

History of Carolyn Rolfson Sargis and the Sargis Award



Carolyn Rolfson Sargis served this university as a secretary, financial secretary and business manager from 1919 to 1963.

Ms. Sargis began her tenure at the Stevens Point Normal School as secretary to the principal of the training school. Five years later she became the school's financial secretary and eventually was promoted to business manager. Her responsibilities were as diverse as her many positions. She provided the budget management and planning function. She did student registration and purchasing (which at the time included everything from frogs to coal for the heating plant). She was the university cashier, she did payroll, gave out student scholarships, and was responsible for printing, personnel and any other category of work assigned.

Carolyn Sargis was a stabilizing member of the university community serving under 11 presidents or chancellors. Besides her professional career at the university, she was a member of the Business and Professional Women's Club. She did volunteer work for the American Red Cross for nearly 40 years. She was an active member of the Trinity Lutheran Church of Stevens Point, the Portage County Historical Society, the Wittenberg American Legion Auxiliary and the Home for the Aging Auxiliary. As the first recipient of the prestigious award named in her honor, Ms. Sargis' lifetime contributions and dedication set the criteria for future recipients.

The entire university community views the Sargis Award as one of the campus' most coveted recognition. Carolyn Sargis was proud to have her name associated with this prize given in recognition of notable accomplishments and service by members of the university's classified employees (now university staff).

In her words, it is the "behind the scenes people" who keep the university running.

The award was originally established in 1985 by the Division of University Relations, and now is given by the University Staff Council to recognize outstanding university staff.

By presentation of this award, we honor university staff members who, throughout their careers at our university have:

- contributed by way of their day-to-day activities in such a manner to have significantly demonstrated positive benefits or support for their department or unit, and by extension, to the university community.
- regularly exemplified professionalism in their working relationships and contacts within and outside of the university community.
- shown a commitment to personal growth and community service.

When Carolyn Sargis received this award no nominations were sought, no letters of support were acquired, no hoops to jump through. Instead, she was given the award because someone recognized her contributions inside and outside the university community. This was truly an unsuspected honor for her. The intent is to preserve the spirit in which the award was established.