UNIVERSITY CENTERS



The OZZI Reusable Container Program, an alternative to disposable containers, is in its fifth year on campus. In December 2024, we celebrated the **100,000** use of an OZZI container! Students and staff are changing the world, from disposable to reusable, one meal at a time. Stryker returns his reusable container to the OZZI machine (above).

Prepared By:

Kyle E. Burke, Director of University Centers and Student Engagement Karen Daniel, University Services Program Associate



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Students stryke a pose with Stryker on Eagle Field during Eagle Fest 2024 (top left). University Centers & Dining Services staff practice their 'talons up' at the start of the fall semester 2024 (top right). University Centers staff enjoy Patio Days on the Union Patio in July 2024 (bottom right). University Centers Associate Director-Michael Slevin, pictured middle with Chancellor Beeby and Vice Chancellor Vitaliano Figueroa, celebrates his retirement on January 31, 2025, after 30 years of service to UWL (bottom left).

A Message from the Director...



Hello and welcome! I'm Kyle Burke, and I have the incredible honor of serving as the Director of University Centers and Student Engagement here at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Since arriving at UWL in March 2021, I've come to truly understand what makes this campus so special, it's the people! The energy, passion, and dedication of our students, faculty, and staff create a vibrant community where learning, growth, and connection flourish every day.

I'm continually inspired by the outstanding programs and services that University Centers offers to both our students and the broader campus community. These successes are a direct result of the talent, commitment, and collaboration of our amazing University Centers team. Over the past year, we've achieved so much together, and the year ahead promises even more exciting progress. To each member of the team: thank you for your tireless work, your passion, and your dedication. You make this place extraordinary.

This past year we had a few staff changes. One staff member has retired: Michael Slevin-Associate Director. I congratulate Michael on his retirement and thank him for 30 years of service! Four staff members have moved on to other opportunities; Mikaela Schneider-University Reservations Scheduler, Doug Wilken-AVLS Coordinator, Jamie Henk-Communications Specialist, and Colin Smith-Union Custodian. I thank them for their service and wish them well in their next career endeavors. We also welcomed a few new staff members including Hayley Harnden-Associate Director (former Events Manager), Jackie Moenck-University Reservations Schedular, Paul LeCount-AVLS Coordinator, Paytyn Wilson-Program Coordinator for Student Leadership, Erik Gunderson-Whitney Center Custodian, and Cedric Roberts-Union Custodian. Welcome to the University Centers team, we are glad to have you here.

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 2024-2025 academic year. A few of our highlighted achievements over the past year include:

- Produced the fourth annual Eagle Fest which featured over 130 student organizations and UWL departments and saw over 6,000 student, staff, faculty, and local community attendees
- Engaged 98.9% of new first-year students, 89.1% of second-year students, and 74.0% of transfer students in at least one activity/program/service during the first six weeks of the fall semester
- Launched The A-9 Eatery dining station which supports students with the 9 major allergens and greatly enhanced their dining experience
- Installed our new Student Union Art Exhibit Gallery space outside of the Bluffs Ballroom
- Students performed 16,199 volunteer service hours on campus and in the local community
- Reached a milestone of over 100,000 OZZI reusable meal containers used at the Student Union and Whitney Center
- Scheduled and planned over 12,000 meetings and events on campus and hosted 194 community events through our private rental program

Some of our goals for the 2025-2026 academic year include: continuing our efforts to focus on the engagement of our first-and second-year students, focus on the culture and experience of our student staff, connect students and build community through the campus dining program, and develop an action plan for how University Centers will support the new UWL strategic plan. 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.

We are excited to be hosting the fifth annual Eagle Fest on Friday, September 5, 2025. You won't want to miss this exciting UWL tradition!

The University Centers department, and the buildings we operate, will continue to be safe and inclusive environments for all students, faculty, staff and guests. 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 Student Association Presidents...



Student Association had a productive year making a positive impact on the campus community through various projects and initiatives. We had the opportunity to build new relationships and continue collaborative efforts with the campus and shared governance leadership to ensure transparency and student-centered approaches to every conversation. To further these efforts, our Policy Creation Advisory Ad Hoc Committee gathered research and presented a formal request to campus leadership for more formal student involvement in the policy creation and review process at UW-La Crosse.

As an organization, we prioritized student advocacy for the Prairie Springs Completion Project in the state budget by meeting with legislators, organizing individual student outreach to representatives, and speaking at a public budget hearing. Additionally, with the

support of SUFAC and the Green Fund, we passed a resolution to approve another three-year agreement with the University to fund the Sustainability Program Manager position. In a continued effort to increase student engagement, we partnered with Earthapalooza to host our first Student Association Vendor Fair with numerous student vendors. And for our spring event, Pie A Senator, we fundraised over \$500 for the Student Association Multicultural Student Organization Scholarship!

I know the next year of Student Association, under the leadership of President Emma Wittman and Vice President Cisco Garcia, will be successful and continue championing efforts to endow the scholarship, advocate for students, and empower student leaders.

Emma Latus Student Association President, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025



Transitioning from the 2023-2024 Asian Student Organization Senator to the Inclusivity Director in 2024-2025, to now the President of the Student Association, this has been an incredible journey. Vice President Garcia and I are looking to increase shared governance, enhance the voices of our student body, and of course progress UW-La Crosse to become the best institution it can possibly be! We are honored to have this exceptional responsibility and opportunity.

Our predecessors, Emma Latus and Avery Ladd-Winders have done an excellent job at paving a smooth transition for leadership and of course, have set a high bar of achievement. Vice President Garcia and I are eternally grateful for their wisdom and

consistent support throughout our time in Senate.

Finally, Vice President Garcia and I have plans to work diligently with our faculty, staff, and administration over the summer, preparing for an exciting year! We are eager to meet with student organizations, athletic groups, and all members of our UWL and La Crosse community. Through transparent leadership and honest communication, we anticipate a successful and enthusiastic year!

