

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE

Spring 2021 Newsletter

Pointers Work to Get Out the Vote

Last fall **Sanne Roeven** won a \$1,000 fellowship from the Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP), designed to support students working on voter engagement. Roeven, who graduated from UW-Stevens Point in December with degrees in political science, international studies, and Spanish, spent several months deeply involved in the hotly contested 2020 election.

“My interest in government, the election, and the electoral process stems from my belief that by choosing to invest and participate in our democracy we can truly make a difference and affect positive change in our communities,” said Roeven (right), who learned about CEEP from **Jennifer Collins**, professor and chair of the Department of Political Science.

Roeven’s fellowship was divided up into four areas: voter registration, voter education, absentee/early voting, and Get Out the Vote. Her GOTV efforts led Roeven to work with **Aaron Larson** and **Maverick DeLain** of the Student Government Association. Larson and DeLain, students in the Department of History and International Studies, had planned voter registration tabling events and an absentee ballot dropbox, which Roeven promoted with stickers and informational videos.

Roeven created a total of three videos shared on YouTube, covering registration, absentee voting, and “Why We Vote,” which featured the voices of UW-Stevens Point students and faculty. She also worked on efforts designed to outlive the 2020 election.

“As part of my fellowship I worked on more lasting institutional voter engagement efforts, which took the form of writing a piece of legislation encouraging faculty to include voter registration information on syllabi and working with university leadership on creating orientation voter information packets for freshmen moving into the dorms,” Roeven said.



Other election engagement activities Roeven coordinated included a Zoom watch party for the vice presidential debate and a screening of the film “All the Way” about the civil rights movement during Lyndon B. Johnson’s presidency. In addition to working with Roeven on the debate and other events, Collins shared campus community data on UW-Stevens Point student voting rates with the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement, and met with a Hmong community group to discuss election issues at the invitation of the League of Women Voters.

These and other efforts were acknowledged in UW-Stevens Point’s designation as a 2021-2022 “Voter Friendly Campus” by two bipartisan national organizations. “This was a collaborative effort to build lasting support,” said Larson. “We worked with many campus units to make sure the work lasts past Nov. 3.”

“It was so inspiring to work with dedicated students, faculty, and staff on this project and see how much they care about our community,” said Roeven.

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Facility Prepares Students for Aquaculture Careers

Aquaculture, the farming of aquatic organisms, produces more than half of the seafood consumed on the planet, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. UW-Stevens Point is at the forefront of preparing students for careers in aquaculture, the fastest growing segment of food production systems in the world.

UW-Stevens Point was the first university in Wisconsin to offer an aquaculture minor and the first accredited university in the nation to offer full semester aquaponic courses. Sustainable aquaculture meets consumer demand for seafood while taking pressure off wild populations and enhancing food security, safety and quality, notes **Chris Hartleb**, biology professor, who launched the program.

In Wisconsin, aquaculture is used for food production and also for baitfish for anglers, aquarium fish and stocking efforts for sport fish or conservation species, such as walleye or lake sturgeon. Aquaculture encompasses health and biosecurity, genetics, systems engineering, chemistry, and nutrition, in addition to the culture of aquatic species.

In the state and across the nation, skilled and experienced professionals are needed in the growing aquaculture industry. UW-Stevens Point has the only program in the Midwest and one of few in the nation that offers students hands-on training and skills sought by the industry. This leads to nearly 100% job



placement, Hartleb said, for students in aquaculture and aquaponics. A certificate program is available for aquaponics — growing greens and other vegetables in water fertilized by fish.

The world's largest aquaponics facility, Superior Fresh in Hixton, Wis., partners with the UW-Stevens Point Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility for research initiatives as well as internships and employment. Its president, **Brandon Gottsacker**, is a UW-Stevens Point graduate.

"UW-Stevens Point guided me toward this exciting new industry by providing me unique opportunities to learn about aquaculture," he said.

Located in Bayfield, NADF provides real-world learning to students through 12-week summer internships and apprenticeships. Students learn aquaculture systems operation, fish husbandry, critical thinking, applied fish biology and water chemistry. They are involved in current research and demonstration projects which include data collection, observation and interactions with partners.

"This was an amazing experience for me, and through this internship I discovered what I wanted to do for a career," said **Brianna Dunbar**, a recent graduate and aquaculture technician at Superior Fresh.

College of Letters and Science Promotions

Adriana Durbala, Physics/Astronomy: Promotion to Professor
Mark Ferguson, Psychology: Promotion to Professor
Daniel Graf, Biology: Promotion to Professor
David Roloff, English: Promotion to Professor
Justin Sipiorski, Biology: Promotion to Professor
Robert Sirabian, English: Promotion to Professor
Steven Suehring, Computing and New Media Technologies: Promotion to Associate Professor
Remya Sarma-Traynor, World Languages and Literatures: Promotion to Senior Lecturer

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Message from the Dean

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

It has been a challenging year, to say the least. Despite that adversity, the faculty and staff of the college have risen to the occasion and remained focused on advancing the university's mission of excellence in teaching, research, and service throughout the year. We have also begun preliminary preparations to return to more normal activities this fall.

