

FOSTERING SUCCESS PROGRAMS

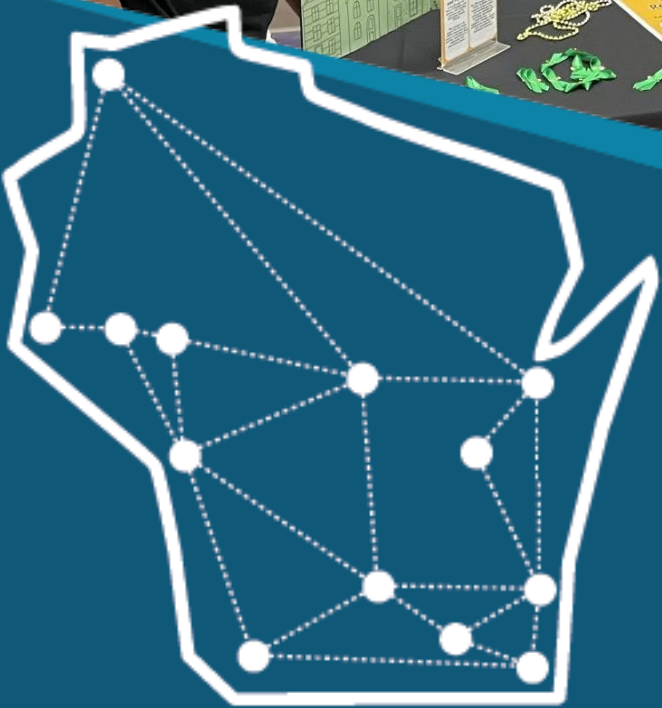


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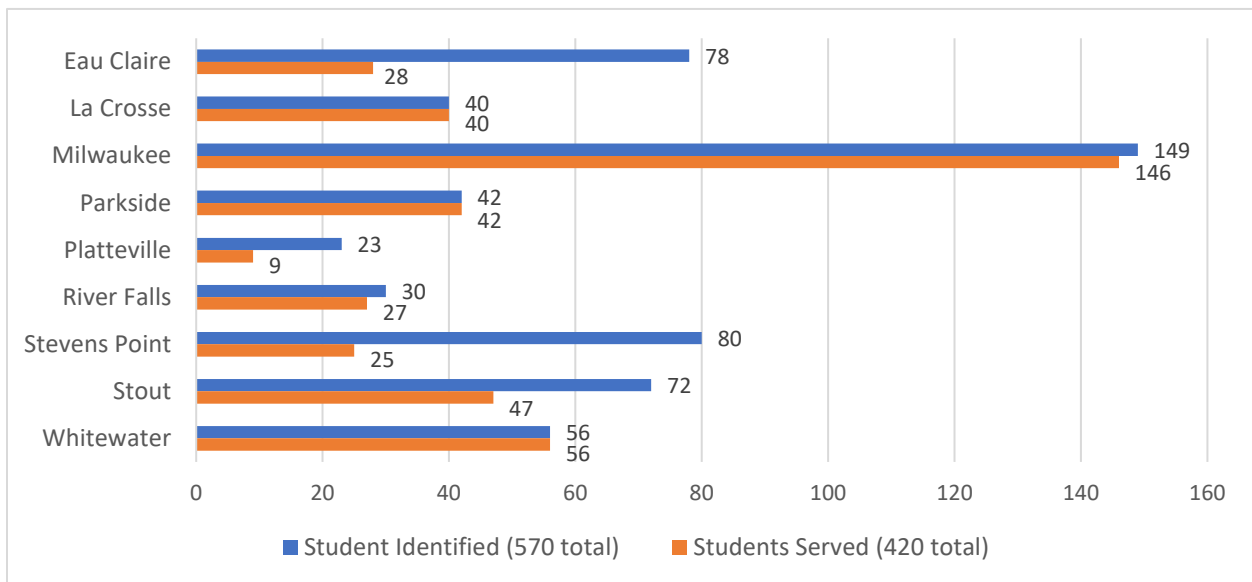
Executive Summary

Program Overview

The Universities of Wisconsin Fostering Success (FS) programs provide individualized support, guidance, and resources for UW university independent students with lived experience in foster care, legal guardianship, or who were orphaned, wards of the court, unaccompanied and homeless, or experienced other similar circumstances.

The Fostering Success programs have endeavored to cultivate an environment where each student feels valued, supported, and equipped to achieve their highest potential. This year, the nine Fostering Success programs across UW universities served 420 students (see Figure 1), compared to 255 last year—a 65% increase. This significant growth highlights enhanced efforts to identify eligible students and engage them in ways that meaningfully contribute to their success as students.

Figure 1: Fostering Success Students Identified and Served




This report delineates progress made, highlighting key milestones, student success narratives, and the impact of our diverse programs and partnerships. From academic support and mentorship to financial assistance and community building, a comprehensive approach ensures that students receive the holistic support needed to thrive both academically and personally. Without these supports, studies show that very few will achieve their goal of earning a college degree, despite their desire to do so (see graphic, at right).