Emma Wittman
Student Association President, 2025-2026

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.

Leadership & Involvement Center Mission

The Leadership and Involvement Center envisions a campus where students lead purpose driven lives by engaging in activities that promote lifelong, active citizenship, personal well-being, and professional growth. We are dedicated to engaging students in leadership, involvement, and service opportunities.

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

- <u>Leading to Serve</u>: We engage in activities that serve the goals and best interests of our students, colleagues, and community those that promote self-actualization. Our success lies in the success of others.
- <u>Multiculturalism:</u> 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."
- <u>Assessment:</u> 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.
- <u>Integrity:</u> 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 2024-2025

- Goal 1: By July 2025, University Centers, in collaboration with campus partners in Student Affairs, Diversity &
 Inclusion, and Academic Affairs, will develop and implement a 3-year campus-wide Student Engagement strategy.
 IN PROGRESS
- **Goal 2:** By June 2025, University Centers, in collaboration with the Division of Student Affairs and the Chancellor's Office, in effort to establish a new campus tradition and to further develop and support our students' affinity to UWL, will create and implement a Convocation ceremony experience for our Fall 2025 first-year students. **DELAYED**
- **Goal 3:** By September 2024, University Centers, in collaboration with University Dining, The ACCESS Center, and Facilities Management, will launch "The A9 Eatery," a pilot program focused on enhancing UWL's support of students needing accommodation for food allergies, strengthening students' dining experience satisfaction, and supporting recruitment with a premier dining service. **COMPLETE**
- Goal 4: By August 2025, University Centers, in collaboration with Records and Registration, Athletics, Campus Recreation, and Information Technology Services, in effort to improve and streamline the reservation process, will assess current reservations/scheduling platforms to determine the feasibility of a shared platform between Records and Registration and University Reservations. If a shared solution is not available, University Centers, in partnership with key personnel, will choose and implement an event scheduling platform based on the feature set, initial cost, and ongoing operational costs. COMPLETE

GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS/POINTS OF PRIDE 2024-2025

- 1. Eagle Fest 2024: The fourth annual Eagle Fest was held on Friday, September 6, 2024, on the Student Union Lawn, Badger Street, Drake and Eagle Fields. This major UWL tradition kicks off the start of the new school year. Eagle Fest featured three musical performances by Vocal Ties, Black River Band, and Bad, Bad Hats. The event also featured a Welcome from Chancellor Beeby, the Screaming Eagles Marching Band, booths by student organizations and departments, inflatables, yard game zone, cornhole tournament, Drag Queen Bingo, caricatures, Drama Club Improv, Art Department tote bag art, free popcorn, photos with Stryker, a BBQ dinner hosted by University Dining, and three food trucks (Taco Broz, Monkey Business and Oly's Donuts). Total attendance exceeded 6,000. Eagle Fest is for the entire UWL community of students, faculty, staff, and families! A drone flies high over the start of Eagle Fest 2024 on the Union Lawn (right).
- Student Union Signage: Even more signage was installed this past year that included: new Union Art Exhibit Gallery installation/lighting outside of the Bluffs Ballroom, and an outdoor jumbo double-sided TV monitor between the Union and Prairie Springs. The Information Center was also rebranded as the Welcome Desk, aligning with our mission to create a warm, inclusive environment for all. As the "living"
- 3. <u>Student Employment:</u> University Centers employed approximately 70 student employees that serve in various roles in these areas: University Centers Administrative Office, Reservations, Audio Visual Lighting Services, Dining Plan/ID Card Office, Custodial Services, Welcome Desk, COVE Graphics, Bluffs Set-Up Crew, Leadership & Involvement Center, Building Management, and the Pride Center. Students share their personal experiences from their employment in University Centers on page 18.

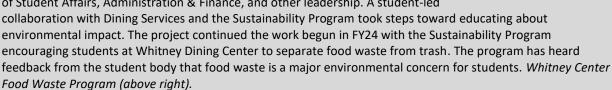
room" of campus, we welcome everyone to connect, relax, refresh, learn and play. See page 20 for photos.



4. <u>TrafSys Union Traffic Data:</u> Overall Student Union building traffic count comparison between the previous year of 2023-2024 (period 1) compared to the current year of 2024-2025 year (period 2) displays 996,688 visitors in the U, a 2% increase!

YEARLY TRAFFIC DATA					
Location	Period 1	Period 2	Gain/Loss		
	5/30/2023 to 5/30/2024	5/31/24 to 5/31/2025			
East Entrance	288,010	293,852	2%		
North Entrance	243,603	243,989	0%		
West Entrance	443,221	458,847	4%		
Total	974,834	996,688	2%		

- 5. <u>Sustainability:</u> Despite new initiatives and efforts, preexisting programs and projects remained at similar levels of success as previous years which was achieved by managing time and resources to ensure that there is ongoing support. Metric for this goal includes MTU rides, Drift Cycle Rides, OZZI use, and success of events like the PS
 - Lecture Series+Awards, Earthapalooza, and a campus moveout diversion effort. Provided a comprehensive review and recommendation on campus-wide emissions reduction target to leadership. This collaborative work runs through JCES. We experienced a successful implementation of a reimagined version of the Reduce Reuse Reimagine program during campus moveout. We saw continued growth on the Sustainability Insta account by reaching a goal of 1,150 followers by end of the academic year. Assisted in a long-term strategy to maintain the Sustainability Coordinator position by successfully advocating for the proper title for the Sustainability Coordinator and provide all needed resources to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Administration & Finance, and other leadership. A student-led



6. **Pride Center:** Over 400 people attended the annual Art & Drag Show 2025 in the Bluffs (top right). The Pride Center raised \$3,420.00 for the Pride Center Scholarships. The Pride Center gave out four scholarships totaling \$3,000.00. We raised \$1,125.00 during UWL's Annual Giving Day. The Pride Center, a Living Learning Community located in Wentz Hall, began in Fall 2024. We filled the floor, had two amazing Resident Advisors (RAs), and made regular connections with the residents. Some special programs included painting pottery, skate night at the local roller-skating rink, and attending the Midwest BLGTA College Conference (bottom right). We had such a great community that over half of the students who lived on the floor this year are returning to the LLC for the 2025-2026 school year as well! Our LGBTQ+ students, faculty, & staff participated in 16 class panels. The Center also led 20 trainings, conducted 76 consultations, and served 6,137 people through all its programs.





