

For Supporters, Alumni, Friends, Faculty and Students of UW-Green Bay

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UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN  
GREEN BAY

# RISING TOGETHER

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# FIRST NATIONS DOCTORAL STUDENTS SUPPORT COMMUNITIES, FUTURES

History was made last May when Crystal Lepscier and her fellow students in the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's First Nations Education Doctorate Program crossed the commencement stage. The moment not only marked the first graduates of the program, but also the first-ever doctorates awarded by the University.

**“Our classes were not always subjects you would normally find in a doctorate program,”** says Lepscier, an enrolled member of the Little Shell Band of Chippewa of Montana who now works as the university's First Nations Student Success coordinator. **“We listened to oral stories, participated in classes on healing and generational trauma – it was all very inspiring,”**

The First Nations Educational Doctoral Program was created to expand students' knowledge about Indigenous peoples and prepare them to be

changemakers. Led by program chair, Dr. Lisa Poupart, faculty created the program by meeting with tribes across Wisconsin to learn their needs and ask for feedback on their plans.

As part of the program, J P Leary, a UW-Green Bay associate professor and a member of the program's faculty, says students explore topics such as traditional (precontact) worldviews of the Indigenous peoples and their governance, the impact of Euro-American colonization and its resulting trauma, grant writing and the relationship between their work and Indigenous education. After two years of classes, students begin working on their applied dissertation project.



J P Leary



Crystal Lepscier receives her graduation garment from Pieter deHart, Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies and Research, and J P Leary, associate professor, during May 2022 graduation ceremonies.



UW-Green Bay presented its first doctorate degrees in 2022 to four students receiving the Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) in First Nations Education. From left are: Yekusiyi Rosa King, Crystal Leah Tourtillott Lepscier, Artley Murray Skenandore Jr. and Vicki Lee Young.

**“The applied dissertation is something you do not find in traditional PhD programs,”** says Leary (Cherokee/Delaware). **“Students take what they've researched and apply it to the community. The practice of that research has an inter-generational aspect as well. They need to involve elders or youth in what they are doing.”**

The First Nations Educational Doctoral Program

is one of the initiatives included in the \$20 million Ignite the Future campaign. Last fall, Delaware North, a global hospitality company that operates the food service at Lambeau Field, announced a \$100,000 donation over five years to support UW-Green Bay's First Nations programs.

**“The First Nations programs are of significant importance in developing leaders who are**

**resilient, inclusive and engaged members of the community – ready to face challenges and solve problems,”** Jamie Oblatz, president of Delaware North Sportservice, said when the donation was announced.

Last fall, the program's third cohort of students began. As part of the year-round program, students meet at the University every third weekend, taking two classes at a time. After that, students begin to work on their dissertation, which may take another two or three years, says Leary, adding that some members of the first cohort are still finishing their dissertation and application of learning and that members of the 2020 cohort have started on their dissertations.

**“These are all working adults in the program and through the cohort, they develop a bond,”** he says.

Lepscier agrees. **“We became close and there are things you need to give up to be in the program, but you need to remember what brought you there – your own motivation, your ancestors and knowing you are doing something to help your community,”** she says.



Jamie Oblatz



## NEW FACILITIES HELP COMM PROGRAM PRIORITIZE IN-DEMAND SKILLS

The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's new Media Hub provides students with authentic learning experiences that will better prepare them when entering the workforce.

The hub includes updated radio and television equipment along with the Frank Wood Media Newsroom, which provides a new space for students to collaborate, develop ideas and work together. Wood, a 2011 inductee into Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame, had "ink running through his veins" and owned 34 newspapers, says his son, Pat Wood, publisher of Multi Media Channels, LLC.



Mallory Allen

**"My dad (Frank) always wanted everyone's voice heard in his newspapers," he says. "He would appreciate the work being done by the University to provide more opportunities for students to share their voices."**



Associate Teaching Professor Danielle Bina teaches a Communications course in the Frank Wood Media Newsroom.

Danielle Bina, an Associate Professor in Communications, says the space will prepare students as they head into the workforce.

