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UW-Marinette backers show their support

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MARINETTE -- Raising \$330,000 in 18 months is no small accomplishment.

In fact, it is extraordinary.

But that's what supporters of UW-Marinetette did: They donated amounts totaling one-third of a million dollars to a two-year college they value and appreciate.

The donations allowed UW-Marinetette to more than double this year's scholarships to area students. The amount awarded went from \$14,000 in 2006 to more than \$30,000 this year.

In addition, the community's generosity enables the campus to set up a Theater on the Bay endowment fund, a lecture and fine art series and provide more professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

"You are making a tremendous difference," Dean Paula Langteau told donors Friday at a recognition ceremony.

The ceremony marked the unveiling of a donor wall, located in the fine arts building, which recognizes those who have given \$3,000 or more to the campus since its formation in the mid-1960s.

Langteau did much of the most recent fund-raising as she visited campus supporters of the past and present. Her goal was to thank them and find out why they valued UW-Marinetette.

Along the way, she learned just why people think UW-Marinetette is special.

"It was the greatest history lesson I could

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From left, Morris Mundt, Jean Twining and Grace Mundt look over the new donor recognition wall at UW-Marinetette. The wall honors cumulate gifts made over the past 40 years.
EagleHerald/Rick Gebhard

hope to get," Langteau told donors and campus employees.

"They opened their hearts and we ended up having a fund-raiser we hadn't planned on," she said in an interview before the reception.

Langteau heard their stories and she saw something else, too.

She saw "the sparkle in their eyes and the excitement when they talked about how they would like to invest" in the campus.

Since she assumed the job of dean nearly three years ago, Langteau has made it her mission to connect with people and find how UW-Marinette can better serve the community. Her efforts have resulted in new opportunities for nursing students and boat builders.

Langteau is equally excited that the campus now has a tangible means of recognizing local generosity.

The donor wall, a mixed medium design, incorporates hand-carved cherrywood and acrylic as well as copper, silver-nickel, gold and brass donor plaques.

The wall recognizes donor gifts of more than \$1 million. The plaques can be rearranged as donor levels increase, and there is room for more donor names. Of the 158 donor blocks, 118 are filled.

"A donor wall usually has a lifespan of 10 years, and is usually part of a single fund-raising campaign," says Langteau. "We wanted something that would stand the test of time."

A carved grove of evergreens represents the campus location along the waters of Green Bay. A seagull gazing toward the bay represents Theater on the Bay, which has tied campus and community together for more than 40 years.

Whenever possible, components of the wall were produced locally. Each donor received a carved and engraved plaque representing the wall; these were produced by Goodwill Industries.

Langteau likes to compare the wall to a patchwork. During her meetings with donors, she heard different stories and different reasons for giving to the campus.

"Some just love TOB, some just love athletics, and for a good many, it's about our access mission," said Langteau. "Many people told stories about their children going here. The most common theme was that UW-Marinette is an integral part of our community. People feel invested."

Langteau and other campus officials continue to look at ways to further reach community needs.

"These are the most wonderful people in the world," said Langteau.

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