7. 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, Access, Belonging and 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 2024, 4,355 first-year, second-year and transfer students attended at least one event or activity during the first six weeks of the semester. 98.9% of first-year students, 89.1% of second-year students, and 74.0% of transfer students were "engaged" in at least one event/activity. On average, engaged first-year students participated in four (4) events/activities, while second-year and transfer students participated in two (2) events/activities. We also discovered that on average, engaged students are members of at least one Recognized Student Organization by the end of the first six weeks of the semester.

Comparison of Academic Outcomes:

Average Semester GPA					
		"Engaged" Students	"Not Engaged" Students		
Fall 2024	First-Year Students	3.26	2.60		
	Second-Year Students	3.24	2.90		
	Transfer Students	2.90	2.61		
	Overall	3.23	2.88		
Fall 2023	First-Year Students	3.15	2.62		
	Second-Year Students	3.19	2.85		
	Transfer Students	2.77	2.64		
	Overall	3.17	2.80		

Table above shows mean GPA of "engaged" and "not engaged" students after the fall semester. Data from both the Fall 2024 and Fall 2023 cohorts are reflected. For both cohorts, average GPA is higher in the group of "engaged" students.

Comparison of Retention Rates:

Retention to Fall 2024					
		"Engaged" Students	"Not Engaged" Students		
First-Year Students	Retained to Fall 2024	86.6%	81.1%		
	Not Retained	13.4%	18.9%		
Second-Year	Retained to Fall 2024	91.7%	86.6%		
Students	Not Retained	8.3%	13.4%		
Transfer	Retained to Fall 2024	84.2%	81.6%		
Students	Not Retained	15.8%	18.4%		
Overall	Retained to Fall 2024	88.3%	84.7%		
	Not Retained	11.7%	15.3%		

Table above shows retention rates for students who were part of the Fall 2023 engagement analysis. For first-year, second-year and transfer students, those who were engaged in Fall 2023 were more likely to be retained to Fall 2024.

- 8. The Leadership & Involvement Center: There were1,240 attendees at LIC- sponsored events/programs. The LIC sponsors various Leadership Programs: UWL Student Leadership Summit, EagleLEAD, and National Society for Leadership & Success. They also offer Involvement Programs: Involvement Fair, and the Sample the City & Volunteer Fair. There were also volunteer and services opportunities: Ugetconnected, Chancellor's Volunteer Service Award, UWL Day of Service, Make a Difference Day, and Blood Drives (327 units of blood
- 9. <u>UWL Student Leadership Summit</u>: The LIC hosted the 2nd Annual UWL Student Leadership Summit on February 24 with 33 students and 9 student speakers. This year our keynote speaker was Dr. James Beeby and over the lunch hour we hosted a student panel. While we did not meet our goal of 60 student attendees, our marketing efforts improved, and we partnered with eight campus departments, offices, and student organizations to sponsor students' registration fees. *Chancellor Beeby and student Rachel Diede after the Student Leadership Summit Keynote (right)*.

collected this year).

10. Eagle Excellence in Leadership Awards: University Centers partnered to host the 2nd Annual Eagle Excellence in Leadership Awards ceremony, presented by the Division of Student Affairs on May 8, 2025. We saw over 140 individuals in attendance. This ceremony acknowledges and pays tribute to our campus's student leaders. We are privileged to witness our students taking the lead in a variety of roles. The 8 distinguished awards are designed to create a moment of reflection, appreciation, and gratitude for the exceptional contributions made by student leaders who enrich our campus daily.



- 11. <u>National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS):</u> 291 students joined the UWL Chapter of the NSLS this academic year, and 174 (60%) were inducted. This spring, the UWL Chapter became a Recognized Student Organization.
- 12. <u>Chancellor's Volunteer Service Award:</u> For the fourth year of the program, we had 195 students participate in the program, with 122 completing the requirements for recognition, and a total of 8,018 hours. This year we also recognized four students for the Eagle Achievement Award, completing 400+ hours during their time at UWL.
- 13. Eagles @ Nite: Eagles @ Nite saw increased recognition in the program's second year of operation. We continue to see attendees at every event, some events as high as 150 attendees. This year saw a variety of events including Hobby Night, Board Game Night, and a Glow Party. Eagles @ Nite also continued to build partnerships for events and worked with partners, such as: Campus Activities Board, the Leadership and Involvement Center, UWL Votes, Tabletop Gaming Club, Tarot Club, the E-Zone, Outdoor Connection, Health and Wellness, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and many more. During Spring Semester, Eagles @ Nite also hired two student staff members, who have aided in planning, implementing, and staffing these events. Students at Bob Ross Paint Night in January 2025 (right).



14. Election Engagement Team: The Election Engagement Team had four Campus Vote Project Democracy Fellows, and as a team, we promoted student participation in three elections (Presidential, Spring Primary, and Spring General). Throughout the year, we created and continued to build many strong relationships and partnerships. This year we have improved our voting registration. For the presidential election, we hosted our first early voting event, Ready, Set, Vote. For this event, we partnered with UWL Pride Center, UWL Student Association and The League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area. In addition, we happily hosted a Registration Drive in the Eagle Mail Center during Voter Education Week. UWL was recognized as a Voter Friendly Campus for the 5th iteration of the program, and we will receive our date from The National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE) next spring.

