



# Connections

Fall 2021

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE

[www.uwsp.edu/cols](http://www.uwsp.edu/cols)

## Alumni Giving Honored in COLS

Frank and Kathleen Haeni exemplify the power of philanthropy. They both graduated with biology degrees from UW-Stevens Point in 1970 and went on to have long careers teaching.

More than 50 years since leaving campus, the couple returned in early November for the dedication of the Haeni Lecture Hall in the Chemistry Biology Building. A plaque outside, recognizing their widespread impact on the college.



***UWSP '70 alum Frank and Kathleen Haeni pose outside of the lecture hall named in their honor.***

Their endowments to the UWSP Foundation began in 1989. To date, Frank and Kathie are responsible for six endowments, making it possible to award scholarships to 36 students and funding faculty-mentored undergraduate research. Four of their endowments are designated for students in the College of Letters and Science, in biology and history; two support students studying forestry and wildlife, in the College of Natural Resources.

The Haenis have stayed connected to UWSP and are deeply committed to helping students attain success. Frank has been a lifelong naturalist. He traveled back to campus for the dedication of the CBB in 2018. He's even donated live edge oak tables, originating from a tree that was rooted on the original site of the college building.

Speaking at the unveiling ceremony, Kathie said the naming of the lecture hall was an honor for them. The honor belongs to UWSP, and we are forever grateful for the caring commitment and philanthropy of two very special UWSP alum.

Watch the naming ceremony [here](#).

### Funding Future Research

It's an honor from one Pointer for another that will fund future UWSP undergraduate research in biology and chemistry.

The southwest corner of the Chemistry Biology Building, the second floor student lounge, is now dedicated to '90 UWSP alum Tamlyn Rene Thomas King. A plaque is installed just outside the Student Interaction Lounge. Her brother, '88 alum Scott Thomas (biology), wanted to give a gift to support the College of Letters of Science.

Thomas King worked various jobs to support her UWSP education. She spent decades working as a fire chief for the villages of Plover and Junction City. She went on to nursing and teaching first aid, EMT-basic and fire certification courses at MSTC.

Thomas' admiration for his sister shared on the plaque near the space named for her says, "Tammy is a great example of what can be done, if you work hard to achieve it."



***Department of Chemistry Assistant Dean Jason D'Acchioli and College of Letters and Science Dean Joshua Hagen stand near the new installation of the Tamlyn Rene Thomas King plaque.***

### Inside

- Message from Dean Joshua Hagen
- Skyward Internship Center opening
- Alumni spotlight: Corey Jaskolski

# DISCOVER YOUR PURPOSE

### Your Gift Makes a Difference!

To create a legacy at UW-Stevens Point, please contact Tony Romano at 715-346-3406 or email [tony.romano@uwsp.edu](mailto:tony.romano@uwsp.edu). Thank you for your consideration!

# Environmental Research Training Supports New Science Teachers

The University of Wisconsin Stevens Point is helping to spark an interest in environmental science and research at the middle and high school level. Science teachers from the Stevens Point Area Public School District, and UWSP pre-service teachers spent two days training in a biology lab on campus in October as part of the Wisconsin Inquiry-based Scientist-Teacher Education Partnership (WInSTEP) with UW-Milwaukee. They learned how to implement research on the effects of environmental toxins in order to take the research model into their own classrooms.

The WInSTEP is funded by the NIH Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA), providing all of the classroom supplies and training needed in order for teachers to implement the program in their first year of teaching.

Department of Biology associate professor **Krista Slemmons**, second from right, works on the earthworm module with teachers participating in October's WInSTEP training.

"This has the potential to be a sustainable partnership between future science teachers, teachers across the state, our two colleges and our two institutions," said associate biology professor Krista Slemmons.



**Department of Biology associate professor Krista Slemmons, second from right, works on the earthworm module with teachers participating in October's WInSTEP training.**

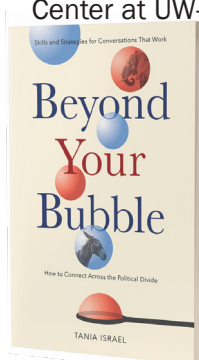
The teachers can use the inquiry-based module for classroom experiences, have their students share their research on the behavior of earthworms or minnows exposed to toxins, and then present their own research at UW-Milwaukee's annual spring Student Research Conference.

The longer term goal for WInSTEP is to engage students across the state in hands-on research that can foster a love of science in middle and high school students.



## Community Book Read Builds Skills to Bridge Divides

In an effort to bridge divides, or just make the holidays more bearable for family members with opposing political viewpoints, professor of philosophy **Dona Warren** organized a community book read this fall through the Critical Thinking Center at UW-Stevens Point.



Community members in central Wisconsin who signed up got copies of the book, "Beyond Your Bubble" (2020) by author Tania Israel, Ph.D. Thanks to a grant from the Menard Center for the Study of Institutions and Innovation

at UW-Stout, the books were provided at no cost.

Israel writes that most readers will likely identify with the "exhausted majority" instead of existing on polar opposites. She gives reassurance that there might be more agreement than a reader assumes there could be on a number of issues. However, Israel stops short of suggesting dialogue needs to persuade someone to change their position.

Her book is much more focused on ways of engaging and using conversational skills - skills like active listening and reflecting - to help build connections between people who might disagree politically.

Professor Warren said "Beyond Your Bubble" is a good starting point for improving dialogue and it offers "concrete advice" for controlling one's emotions.

"It's nice to be reminded of the skills. You need to build trust and understanding because you can't go deeper without that," Warren said. "I do see it as a first, necessary and often overlooked step in order to have broader conversations."