**"We have a lot of technology in this place. It's a sharable space for the campus as a whole," she says. "This space moves us closer to the goal of returning student-run media to the campus. To me, that's the most exciting part of this project."**

Mallory Allen, who graduates this spring with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, called the space "true to form."

**"When you look at the equipment we get to use and the space we get to learn in, it's what we'd see in the 'real-world' and what those of us who pursue careers in the media will use," she says.**

Associate Professor Bryan Carr — a driving force behind the campus' new student radio station — says the new production center has high-definition video cameras, one-touch recording systems, multi-track audio production and voiceover booths.

**"They will be able to do any kind of studio production here," he says.**



## STUDENT PHOTO FEATURE **OSVALDO LOPEZ '23**

After picking up a used camera off of eBay, Osvaldo Lopez discovered an instant affinity for photography. His focus in photography has centered around family, childhood, and personal struggle. Osvaldo is graduating in May with a Bachelor of Arts degree and plans to pursue a career in graphic design. View online gallery: <https://osvaldolopez.myportfolio.com>.





A UW-Green Bay student puts a record on the turntable at the campus radio station during what year?

a. 1980 b. 1962 c. 1994 d. 1974

See answer at: [uwgb.edu/alumni](http://uwgb.edu/alumni)

## AT A GLANCE

# MAJORS & MINORS

UW-Green Bay has been the fastest-growing UW school in Wisconsin for six consecutive years. With campuses in Marinette, Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Green Bay, our mission is to teach all who wish to learn. So, what are the hottest programs?

### Top Majors and Minors in 2022-23

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Psychology                        | 6 Marketing  |
| 2 Business Administration           | 7 Computer Science                                   |
| 3 Human Biology                     | 8 Associates<br>(Health, Education & Social Welfare) |
| 4 Associates<br>(Arts & Humanities) | 9 Accounting   |
| 5 Elementary Education              | 10 Associates<br>(Science, Engineering & Technology) |

### Top Minors in 2022-23

- 1 Psychology
- 2 Business Administration
- 3 Secondary Education
- 4 Spanish
- 5 Sociology & Anthropology

Based on Fall Head Count 22-23



**They got their degree. Then What?**

Read Phoenix success stories: [news.uwgb.edu/tag/rise](http://news.uwgb.edu/tag/rise)





## WOMEN'S INSTITUTE EDUCATES, INSPIRES AND BUILDS FUTURE LEADERS

History hasn't been kind to China's Chairman Mao. But his famous quote "Women hold up half the sky" resonates even in 21st-century America. Plus, the common rejoinder from women — "But men still run the party." But if the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's Institute for Women's Leadership (IWL) has anything to do with it, women will be holding up their fair share of leadership roles sooner than later.



Janet Bonkowski

And for Janet Bonkowski, the Institute's Executive Director, the sooner the better. "We're doing this in a very interesting time — working

not only to be inclusive to women but also inclusive in an evolving society and region."

**As Bonkowski puts it, "The corporate ladder that once accessed the 'glass ceiling' now has a broken rung, a phenomenon where women in entry level positions are promoted to managerial position at much lower rates than men,"** which adds even more urgency to the Institute's mission. IWL events include networking, workshops and training.

Being a part of the University of Wisconsin also has advantages. **"That's why we're leading with facts and information," Bonkowski explains. "University professors with expertise in research survey women regularly, which is different from what other groups can do."** And the results can be surprising, like research revealing

**that businesses with women leaders tend to be more profitable, she said.**

Beyond research, the Institute is also a practical resource for women in Northeast Wisconsin.

**"The variety and accessibility of program offerings through the IWL is incredible,"** says Kara Miller, a business system analyst for Imperial Supplies, a leading supplier of heavy-duty truck parts. **"The Institute is really dialed into providing opportunities that apply to individuals at any stage of their career."**

For Miller, one of her favorite recurring events is Caffeinated Conversations, a gathering for coffee and topic-driven conversation. **"I really enjoyed the energy and connection I felt during and after our conversations."**



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUELS STUDENT ATHLETES' COMPETITIVE EDGE

Being a Phoenix athlete means rising to the challenge of juggling many demands: workouts, practices, travel to competitions, and social and family time. For softball player Hailey Heckenlaible, it was not always possible to pack a whole days' worth of meals and snacks.