- 15. <u>Civil Discourse Program:</u> This year, we hosted two panels and practice sessions and four Student Moderator Trainings. For the 2025-2026 academic year, we are planning to facilitate a workshop during Free Speech Week and Social Justice Week while continuing our Student Moderator Training and panel discussions.
- 16. Recognized Student Organizations: Student organizations continue to offer a place of community, shared interest, and connection for students across campus. Our community offers 206 organizations ranging from academic interest, service-based, athletic interest, special interest, social activism, spirituality, or student governance. Student Organization Officer Training continued to offer breakout sessions during training to provide more targeted support in the following areas: Finances & Fundraising, Leadership Development & Volunteering, Recruiting & Retaining Members, Marketing & Social Media, and Event Planning. A new addition to training this year was a partnership with



the Alumni & Friends Foundation to offer student organizations the opportunity to receive donations during their philanthropy event *One Day for UWL*. Sixty clubs (20 sports clubs and 40 non-sport clubs) received funding totaling \$30,383.19! The COVE also hosted the first Student Organization Workshop series for student organization leaders. The series offered one 45-minute session per week for seven weeks on a variety of topics in the hope of continuing to build leadership skills for leaders. Examples of topics include conflict resolution, community service and active citizenship, leadership theory and styles, hazing prevention and education, meeting management and group communication, and more. Organizations that attended all sessions received a \$50 scholarship to their organization. Two student organizations completed the

series this year, Chemistry & Biochemistry Club and Early Childhood Educators Club. Fall Involvement Fair had 115 Student Organizations attended, and 600+ students attend. The Spring Involvement Fair had 75 student organizations attended, and 350+ student attend. Other Student Organization statistics: **16,199** Hours of Service approved on Ugetconnected and My Orgs platforms, **775** events (meetings, speakers, fundraisers, socials) hosted by over 114 organizations, **44** Fundraiser Registrations were approved, **65** Printing Projects were approved (t-shirts, miscellaneous apparel, and merchandise/swag), **7** Regalia/Stole Requests approved, **31** applications were received for a Student Organization Grant, for a total of **\$27,410** in grants funding. *Black Student Unity tabling at Eagle Fest in September 2024 (above left)*.

17. Campus Activities Board (CAB) Campus Activities Board has continued to build on their revamped programming structure and have seen continued success. Their current model includes two programs per week on average. This includes a Lunchtime Program (every Wednesday, Noon-2:00 pm) as well as an evening program during the week. During the fall semester, CAB took their first bus trip in several years, heading to Valley Fair for an evening at "Valley Scare". CAB also implemented a new program on Study Day, Study-a-Thon, an all-day event with a structured schedule including study time, activities, lunch, and giveaways. CAB had three returning students in the spring semester and two new hires. They continued with the same programming schedule and had several successful events, including a bus trip to a Minnesota Timberwolves game, Spring Spectacular, and the Spring Concert with Hot Chelle Rae! This concert was the first to be planned after COVID. CAB also continued several

partnerships, such as: Sample the City and Volunteer Fair with the Leadership and Involvement Center, Eagle Fest, Fall Fest, Night on the Slopes with Campus Recreation and Outdoor Connection, and continued to see increased attendance at many of their events. 2024 CAB Team at Eagle Fest 2024: Megan McMunn, Julia Davis, Rachel Diede, Erica Steinmetz, and Avery Kehoe (top right). Students on the court at the Minnesota Timberwolves Game for CAB's Spring Bus Trip (bottom right).





- 18. The COVE Graphics Garage: The COVE Graphics team was busy this year managing 150 invoices totaling over \$6,000 in sales on items such as posters, flyers, buttons, and our new sticker service. This is the first full year we have offered our sticker service and student organizations, and the campus community has embraced this new service. COVE Graphics Staff: Jamie Henk-Communications Specialist, student design staff Ellie Baudry, Josie Bartol, Jack Erickson, and Kyle Hutson-Program Coordinator for Student Organizations (right).
- 19. <u>Union Social Media/Instagram:</u> The Student Union Instagram gained 500 followers in 2024-2025, up 201% from last year. Our top four posts of the year on the Student Union Instagram were:





Likes: 174 Views: 10,297

Stryker's #uwl2024highlights

Likes: 206 Views: 2,248

Eagle Fest Recap

Likes: 183 Views: 7,574



Likes: 161 Views: 1,972

The Student Union Instagram focused on building momentum for further growth. This involved continuing our efforts in brand recognition and exploring ways to increase link clicks from our posts. Students going from the information in a post to our bio means they are engaging with the page and becoming more involved with our programs. The COVE Instagram gained 274 followers in the 2024-2025 academic year. Compared to last year, our overall reach is up by 523.5%! This year, the COVE Instagram worked on brand recognition. This step is important for further growth, so that the COVE accounts can closer match our Student Union in engagement. When scrolling the @uwlthecove page on both Instagram and Facebook, there will be a stronger sense of unity between the posts than the prior year. We worked towards this by building a consistent branding guide and have Graphics students keep those elements in mind while designing. You will notice a mixture of COVE green and variations of teal in most of our posts. Top four posts of the year on the COVE Instagram were:



Likes: 114 Views: 9,752

Spring Involvement Fair



Likes: 136 Views: 2,260

Eagle Fest Teaser



Likes: 120 Views: 1,773

Stryker Day of Service



Likes: 104 Views: 5,115

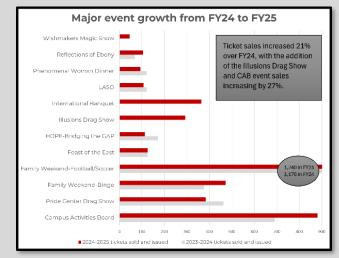
20. Fraternity & Sorority Community: The Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) community continues to see growth in their community after successful Fall recruitment, and continuous open bidding and recruitment in the Spring. FSL continues to build connections within their community and beyond, seeing an increased number of socials between chapters as well as their local chapter counterparts from other nearby universities. FSL hosted another successful Greek Week in March that included a Day of Service and a social at Jump Start. Chapters also saw success with their individual philanthropy efforts including Alpha Phi's Red Dress Brunch, Sigma Sigma Sigma's "Pie a Sigma Tri", Alpha Xi Delta's "Xi Gala" and Delta Sigma Phi's support for Sarah's Golf Outing. Order of Omega restructured slightly to add activities and professional development opportunities



to their monthly meetings and continues to see success with initiating members in both the Fall and

Spring. Panhellenic Bid Day Fall 2024-Chapters L-R: Alpha Xi Delta, Sigma Sigma Sigma, and Alpha Phi (above).

