did lose a few full-time staff but had a good retention rate for student employee help. We continue to experience an increased reliance on student staff and are offering more employment opportunities for students. *‘Just Baked’ self-serve kiosk (right).*



24. **Dining Services Programs/Events:** The successful Tailgate Party was celebrated once again on the Union lawn prior to the first home football game featuring hamburgers, brats, sides, and ice cream. The traditional Holiday Luncheon returned to campus on December 15, 2022, for the first time since the COVID pandemic. Over 300 staff/faculty dined on French Onion style pork loin, herbed chicken breast, composed salad, roasted potatoes, 5<sup>th</sup> season blend vegetables, and desserts! Non-perishable food items were collected as part of the Great Rivers United Way and Rotary Lights Community Food Drive. Dining hosted a ‘Hormel’ takeover spring semester featuring plant-based pizza toppings in Whitney Center. They also raffled three different Super Bowl packages. Specialized subs for Super Bowl Sunday were also created. Dining Services continued their successful pie sales over both Thanksgiving and Christmas, selling 70 pies. The Dining Program continued to host ‘Recipes from Home’ (22 were featured during spring semester). This coming year we will ask for recipes during START via QR code to a survey link to submit a recipe. We hosted the second Recipe Showdown: Division of Student Affairs. Six departments participated by submitting a recipe in one of the featured categories of appetizers, dips & salsa, and desserts. Each category was featured on a different day where students tasted and voted for them. *Staff/faculty enjoy the first Holiday Luncheon in the Student Union Bluffs Room since 2019 (above right).*



**GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2022-2023...CONTINUED**

25. **Late Night Breakfast:** The traditional end of the semester event remains popular. Breakfast consisted of French toast sticks, sausage, cheesy eggs, hash browns, frost your own donut, waffle bar, cold brew bar, and a hot chocolate bar! It's a great kick-off for finals week. Over 1,800 students participated during the fall and spring event. Pepsi also set up sampling in the Whitney concourse. *Staff prepare to serve many Grand Slams to students at the December Late Night Breakfast (right).*



26. **Eagle ID Card:** In Fall 2022 we launched the redesigned student Eagle ID Card that had a new fresh look. The text is in black on a grey background featuring the UWL seal. The new cards are here to stay for a while (right).



27. **OZZI Reusable Containers:** Two Green Fund Grants fund two OZZI vending machines. It was another great year of reusable container use at both the Student Union and Whitney Center. The OZZI System has reduced UWL's reliance on single-use to-go containers. *We are excited to share that over 75,000 reusable containers were recycled through the OZZI (below)!*

CUSTOMER	Serial #	Total Thru 2022	JAN, 2023	FEB, 2023	MAR, 2023	APR, 2023	MAY, 2023	YTD 2023	TOTAL TO DATE
University of WI La Crosse - Student Union	1146	12,107	89	313	284	371	155	1,212	13,319
University of WI La Crosse - Whitney Ctr	1,179	56,227	447	1,748	1,329	1,945	410	5,879	62,106

28. **BOOST Mobile Ordering:** There were 5,360 BOOST mobile orders this past year. Next year we will see substantial growth with the app as the mobile option will be available for all retail dining areas.

29. **Catering:** There were 1,220 Catering Orders during 2022-2023! Fall semester there were 577 catering orders and spring semester there were 643 catering orders. This reflects a 31% increase from 2021-2022.

## **CHALLENGES/ISSUES**

1. **CAB:** Movies continue to have low attendance, especially for the movies that are on streaming platforms. CAB also saw lower attendance for game nights.
2. **Student Organizations:** We continued to see a disconnect between current officers and the policies and procedures for Recognized Student Organizations. There is minimal Adviser training and support and no ongoing training or education for officers.
3. **Fraternity & Sorority Life:** The community continues to see low numbers, especially in our Fraternity chapters, which remain at only two. Both need to stay active for our Interfraternity Council to exist. There is limited professional staff experience in FSL.
4. **Pride Center:** The number of LGBTQ+ students have increased; however, the future is uncertain if the Pride Center will continue to have a Graduate Assistant. There has been a need for an additional position in the center. Hostility in the United States against Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work, trans and nonbinary people and the LGBTQ+ community takes a toll on staff and students and there is deep concern of what will happen in Wisconsin, UW System and at UWL.
5. **National Society for Leadership and Success (NSLS):** During our second year as a NSLS Chapter, we experienced a large decrease in the number of students who signed up for the program and we also saw a 4% decrease in completion of the program. After talking with a representative from the national office, we learned it is common for Chapters to have a decrease their second year. We are adapting the program to better serve UWL and create a sense of community among participants.
6. **University Dining:** Supply chain issues continue to impact the dining operation. It is increasingly more challenging and expensive to get needed supplies. Staffing shortages also continue to impact the operation. Both the Cellar in the Student Union and Chars in the Whitney Center remained closed due to lack of staff. We hope to be able to reopen the Cellar in the fall.
7. **Eagle ID Card:** Though we strive to simplify the Eagle ID photo submission, one of the challenges has been new students submitting their Eagle ID Photo ahead of START. We aren't able to change the steps and process in GET Mobile. We have added more tools/resources for students, staff, and faculty to guide them. A new webpage was created that is dedicated to ID photo upload instructions and photo requirements and added samples of what approved photos should look like, along with the most common unapproved photos we see. This change has led to more students submitting an approved photo on the first try.
8. **CBORD Support:** In July 2023 campus will be upgrading CBORD, we are currently on version 7 and will be switching to version 8. To keep printing cards after the CBORD update we will be updating/changing our ID production software. We have used IDWorks for over a decade and it has become buggy and obsolete. We will be upgrading to InstantID, which should integrate seamlessly with CBORD and simplify designing and printing cards. New printers were also needed as our current ones were not compatible with the new version of CBORD or InstantID. The new printers will print 3 times faster than our current ones and supplies will be less expensive.
9. **University Centers Reservations:** A leave of absence for the lead custodian working with event set-ups, placed an extraordinary workload for those who kept Reservations moving forward. Operational corners were cut to keep the daily functions moving. Parking limitations and venue availability have caused us to lose significant business from recurring events over the next two years.
10. **Custodial:** Staffing shortages have impacted our custodial team over the past year. With the departure of three custodians this year, the remaining team members stepped up and helped cover during these times. We are grateful for the team efforts and look forward to the coming year as we approach the year fully staffed.