Festival Foods has come to the rescue of University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's athletes. Recognizing the unique nutritional needs students have while training to compete at their highest level, the grocery chain has partnered with Green Bay Athletics to create the Festival Foods Fueling station at the Kress Events Center on the Green Bay campus. Funding comes from Festival's significant gift to the University's Ignite the Future campaign.

**“Personally, the convenience of the fueling station has lifted a huge weight off of my shoulders. I am never stressing over buying the right foods or not having enough time to eat before, after and in-between games and practices,”** says



### **Heckenlaible, a junior from East Bethel, Minn.**

The first-of-its-kind partnership for Phoenix Athletics looks to enhance the student experience and performance. The Fueling Station is located in the main concourse area of the Kress Events Center and serves as a one-stop shop for all student-athlete nutritional needs, allowing them to quickly grab food to help balance time demands as well as provide nutrition education regarding recovery and performance.

**“As a company, we are deeply committed to making a positive difference in our communities, and this is the perfect opportunity for us to show our commitment to the student-athletes of**

### **UW-Green Bay,” said Mark Skogen, Festival Foods president and Chief Executive Officer.**

Dr. Debra Pearson oversees dietetics students who provide education and operational leadership of the station. “The opportunity for students to gain practical experience in sports nutrition while working with a Division I Athletics program really sets our dietetics program apart from others,” she said.

As softball coach, Sarah Kubuske says the Fueling Station eases her mind knowing that athletes have the food they need. **“It gives me one less thing to worry about knowing that we can provide this perk for them and takes one additional thing off their plate.”**



## ALUMNA: 'I WANTED TO PAY IT BACK, AND PAY IT FORWARD'

Abigail Kiefer's link to the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay began as a toddler. While both her parents were students, she attended the campus daycare. When she was 5, Kiefer's family moved to Madison, but she didn't forget about UW-Green Bay.

When it came time for college, an interest in urban planning drew her back to the Green Bay campus. **"I knew they had a great urban planning program," says Kiefer, who became involved in student government where she crossed paths with Kurt Kuber.**

A few years older, Kuber, a graduate of Sheboygan South High School, came to UW-Green Bay to study business. He became active in student government, eventually serving as president of the Student Government Association.

The two married in 2007 and both went on to successful careers — Kiefer at Airbnb as its policy and product development lead and Kuber as



Kurt Kuber ('01 Business Administration) and Abigail Kiefer ('03 Urban & Regional Studies and Environmental Policy & Planning) remember their UW-Green Bay days fondly and want to support future generations.

global vice president for commercial strategy and planning at The Honest Company.

The couple never forgot their years at UW-Green Bay, and those good memories and excellent preparation for their careers were the motivation to support the campuswide Ignite the Future campaign. The \$20 million campaign focuses on four key areas: student support, emerging academics, creativity and the arts and athletics and recreation.

**"UW-Green Bay is part of my origin story.**

**Everything I've done in my life goes back to it," Kiefer says. "I wanted to pay it back, and pay it forward."**

The couple met with Chancellor Michael Alexander and were impressed with his vision for the university.

**"When you think about the history of UW-Green Bay, it's relatively new. Older schools have already built that culture of giving," Kuber says. "It's an exciting time on campus and an ideal time to build that culture of giving at UW-Green Bay."**





## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

# JUSTICE SAXBY '25

Sustainability and climate change are longtime passions for Justice Saxby. Creating a path to her future found Saxby connecting with the University dubbed 'Eco U®' since the late 1970's. This first-generation student is majoring in environmental science with a double minor in geoscience and sustainability. She desires to research climate change and work with companies to find ways to ensure a better, greener future. **"I couldn't just sit back and do nothing and watch from the sidelines," she says.**

Saxby, grateful to have received the Carol R. DeGroot Endowed Scholarship in Environmental Science, is financing her own education. Her scholarship allows her to excel both in the classroom and as a part of the Phoenix community. She hopes to show her donors gratitude by making a difference in the world.

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