- 21. Event Ticket Sales: Online ticketing was launched, an upgrade that simplifies the experience for event participants, reduces paper waste, and saves time. There was a 21% increase in tickets sold/issued across twelve major events managed by University Centers compared to FY24 (right). Ticket sale growth was driven by the Illusions Drag Show and CAB events.
- 22. Campus Food Pantry: The Food Pantry had 421 unique users this past year. We had an increase in monthly food drive participation compared to the last four years, with 19 participating offices and departments collecting over 2,300 donations for the pantry.



23. <u>University Reservations</u>: Jackie Moenck was hired as the new University Reservations Scheduler. Reservations revenue collected was \$76,356.61 (\$41,404.68 from external customers, and \$34,951.93 from internal groups). While the overall number decreased, the revenue collected from external rentals increased by 48%. Many new events along with typical UWL events were hosted in the Student Union. The total bookings made by the University Reservations Office for UWL Departments and Student Organizations was 12,215 (9,454 in EMS, and 2,761 in Ad Astra). There were 194 bookings made by external groups. These groups often provide a positive review, "The reservation process was so easy! Hayley provided me perfect recommendations with room

descriptions and photos. She listened to my request and completely tailored the offerings to what I needed. This took a load off my mind in that she was already thinking of everything! Got the room reservation in place quickly." "What a treasure! This location is top notch...surroundings are beautiful...room itself was fantastic. Well set up and well designed. We had great signage telling us where to go and restrooms nearby. Loved this location." Marine Credit Union

24. Audio Visual Lighting Support: Paul LaCount was hired as the new AVLS Coordinator. AVLS supported the events throughout the entire Student Union, including several large-scale events in the Bluffs. From February until May, Interstate Sound was hired on to assist with events as needed to supplement coverage. The UWL Pride Center Drag Show (right) is one of the largest production events of the year. The AVLS student staff were nominated for a second year for the Aerie Award at the second annual Eagle Excellence in Leadership Awards.

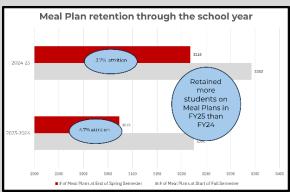


25. <u>Event Services:</u> This past year brought significant transitions and challenges for the Event Services and University Reservations team due to a retirement and other employee transitions. Despite these changes, the team demonstrated resilience and dedication, working collaboratively to uphold the high standards of service our

campus community expects. Other unit members took on additional responsibilities, ensuring operations continued smoothly and effectively. Their commitment was instrumental in maintaining continuity during this period of change. One of the most significant campus events was the inauguration of Chancellor James Beeby on May 2, 2025 (right). This event required the full collaboration of the University Centers team for its planning and execution. Both the investiture ceremony and the celebratory dinner proceeded smoothly, making the occasion a meaningful and rewarding experience. It was a proud moment that brought together the campus and broader community in celebration.



- 26. <u>Custodial Services</u>: Two new custodians were hired: Erik Gunderson-Whitney Center, and Cedric Roberts-Student Union. To address vacancies and ensure coverage, overtime was approved, enabling staff to maintain a safe and clean environment for all. A significant number of overtime hours were dedicated to supporting increased number of campus events at the Union and accommodating the growing student population at Whitney Center. Despite limited staffing, custodians continued to uphold high standards of cleanliness and service during major events, including Chancellor's Inauguration, Spring Cab Concert, Eagle Fest, Late Night Breakfast, Spring Spectacular, WIAA State Track Meet, nine START dates in June, Campus Close-Up events, voting, and the opening of the new A-9 Eatery Dining space. To accommodate the increased foot traffic during the State Track Meet, Union building hours were extended, further demonstrating the team's commitment to meeting customer needs. Across both Student Centers, the custodial team has remained dedicated to delivering a welcoming experience. Their efforts include maintaining clean, safe environments and diligently managing winter snow removal for easy building access. Regular equipment maintenance ensured all custodial machinery remained in good working condition. A reliable, hardworking student custodial staff strongly supports the team.
- 27. <u>Dining Plans:</u> The residential Dining Program consists of three plan options: Stryker Classic, Stryker Deluxe, and Reuter Blocks. Strong retention reflects both the quality of the dining experience and students' sense of connection on campus. We measure Dining Plan retention by comparing the number of students enrolled in a plan at the start of fall semester to those still on a plan at the end of spring. While some attrition is expected, we're proud to report continued progress: in FY25, attrition fell to just 3.7%, down from 4.7% the year prior, a 21% improvement. We served 963,126 meals on the Classic and Deluxe Plans, 6.2% more than the previous year, due to the large number of residential students.



28. <u>Dining Services:</u> We opened The A9 Eatery inside Whitney Dining Center on August 28, 2024! The A9 Eatery is a dedicated kitchen and dining space designed to serve students with food allergies and dietary restrictions. This allergen-safe environment was made possible through a close partnership and commitment to inclusive dining between Dining Services, University Centers, and the ACCESS Center. *Craig Key, Kyle Burke, Lizzy Haywood, Steve Martens, Jess Harke and Eric Knockles at The A-9 Eatery (right)*. Occupying the former Char's location, which had been closed since the pandemic, The A9 Eatery offers full-service meals free from the top nine allergens and gluten. Since launched, student participation with allergen-safe dining has tripled!