## **CHALLENGES/ISSUES...CONTINUED**

11. **Operations:** We continue to assess the ever-increasing costs associated with maintaining both the Student Union and Whitney Center. The Union is in its seventh year of operation, and we are working to address some preventive maintenance needs/projects. The Whitney Center renovation project has been further pushed back, which means we continue to prioritize deferred maintenance needs/projects.

## **INITIATIVES/GOALS 2023-2024**

1. Produce the third annual Eagle Fest on September 8, 2023.
2. Establish budget to support Eagle Fest.
3. Hire for two vacant positions: a new Associate Director of University Centers, and a new Dining Plan/ID Card Specialist
4. Complete hiring and training processes for both the Reservations Scheduler and Event Manager positions.
5. University Centers Electric Vehicle: We have begun the process of transitioning from a gas-powered micro van to an extended-bed electric vehicle. The transition should take place in FY 24.
6. Continue to build upon the success of the Chancellors Volunteer Service Award program.
7. Continue efforts to develop and grow participation in the UWL Chapter of the Nation Society for Leadership and Success (NSLS).
8. The Election Engagement Team will create a campus coalition to assess the ways students learn about upcoming elections and voter information. We will invite representatives from the Election Engagement Team, University Communications, Residence Life, Athletics, Multicultural Student Services, University Centers, Student Life, and Student Association.
9. Continue Phase III of the Vinyl/Photo Signage project.
10. Find an appropriate vendor for the Student Union directional signage.
11. Finalize art installation details for the wall opposite the Bluffs Ballroom. Assess current art in the Union and begin the process of replacing outdated art with new pieces.
12. Continue to highlight an affinity to Stryker and his personality and build up his visibility on campus.
13. Continue unifying the Stryker SOAR/Six-Week Engagement programming messaging in the first six weeks of the fall semester so students know where to find event information.
14. Develop a marketing plan for FSL that resonates with parents, students, faculty, and staff.
15. Send at least four students to an FSL leadership conference.
16. Seek training for professional staff working in Greek Life.
17. Implement a Fall Student Organization Officer Training that increases engagement with the content and creates an enjoyable and informational session that students want to attend.
18. Develop monthly roundtables and informational sessions available for student organization officers throughout the year.
19. Increase office presence with advisers as a resource.
20. Refresh the current Student Organization Resource Guide.
21. Eagle LEAD and Student Leadership Summit: The Leadership and Involvement Center created the Eagle LEAD Speaker Series in 2021. After evaluating this program, we will change it to a year-long Speaker Series with a monthly speaker. Additionally, we will host the inaugural Eagle LEAD Student Summit in spring 2024.
22. Continue to bolster sustainability efforts such as MTU ridership, potential for EV chargers, and support for Strategic Energy Management.
23. Encourage students to use the OZZI system and increase usage of the reusable containers.

## **INITIATIVES/GOALS 2023-2024...CONTINUED**

24. Research and discuss the possibility of hosting an LGBTQ+ high school and/or middle school camp.
25. Establish a second Queer Coffee (mid-day) and offer one event outside of the workday for LGBTQ+ faculty, staff, and their families.
26. Increase usage of the Ugetconnected site by creating partnerships with Service-Learning courses and student organizations.
27. CAB will implement an improved marketing plan and partner with COVE Graphics to promote events in the Student Union. This will include assessing frequency, type, and promotion of movies shown.
28. University Centers is working to create a new late-night programming series. .
29. Dining Services is working with two UWL students who will open a new food venue in the lower level of the Union called “Spark Smoothies” and will serve primarily smoothies and paninis.
30. Dining Services is working to expand the use of the BOOST mobile app to include use at all retail dining locations.
31. Work with Identisys and CBORD to convert to new production software for the ID cards when ID Works software expires in 2023.
32. Re-engage staff in the ‘Did You Know’ theme series to develop new posters.
33. Resurface floor in back of house at the Union to a slip-resistant but non-textured surface.
34. Move forward with updating the EMS Event Management System software.