Warren led one of multiple discussions with students and community members in early December. The reading groups, meeting virtually and in-person, shared their thoughts on the power of active listening and showing empathy. The short, 178-page, book sparked constructive conversations on misconceptions and hopefully, with practice, demonstrated that we don't always have to shy away from difficult conversations.



**University of Wisconsin  
Stevens Point**



# Internship Center Expands Student Opportunity

The eight workstations located in the Science Building's Skyward Internship Center represent major opportunities for UWSP students who no longer have to leave campus to share their skills, working for the local education software developer.

Stevens Point-based Skyward collaborated with the university on a multi-year lease of the space, which opened November 1, 2021.

Skyward interns typically work 15-20 hours weekly. They can collaborate with colleagues and clients seamlessly with the center's computers and video technology.

Organizational Development Manager Rebecca Gaboda said interest in Skyward internships

saw an immediate uptick since the opening. The convenience of the campus center has made it easier than ever for student interns to make time to gain valuable work experience.

**Senior Ashley Reuter** was interning for Skyward last year, prior to the center opening, but now she said it's been so much more convenient to set up in the center and work around her "crazy schedule" as she worked to finish her final semester, majoring in international studies and political science.

She works three days a week for Skyward.



Reuter helps staff in school districts across the country with software training or trouble shooting.

"It has taught me so many soft skills that are going to be helpful in my future," said Reuter. It's a very professional experience."

The center is well equipped and Reuter said she can easily connect with a support team with any questions.

Reuter graduated in December and has accepted a full-time job as a Skyward customer consulting and support representative.

Skyward currently employs nearly 50 UWSP students each year and university alumni make up 40 percent of Skyward's 650 employees.

**550 FALL '21 GRADUATES**

**135 COLS GRADS**

**3 CEREMONIES**

## Message from the Dean

Dear Friends of UW-Stevens Point's College of Letters and Science,

After a rough year dominated by online learning and Zoom meetings, it has been great to be back on campus this fall. Classroom instruction has resumed and most activities are proceeding with a general sense of normalcy, except we are wearing masks indoors. This is not what we hoped for during last summer, but we will continue to adapt to circumstances.

The faculty, students, and staff in the college have actually gone far beyond just returning to campus and in-person instruction and meetings. They have accomplished a great deal, most visibly evident in the

range of partnerships and collaborations that extend across the state. This newsletter can only provide a small sample of those achievements, but you can follow more regular updates through Facebook and Twitter @UWSPCOLS.

There is a lot of positive energy across the college, and I am continually impressed by the achievements of our faculty, students, and staff. Working with our community partners, I am confident we will continue to build on that momentum through the coming year.

Joshua Hagen

UWSP



College of Letters and Science  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## Alumni Spotlight:

### Corey Jaskolski

**Year graduated from UWSP:**  
2000

**Degree(s) obtained:**

B.S. Mathematics,  
Physics UW-Stevens Point;  
M.S., Engineering and Computer  
Science, Massachusetts Institute  
of Technology

**Current position(s):**

Founder and CEO, Synthetiaic  
Working to improve artificial intelligence (AI)  
sensors and other data technologies so that  
humans get the benefit of improved exploration  
and conservation missions.

National Geographic Fellow- has explored all seven  
continents.



#### What are you working on now?

One of the exploration projects we're currently working on is using our Synthetiaic toolset to build an AI that can automatically identify any species of fish in imagery and video. Most ocean survey video never gets reviewed for all the species in it, even though this information would give us a much better understanding of the ocean biodiversity.

*Read more in The Cupola Post at [give.uwsp.edu](http://give.uwsp.edu)*

#### Honors:

**2021 UWSP Alumni Award**

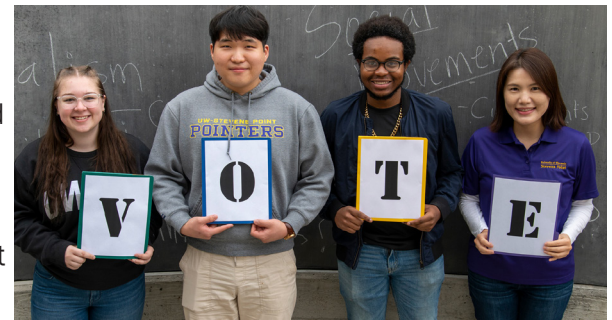
**2020 Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year**

## Voting Drive Earns Silver Seal

Efforts of students and staff who helped coordinate student voting registration and provided voter resources for the 2020 elections earned UWSP a Silver Seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. That means 60 to 69 percent of students were registered to vote and cast ballots in the 2020 general election.

**Maverick DeLain** got involved his freshman year in the Student Government Association. He said he's always been involved in civic engagement but he realized his peers often did not make voting their priority. To improve voting participation, DeLain and others spent hours staffing information tables around campus, allowing some to register right on site or at least making sure students learned locations for their polling sites. SGA members presented in political science classes and held and shared candidate interviews.

DeLain hoped their ALL IN challenge efforts could match or beat the national average. He said he's proud of the Silver Seal designation for UWSP.



"We were just offering up that opportunity to grow their knowledge and use their voice," said DeLain. "Getting one person involved, then another, it's a spiral, domino-like effect."

Nearly 9 million students and 840 colleges nationwide took part in the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

**You can get involved in our Wisconsin Science Olympiad Tournament on campus this spring. COLS will host over 2,000 middle and high school students and families from April 22-23, 2022. There will be a number of volunteer opportunities available!**



**Want to learn more?**

Email [chutton@uwsp.edu](mailto:chutton@uwsp.edu) or call 715-346-2021.

### Social Media

Connect with the College of Letters and Science on popular social media platforms:



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