

MINUTES OF THE
RETIREE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING
July 20, 2023, Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, grand foyer

Report by the Retiree Association president

President Dan Spielmann welcomed about 35 attendees to the annual event, which this year featured an indoor picnic dinner. He shared the following information as part of his summary of the Association's 2022-23 academic year.

- **Events** – The Retiree Association continued to gradually resume a schedule of get-togethers and events following the COVID hiatus of nearly two years that started in early 2000. A September 2022 opportunity at the new STEM Center on campus featured a chance to explore the creative “maker’s space” and the larger facility. A February pre-game reception at the Kress Center for a women’s basketball game drew a couple of dozen retirees and guests (note for next time: set up a little further away from the Pep Band, or supply ear plugs. Seriously, it was a fun event, regardless.) The spring Arboretum Walk in early May drew 13 nature lovers.
- **In Memorium Names** -- The event paused to remember colleagues who had passed away in the last year, including Laverne Blecha, Peter Brezney, Terri Greve, Richard Jansen, Bill Laatsch, Helen Lemmen, Robert Mendelsohn, Bruce Mielke, Janice Mielke, Paul Sager, Aldo Santaga, Sherry Toseland, Robert Wenger and Marge Weidner.
- **Scholarships awarded** – Two UWGB students were recipients of Retiree Association Scholarships for the 2022-23 academic year. Valerie Kupp and Logan Meek each received \$920.

Election of Board of Directors members

The next order of business was the election to the Board of Directors. Four members whose terms were expiring -- Craig Lockard, Pat Przybelski, Dan Spielman, and Chris Sampson -- agreed to accept nomination for re-election for additional two-year terms. Christine Style also accepted nomination. With no other nominations from the floor, it was moved and seconded to approve the five members to the Board. The slate was approved unanimously. Board members continuing for one more year are Carol Emmons, Ken Fleurant, Frank Madzarevic, Kathy Pletcher, and Curt Heuer.

Remarks by guest speaker Chancellor Michael Alexander

Chancellor Alexander said the University continues to be successful at a time when many institutions of higher learning in Wisconsin and across the nation are suffering reversals because of higher costs and declining enrollment. In contrast, he told attendees, UW-Green Bay is financially stable, was projecting a 6 percent enrollment increase for fall '23, and will again approach capacity in its on-campus housing complex. There are significant challenges, he acknowledged – the state of Wisconsin has slipped to 42nd in the nation in terms of tax support

for its university system – but with a clear vision and history of entrepreneurial success, UWGB should be optimistic. “This institution,” Alexander said, “has always been stubborn... in a good way.”

Mentioned by the Chancellor:

- By late 2024 we’ll have a new 200-bed residence hall;
- Remodeling projects have already or will soon upgrade academic facilities across campus, including a Wood Hall home for the growing Nursing program, the Engineering lab in Instructional Services, and improvements to the University Union;
- Replacement of the c. 1970 library by a new Cofrin Technology and Information Center could begin by 2026;
- UWGB is the first in the UW System to adopt something called “direct admission,” which is being piloted with the nearest public high school, Green Bay Preble. UWGB already tops 50% with its enrollment of first-generation college students, and this move to simplify the admissions process might push that number even higher. “We should be exceptionally proud of that.”
- The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that some see as a potential obstacle to diversity in higher education? No impact on UWGB, Alexander predicted. UWGB is already oriented toward open access, it has few if any of the scholarship programs that were apparently problematic elsewhere, and for much of its history the University has specialized in the sort of need-based financial aid and support programs that were never in question. Great news on the enrollment front includes an 18 % increase in Hispanic enrollment. Increasingly, Alexander said, UWGB mirrors the local community.
- He pointed to another area where UWGB has been a successful outlier within the UW System, that being the integration of the two-year campuses of the former UW Colleges. With “merger” over the last decade and a more challenging environment overall, the two-years have lost students and raised fears of more campus closures. Alexander praised former Provost Greg Davis for his leadership at that time in ensuring the so-called “satellite campuses” at Marinette, Manitowoc and Sheboygan have done better than most, with stronger ties to their new home campus in Green Bay that have been mutually beneficial.
- The Chancellor briefly mentioned both Athletics and the Arts – the latter with reference to the Weidner Center getting back in the business of presenting touring Broadway theatre – and said a university needs to be successful in offering popular, public-facing programs.

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Respectfully Submitted
Chris Sampson, recording secretary