We still face many uncertainties, but I am very optimistic that we will overcome whatever obstacles arise and continue serving our students and community. Thank you for all your support and best wishes for a pleasant summer!



Joshua Hagen

Dean, College of Letters and Science

Redesigned Major to Train Science Teachers

UW-Stevens Point has been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to launch a new science education major beginning in the fall of 2021. This unique program will be one of the first ones in the state within the University of Wisconsin System. The new major, natural science: for science teaching certification, is a collaborative degree between the School of Education and the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography/Geology, and the College of Natural Resources.

This program ensures future science teachers have the adequate content and pedagogical knowledge in all areas of natural science for teaching grades 4-12. Of critical importance, this program addresses the need for

College of Letters and Science Award Recipients

David Barry, Sociology and Social Work:
Excellence in Teaching, Scholarship,
and Service Award
Erin Speetzen, Chemistry: Excellence in
Teaching Award
Lauren Gantz, English: Excellence in
Teaching Award
Kate Kipp, Sociology and Social Work:
Excellence in Teaching Award
Katie McGarry, Chemistry: Service
Award
Jennifer Collins, Political Science:
Service Award
Chris Diehm, Philosophy: Scholar Award

qualified science teachers in
school districts across the state.

Students in the natural science
major take course work from a core
set of science courses, select a
minor in one of those disciplines
and a certificate in an additional
field of science. This broad array of
science coursework provides ample
knowledge to teach any science
discipline but also allows students
to focus on an area of emphasis.

Ultimately, the goal of this new
program is to better prepare
students to effectively teach to the
interdisciplinary nature of science
while meeting the need for qualified
science teachers in all science
disciplines across the state. This

new program will be coordinated by **Krista Slemmons**,
associate professor in the Department of Biology.

Your Gift Makes a Difference!

To create a legacy at UW-Stevens Point, please contact **Tony Romano** at 715-346-3406 or tony.romano@uwsp.edu,
or visit www.uwsp.edu/cols/Pages/HowToSupport. **Thank you for your consideration!**

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Chancellor Creates Commission to Build Partnerships with Tribal Nations

A group of campus, tribal and community members will continue working together to acknowledge native burial grounds on the UW-Stevens Point campus and expand the educational opportunities for native students, families, and communities.

Chancellor **Thomas Gibson** has established the Chancellor's Commission on the Ancestors Buried Below Us to coordinate efforts, leverage university resources, and ensure timely progress and momentum.

Historic research shows that the campus encompasses what was at one point a Native American camp and burial ground of the Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi. A temporary memorial marker has been placed near the Communication Arts Center to acknowledge the Indigenous people buried there many years ago.

Members of the commission will advise the chancellor in the following areas:

- Partner with UW-Stevens Point administration to establish a Cultural Resource Management Plan with various tribal nations in the region;
- Provide recommendations for a permanent memorial or another formal recognition to native ancestors after consulting with and receiving support from the tribal leaders in the region;



- Provide recommendations for opportunities to integrate Indigenous tribes' history and culture into the curricular and co-curricular components of the institution;
- In partnership with University Advancement and the UWSP Foundation, engage in efforts to fund a permanent memorial and provide scholarships to support Indigenous students' access to a UW-Stevens Point education.

Commission members with COLS ties include: **Tobias Barske**, assistant dean, School of Humanities and Global Studies; **Sam Dinga**, director, Office of Diversity and College Access, sociology alumnus; **Jenna Miskowic**, outreach assistant, Museum of Natural History; **Nate Sayas**, president, American Indians Reaching for Opportunities student organization, history major; **Sarah Scripps**, director, Museum of Natural History; **Karen Ann Hoffman**, Member of Oneida Nation, philosophy/sociology alumna; **Ray Reser**, former director and current curator of anthropology, Museum of Natural History.

College of Letters and Science Retirements

Bob Bell, Biology
John Coletta, English
Pat Dyjak, English
Brian Hale, History
John Hardy, Biology
Dawn Haynes, Dean's Office
Tori Jennings,
Sociology/Social Work
Brad Kahrs,
Mathematical Sciences
Pat Kleman, Dean's Office
Gary Lueck, Chemistry
Jim McCluskey,
Geography/Geology
Jim Mortier, Physics/Astronomy
David Ozsvath,
Geography/Geology
Keith Rice, Geography/Geology
Ana Runnion, World Languages
Gary Shulfer, Chemistry
Sonny Smart,
Sociology/Social Work
Michael Steffes, English
Nancy Stokosa,
Physics/Astronomy
Jan Swinford, History
Jim Tuszka, Chemistry
Eric Yonke, Interim Dean, History

Social Media

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