*University Centers Staff – December 2022*

## **STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS/TESTIMONIALS**

*“COVE Graphics Garage is important to me because it gives me an opportunity to be creative and get more involved with campus. I am privileged to be able to help student organizations with meaningful and exciting projects that help me understand different design processes and think outside of the box. I am grateful to continue my role in the COVE Graphics Garage next year and to grow my skills in design as well as learn more about myself as a person.”*

**Kristen Wendtland, COVE Graphic Garage 2022-2023**



*“I applied to work for University Centers as a freshman because it was a convenient way to make money on campus between classes. Almost five years later, I am still part of the same team that I love working with. Not just the custodial staff; I mean everyone in the Union. The first friendships I made in college were through this job, fostered by a genuine and caring team of people. When I walk through the Union, I'm greeted by staff from all departments; it doesn't matter what your job title is, it matters that we help each other when we can. My supervisors will roll up their dress sleeves to help us get a job done, an act that really fosters mutual respect. It's definitely the people that have kept me coming back to work here. On top of that, my supervisors continue to support my education to pursue a master's degree at UWL. They allow me flexibility to work completely around school, something that is hard to find elsewhere. I am grateful for the opportunities I have received by working for University Centers.*

**Cara Senn, Student Union Custodian**



*“I have worked at the Student Union as an Administrative Assistant for over a year now, and as time goes on and I am given more responsibilities and the feeling of connectedness I have with UWL only continues to grow. This has been my favorite part of being a student employee, much more goes on here than classes and textbooks and having a 'behind-the-scenes' role has been rewarding. Making connections with the wonderful staff and faculty in my role at the Union has been a privilege. Through getting to know the individuals who are in charge of various areas of campus such as Reservations, Chartwells, finances, custodial, and many more, I've been able to grow my resources in my involvement in student organizations. When my peers have questions, I know who to direct their questions to or who to ask personally. My appreciation for UWL has grown since becoming an on-campus employee and I always encourage students to look first at their own university when in search of a job.”*

**Isabel Piarulli, University Centers Administrative Student Staff, Executive Editor-Raquet Press, and UWL Student Association CASSH Senator**



Students from the Students for Sustainability student organization take Drift Cycle bikes from the Student Union to transport themselves to the City Hall Victory Gardens to volunteer. *Erika Holen, Paige Schowoek, Aubrey Schwonek, Hayleigh Hazen, Blythe Pollard, Grace Lopez Johnson, Anika Whittington (right).*



## **ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS/TESTIMONIALS**

For the December 2022 edition of the UWL Alumni Association's "What's New Wednesday?", Andrew Ericson, Sustainability Program Manager, was the guest speaker. He discussed where UWL stood on sustainability and what was coming up next and touched on how to be more sustainable.

### **HONORS/AWARDS/GRANTS/PRESENTATIONS OFF-CAMPUS**

1. Andrew Ericson, Sustainability Program Manager, was nominated for the ***Sustainability Institutes 2022 Inspiring Sustainability Award***. Andrew was also elected as the Treasurer of Drift Cycle, Inc.
2. The Pride Center received the ***Of the Month Winner from The Carol J. Bassuener Chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary***.
3. UWL received the ***"Voter Friendly Campus"*** designation this spring from the Fair Elections Center's Campus Vote Project and NASPA. UWL is one of 258 campuses in 38 states and the District of Columbia to receive the recognition for campuses that have planned and implemented practices that encourage their students to register and vote in the 2022 elections and in coming years.
4. Anita Bashaw, Student Union Custodian, was nominated and won the ***Division Award for Outstanding University Staff*** (less than 5 years).
5. Gary Ellis, Student Union Custodial Lead, was nominated for ***Student Employer of the Year*** (4<sup>th</sup> time).
6. Kyle Burke, University Centers Director, received the ***ACUI Region V Susan Maul Distinguished Service Award***, as well as the ***ACUI Legacy Leader Award*** in 2022.

## STUDENT UNION VINYL PHOTO/SIGNAGE PROJECT- PHASE II

Phase II was completed in summer 2023! The vinyl signage, photos, and backlit signage is featured in these locations: *Clockwise from top left: 3200 University Centers Suite/Dining Services Administrative Offices, The COVE, The Commuter Lounge, first floor Dining and elevators areas, and the UWL Bookstore (below and page 20).*



**STUDENT UNION VINYL PHOTO/SIGNAGE PROJECT - Phase II ...CONTINUED**



**COME TO THE U - GET INVOLVED.  
ENJOY YOUR CAMPUS LIVING ROOM!**

*University Centers serves the community by providing a welcoming environment that facilitates learning opportunities, embraces inclusivity, and enriches the campus experience.*

*University Centers Mission*