The Eatery serves fresh, made-to-order meals such as stir fry, nachos, quesadillas, gyro bowls, and a fully stocked salad bar. Students on the Stryker Classic or Deluxe Dining Plans can access the venue at no extra cost and may return to Main Dining without using an additional swipe. Operated by ServSafe Allergen-certified Chartwells staff and overseen by Campus Dietician Jess Harke, Chef Robb Hanson and Sous Chef Brayden Thiesen, The A-9 Eatery

sets a new standard for allergen-aware dining in the University of Wisconsin-System. As Director Kyle Burke notes, "We've reopened a long-closed space and created a safe, supportive environment where students with dietary needs can thrive." We served 66 registered students by the end of the academic year and opened The A9 Eatery to UWL employees interested in high-quality, allergen-aware meals. Student Bennett Bookter and Chancellor James Beeby in The A9 Eatery space (right). Just Baked Bistro also expanded to a third location in Sanford Hall, joining the original kiosks in Reuter and Eagle Halls. This year's total sales topped \$11,000, an increase of more than 12% over the inaugural year! The kiosks offer a rotating menu of hot, ready-to-enjoy meals and snacks. Just Baked Bistro service supports convenient, 24/7 access to hot food right in the residence halls.



- 29. Dining Programs/Events: We strengthened commitment to grow an inclusive community by learning about culturally relevant food needs across the student body. During first semester, Dining Services held listening sessions with 35 students to hear what would increase satisfaction among international students, then we developed offerings based on what we heard. We are focusing on three pillars to support an inclusive dining experience: education of staff and students, celebration of important cultural foods and holidays, and collaboration with students to ensure authenticity and participation. Notable enhancements include the introduction of halal-certified meals in campus convenience stores, integration of halal-certified proteins in the Main Hall, and the launch of a new "rice-and-spice" station at Whitney. Since 2009, the Recipes from Home program has helped students feel more connected by bringing their families' favorite dishes to Whitney Dining Center. Each summer during UWL's START orientation, incoming students and their families are invited to submit a beloved recipe. From September-November, Whitney Main Dining feature five to eight of these dishes each week, accompanied by a display card with the student's name, hometown, and the recipe's ingredients. In fall 2024, featured recipes included white chicken chili, cherry coffee cake, buffalo turkey burgers, tortellini soup, and chicken bacon ranch tater tot casserole. Students feel pride when sharing these meals with friends. "I was homesick at the time, and having a meal that reminded me of home was special," said first-year student Keira Bloom in April 2025. "I got lots of compliments from my friends and other people on my floor about both meals." The program expanded its reach this year through collaboration with the International Education and Engagement department and international students. During International Education Week, 14 student-submitted recipes from around the world were prepared and shared, along with information about each dish's country of origin. In the next academic year, we will expand Recipes from Home to be served the entire year and feature many more recipes to create meaningful, memorable moments for students.
- 30. Dining Enhancements & Innovations: Sushi Do was launched in August 2025 and quickly became a campus favorite. Its teriyaki chicken bowl emerged as the most popular Block Meal of the year. Murphy's Mug received new paint, updated signage (new logo right), and a direct connection to the library entrance. The revitalized space quickly became a favorite campus study spot, with the refreshed atmosphere contributing to an increase in sales and positive student feedback. Technology upgrades were completed in May with the replacement of all retail point-of-sale (POS) machines across campus and the



migration of the POS server. The project was delivered on time and on budget, resolving previous usability and service challenges with the CBORD platform. These improvements enhanced system reliability and transaction speed, contributing to a convenient and consistent experience for students, staff, and guests.

- 31. Late Night Breakfast: This long-standing tradition, a collaboration between Chartwells and UWL staff and faculty, offers a treat for our students at the end of each semester. During each of the fall and spring events, volunteers from Student Affairs joined Chartwells staff to serve late-night meals during finals week. In FY25 we served a total of 1,976 students at these events, 200 more students than the prior year. Chancellor Beeby, Vice Chancellor Vitaliano Figueroa, Vice Chancellor Stacy Narcotta-Welp, and Hall Director Ben Drake serving up many 'grand slams' (right).
- 32. **OZZI Reusable Containers:** The OZZI program, an alternative to disposable containers, has been active on campus for five years (see cover)! The program provides students, faculty, and staff with durable, reusable containers for to-go meals, reducing the single-use containers for campus dining. Through the OZZI system, students exchange an "OZZI coin" for a container in dining locations, then return it to OZZI machines after use to receive a new coin, creating a seamless, sustainable take-out option. In December 2024, UWL celebrated a major sustainability milestone, the 100,000 use of an OZZI reusable container! Sophomore Avery Black, (right), was the 100,000th user! UWL has avoided an estimated 5,500 pounds of waste and saved approximately \$38,000 in single-use container costs! OZZI containers grew significantly in FY25 compared to the previous year, driven by a large awareness campaign and celebration of the 100,000 use, as well as OZZI's being the container of choice at The A9 Eatery. This demonstrates increased student engagement and momentum toward UWL's sustainability goals. As UWL continues to champion sustainability, the OZZI program stands as an example of how student-driven changes can create lasting environmental and financial benefits, paving the way for a greener future on campus and beyond.
- 33. <u>Catering:</u> There were 1,454 Catering Orders during 2024-2025! Fall semester there were 690 catering orders and spring semester there were 764 catering orders. This reflects a 10% increase from 2023-2024.



