

# A GROWTH AGENDA FOR WISCONSIN

## GROWING PEOPLE, JOBS, & COMMUNITIES

### *Growth Agenda Action Step #10:*

## Establish New “Wisconsin Idea” Public Policy Forums that Bring the University’s Best Research to Bear on Wisconsin’s Biggest Challenges

**Brief summary:** The Public Policy Forums focus UW System resources on Wisconsin’s most vexing social, environmental, and economic challenges. These forums will inform the debate around selected current issues confronting Wisconsin residents by bringing objective, research-based information to the dialogue. Plans are underway to hold two Public Policy Forums annually at UW System institutions beginning in Spring 2009. Forums are to utilize experts to cover national issues impacting the state of Wisconsin. The targeted audience includes state lawmakers, community leaders, business people, faculty, staff, and students.

### **Progress to date and future plans:**

Three UW System institutions have volunteered to host the first Public Policy Forums:

- The UW-Eau Claire Public Policy Forum, held on May 14, 2009, focused on alcohol abuse. Over 200 people participated in the Forum, including attendees at other campus sites at UW-Green Bay, UW-La Crosse, UW-Madison, UW-Milwaukee, and UW-Stevens Point connected by two-way video technology. Participants included representatives from state, county, and city government, the university, private non-profit organizations, and private businesses, in addition to 25 students.
- UW-Madison will host the Fall 2009 forum, which will focus on education policy issues in Wisconsin. Initial meetings have occurred with UW-Madison’s Dean of Education, faculty, legislators, and others, and plans are underway for a meeting of education deans from around the UW System. The group is discussing how to create opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to do research and service learning.
- UW Colleges/Extension will host the Spring 2010 forum, which will look at building sustainable communities. This forum is designed to combine the educational programming focus of Cooperative Extension with the expertise on the UW Colleges campuses, the other three divisions in UW-Extension, and other UW System institutions to work in partnership with local communities.

**For more information:** Contact Bob Jokisch, UW System Administration Special Assistant, 608-262-5450, [bjokisch@uwsa.edu](mailto:bjokisch@uwsa.edu)