University Centers staff gather for a Fall Semester 2024 photo in the Student Union

CHALLENGES/ISSUES

- 1. Lower Level-Union: The space is not currently being used to its potential for programming and dining.
- 2. **Dining Facility:** Whitney Center is our highest-volume dining facility, and its age demands ongoing, and often costly, maintenance and repairs. As we plan for the future, it will be essential to identify near- and mid-term investments that uphold dining experience standards while conserving capital for an eventual full-scale renovation or rebuild.
- 3. **Dining Labor:** Like many institutions, we continue to navigate volatile food costs and labor constraints, both of which impacted operations in FY25. Through close coordination with Chartwells, we maintained quality and service while managing expenses. Sustaining this balance requires a clear understanding of our campus community's evolving dining needs and the operational realities we face.
- 4. **Dining Programs**: We recognize that students' food habits and expectations are shifting, and it is an ongoing challenge to stay ahead of those expectations while maintaining a stable and sustainable core dining program.
- 5. **Campus Activities Board:** CAB is still working on creating their solid marketing and brand identity. They are moving in the right direction but need to continue to evaluate how they are reaching their audience. CAB also saw challenges with the Spring Concert. Under 200 tickets were sold to this event and this will inform their future budget requests, including reevaluating if a concert is a program that will be revisited.
- 6. **Recognized Student Organizations:** Accessibility of policies that govern student organization activities and branding is challenging as some policies may be difficult to find on the website, or even non-existent. For example, UW-System Code of Conduct for Student Organizations language and its interpretation.
- 7. **Fraternity & Sorority Life:** Continuing to struggle to get current members involved, as well as volunteers for events or even just folks to attend events put on by other chapters or councils. With only one fraternity, there is no Interfraternity Council, which can sometimes make connecting and communicating with Delta Sigma Phi challenging. There is a large disparity between total number of members in the sororities. Our largest chapter is consistently at or just under campus total (currently 60), while our smallest chapter is under 15 members.
- 8. **Eagles @ Nite**: Some events still see low attendance. Many campus partners think this is a CAB event, not a University Centers initiative.
- 9. **Make a Difference Day:** Only 62.5% of student attended and volunteered at the event that had signed up. In fall 2025, UWL will host Make a Difference Day, and we hope more UWL students will sign up and attend since we will start the day on UWL's campus.
- 10. **Eagle LEAD/CliftonStrenghts:** We continued to have low turnout at CliftonStrengths workshops and Eagle LEAD. Despite strong content and potential impact, these programs have struggled to attract sustained engagement.
- 11. **Student Leadership Summit:** We had a significant number of no-shows at the Student Leadership Summit. Over the next academic year, the LIC team will reassess outreach strategies, scheduling, and student priorities to better align offerings with their interests and availability.
- 12. **Voter Registration**: A significant challenge in registering student voters this year was the presence of off-campus groups that distributed misinformation, leading to confusion around the registration process. These groups' early outreach during move-in and NSO created barriers that our team had to actively counter through clarification, education, and rebuilding confidence in official voter registration resources. The experience underscored the importance of timely, accurate, and campus-led voter engagement efforts.
- 13. **Campus Food Pantry Funding:** Utilizing food pantry funds has been challenging due to the current reimbursement-based system, which requires a staff member to front the cost personally before being reimbursed. This approach places a financial burden on individuals and can delay timely restocking of essential items. A more direct purchasing method would streamline the process and better support the goals of the Food Pantry.
- 14. **Cove Graphics:** We continue to struggle with getting our services out to the campus community. We have routine clients throughout the year; however, we would like to broaden our base and see more unique users in our space.
- 15. **Pride Center:** There is a fear of the federal directive on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the impact on the LGBTQ+ community. The cost of speakers, films, and workshops is also a challenge.
- 16. **Custodial:** Staffing is extremely difficult to maintain. The shortages have impacted our custodial team over the past year and two positions still remain unfilled.

INITIATIVES/GOALS 2025-2026

- 1. University Centers will establish a comprehensive, strategic University Centers Student Employee Training and Engagement Program.
- 2. University Centers will complete a comprehensive assessment of the Student Union lower level, focusing on space utilization, best practices for recreational equipment access, programming frequency and style, and food availability.
- 3. University Centers will launch a student-centered Dining Advisory Group to help guide the future of campus dining.
- 4. University Centers team will collaboratively review the new UW–La Crosse Strategic Plan and develop a set of department-specific strategic goals that demonstrate how the Student Union, The COVE, and Dining Services will contribute to and align with the University's overarching priorities.
- 5. Produce the fifth annual Eagle Fest on September 5, 2025.
- 6. Establish budget to support Eagle Fest.
- 7. Continue to develop The A-9 Eatery as a permanent program to enhance UWL's support of students needing accommodation for food allergies.
- 8. Increase effective notifications to students and staff about Dining programs: Care to Share and The A9 Eatery, and for special events like the Fall Tailgate Party.
- 9. Strengthen and communicate a comprehensive system for UWL Summer Camp meals, in collaboration with campus partners.
- 10. Expand the Recipes from Home program to the entire year.
- 11. Continue the digital Student Union Event Schedule signage project.
- 12. Complete directional signage building improvement projects.
- 13. Expand outreach and grow participation in the Student Leadership Summit by strengthening marketing efforts, building campus partnerships, and reaching more student groups.
- 14. Build campus familiarity with the Civil Discourse Program by presenting at Free Speech Week and Social Justice Week while continuing our current Student Moderator Training.
- 15. Divide Leadership & Involvement Center responsibilities between Community Engagement and Student Leadership staff to ensure each area has clear ownership of tasks, aligned goals, and effective communication.
- 16. Explore the development of an Alternative Spring Break experience for Spring 2027 by researching best practices, assessing student interest, and identifying potential community partners and service opportunities.
- 17. Continue to build upon the success of the Chancellor's Volunteer Service Award program.
- 18. Continue efforts to develop and grow participation in the UWL Chapter of the Nation Society for Leadership and Success (NSLS).
- 19. Develop a student staffing model for Eagles @ Nite as well as shift support from pro-staff with the loss of a graduate student position.
- 20. Fraternity & Sorority Life will connect as a community, as well as be more actively involved with the greater campus community and surrounding La Crosse community.
- 21. Continue with expansion efforts in the fraternity community.
- 22. Fraternity & Sorority Life will have a smooth transition between Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (FSAs) with the implementation of the new Program Coordinator for Student Leadership position.
- 23. Create a Canvas course to make Student Organization Advisor resources accessible and equitable.
- 24. Continue to build COVE Graphics services by exploring the addition of a new design/print service such as postcards or vinyl tote bag designs. We are eager to find more ways to utilize our Cricut.
- 25. COVE Graphics will be more intentional in tabling effort to showcase the types of services to all students, student organizations, and campus. This includes tabling in both the Union and at the Fall and Spring Involvement Fairs.
- 26. Progress on the Sustainability goals and actions outlined in the 2024 Climate Implementation Plan. Continue support for existing projects and programs as well as new projects and programs.
- 27. CAB will grow their marketing initiatives on social media and beyond.
- 28. CAB will implement a better system to evaluate and review event successes and challenges.
- 29. Locate ways to pay students who assist the with the Pride Center LGBTQ+ Panels in the classrooms. Additionally, work with the DOC Organizations and more campus partners on all programming efforts.

UNIVERSITY CENTERS IN THE NEWS

Read more about the amazing accomplishments of University Centers here:

More than a paycheck - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

<u>UWL Day of Service - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse</u>

Reaching new heights together - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

Going green - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

A taste of home - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

From student advocate to city leader - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

All in - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

Allergen safe. Flavor full. - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

Week Without Driving - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

An (Eagle) eye for art - Campus Connection | UW-La Crosse

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS/TESTIMONIALS

"Working as a Building Manager in the Student Union was one of the best choices I made for myself in my time at UW-La Crosse. It helped tremendously in getting to know new people and throw myself into the campus culture. The professional experience of making decisions and managing a bustling campus center played a large part in helping me land a job after school. Everyone there truly wants to see you succeed in everything you do." Alex Kastner, Building Manager

"Working in the COVE and specifically the LIC has helped me greatly with event planning skills and professional communication. This job has also helped me improve my leadership skills in outside roles, such as being the President of the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity." Caleb Bekkum, Leadership & Involvement Center Program Assistant

"I love being an employee of the COVE because it is a tight knit community where everyone is welcomed, included, and seen! Everyone there is so fun and kind to work with! It is one of my favorite spots on campus and I feel grateful to be a part of that community. I love working for CAB because we create a space for students to have fun and be involved on campus! Our team has a strong bond that allows us to be hardworking and successful in planning and hosting lots of events. Together, it gives my college experience meaning to be a part of an org that fosters happiness, excitement, friendship, and community for students at UWL." Megan McMunn, Event Coordinator, CAB

"Working at COVE Graphics was the perfect job as a student. I met great co-workers and supervisors, while having a flexible schedule for school. I also was able to gain great experiences and grow in my graphics design for my resume. Working at COVE Graphics helped me secure a job for post grad! Josie Bartel, COVE Graphics

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

"Working in the COVE, especially with the Leadership and Involvement Center, was one of the most meaningful parts of my college experience. It gave me the confidence to lead with purpose, speak up with pride, and believe in the value of my voice and ideas. That environment nurtured my goals and helped shape the woman I am today. The lessons I learned there continue to guide me in my professional journey at Explore La Crosse...I carry so much gratitude for the foundation it gave me." Kaytlin Nething, Class of 2024

"My time in the Leadership and Involvement Center was one of the most impactful parts of my UWL experience. It gave me the chance to take on meaningful responsibilities, collaborate with a wide range of campus offices/departments, and build lasting friendships. I was also able to grow within my student position, which helped show future employers my drive and reliability. After graduation, I was hired as UWL's Content Specialist, a role where I continue to lean on the skills, experiences, and connections I gained as a student worker in the Leadership and Involvement Center."

Chloe Hart, Class of 2023

HONORS/AWARDS/GRANTS/PRESENTATIONS OFF-CAMPUS

1. Michael Slevin-Associate Director (top right) was granted UWL Academic Staff Emeritus status, and also was a 2025 recipient of the **ACUI Emeritus Award** having been a member of the institution during his 30 years in higher education.

2. Andrew Ericson-Sustainability Program Manager (second from top) was the recipient of the 2024 Inspiring Sustainability Awards (individual winner) by the Sustainability Institute.

3. UWL received a **2024 Recycling Excellence Award** from the DNR for the campus move out diversion program called Reduce Reuse Reimagine. This program was done in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region.

4. Three University Centers staff were nominated this year for the 2024-2025 **Student Employee Supervisor of the Year Award:** Anita Bashaw, Madeline Kohn, and Tricia Pelishek.

 Kelly Kamrowski-Chartwells Catering Director (right) was honored by the Friends of Graduate & Extended Learning. The award recognizes faculty/staff, who through collaboration, have created and supported learning opportunities that extend UW-La Crosse into the community.

- 6. UWL was designated as a **"Voter Friendly Campus"** for the fifth iteration of the program for the 2025-2026 time period.
- 7. The **AVLS student staff** were nominated for a second year for the **Aerie Award** at the second annual Eagle Excellence in Leadership Awards. The Aerie Award, affectionately named after a "group of eagles" is designed to recognize a collective of students who have gone above and beyond during the academic year.
- 8. COVE Graphics employee, Ellie Baudry, was nominated for the **Emerging Eagle Award for the Eagle Excellence in Leadership Award Ceremony.**
- 9. The University Centers department (below) was awarded **Outstanding Department of the Year** at the spring Division of Student Affairs End of Year Address.



NEW STUDENT UNION SIGNAGE

Three areas in and around the Union received new signage: 1) a hanging wall Art Exhibit with lighting featured outside The Bluffs Ballroom (top), 2) a jumbo double-sided TV monitor installed in the area between the southwest entryway of the Student Union and Prairie Springs Science Center (middle right), and 3) the Information Center was rebranded as the Welcome Desk. The Welcome Desk remains the go-to hub for campus information and connections, now with a name that better reflects its inviting, service-first spirit (bottom).







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



Friday, September 5, 2025

Join us for Eagle Fest on Friday, September 5, 2025, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Badger Street, Student Union Lawn, Eagle Field, and Drake Field. Featured above is student Chase Hendricks, 2025 Eagle Fest "Wings of the Year", winning design.

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