The Opportunity Gap

Youth with foster care experience are not attending or remaining in college at the same rates as their peers

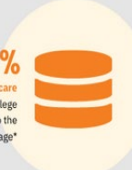
84%

of foster youth ages 17-18 say they want to go to college*



3-11%

of youth with foster care experience earn a college degree in comparison to the ~38% national average*



*Legal Center for Foster Care & Education, 2022
**To learn more, visit <https://www.pheaa.org/funding-opportunities/other-educational-aid/chafee-program.shtml>

The Field Center FOR CHILDREN'S POLICY PRACTICE & RESEARCH

Strategies for Identifying and Connecting with Eligible Students

Almost all Fostering Success programs receive names of eligible students from their financial aid office, using questions from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that ask about experiences in foster care and other eligibility criteria. Once the names of eligible students are collected, these programs have similar strategies for connecting and engaging with students, including the following:

- Personalized emails, calls, texts, and EAB Navigate campaigns to reach out to eligible students and invite them to program events.
- Creation of a pre-orientation survey question that allows students to self-identify as being program-eligible, which prompts follow-up outreach.
- Presence at new student orientation days, registration labs, and involvement fairs to start making connections with eligible students and to help answer any questions.
- Training sessions, student panels, and open houses with university faculty and student service offices (academic advising, admissions, etc.) to familiarize faculty and staff with the Fostering Success program, resources, and the referral process.

In addition to these methods, multiple Fostering Success programs also collaborate with local high schools, foster care agencies, and other community programs to identify eligible students prior to enrollment. When possible, program staff start their outreach to eligible students before they arrive on campus to promote a smooth transition. Some Fostering Success programs have used social media to spread information about the program to students and the university community.

Program Goals and Services Provided

As UW universities continue to grow and evolve their Fostering Success programs, the goals for 2023-2024 shifted slightly from the previous year. Goals in 2022-2023 focused primarily on how to identify eligible students and build resources and communication strategies. Goals in 2023-2024 focused more on increasing student support academically, socially, and financially, as well as increasing student awareness of the resources available. The following goals were commonly seen across Fostering Success programs:

- Raising program awareness for students and faculty/staff, including expanded marketing and promotional efforts and recruitment events.
- Early identification of eligible students (both prospective and current).
- Increasing the overall number of students served.
- Creating a sense of belonging and community.
- Increasing student engagement in programming, services, events, etc.
- Providing resources for basic needs.
- Building a comprehensive academic support system.
- Improving student process and outcome metrics, including full-time enrollment, good academic standing, persistence, and graduation rates.
- Expanding student and professional staff within the program and providing professional development to support program goals and initiatives.
- Strengthening program connections with university services offices and local community partners.
- Cultivating additional donor relationships to support Fostering Success students.

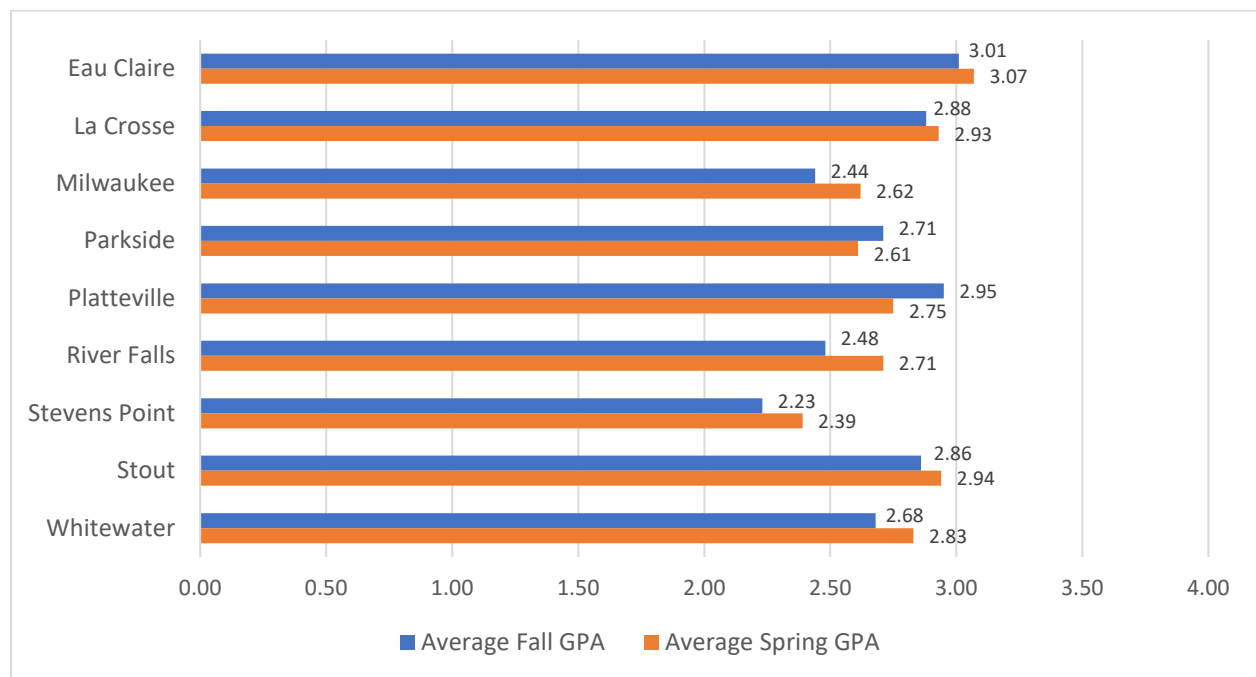
To work toward the goals identified above, universities provided many common program strategies and resources to Fostering Success students to support their academic success and allow them to connect with their peers and create a sense of belonging and community.

- Welcome baskets
- Individualized academic support (advising, coaching, tutoring, study groups, etc.)
- Financial literacy programming
- Peer support, mentoring, and group meetings
- Social and cultural events
- Group dinners
- Scholarship and mini-grant opportunities
- Emergency funds to help with unexpected expenses
- Emergency supply pantries (food, clothing, toiletries, etc.) to ensure students have a stable foundation to focus on their studies
- Housing support during semester breaks

Program Outcomes

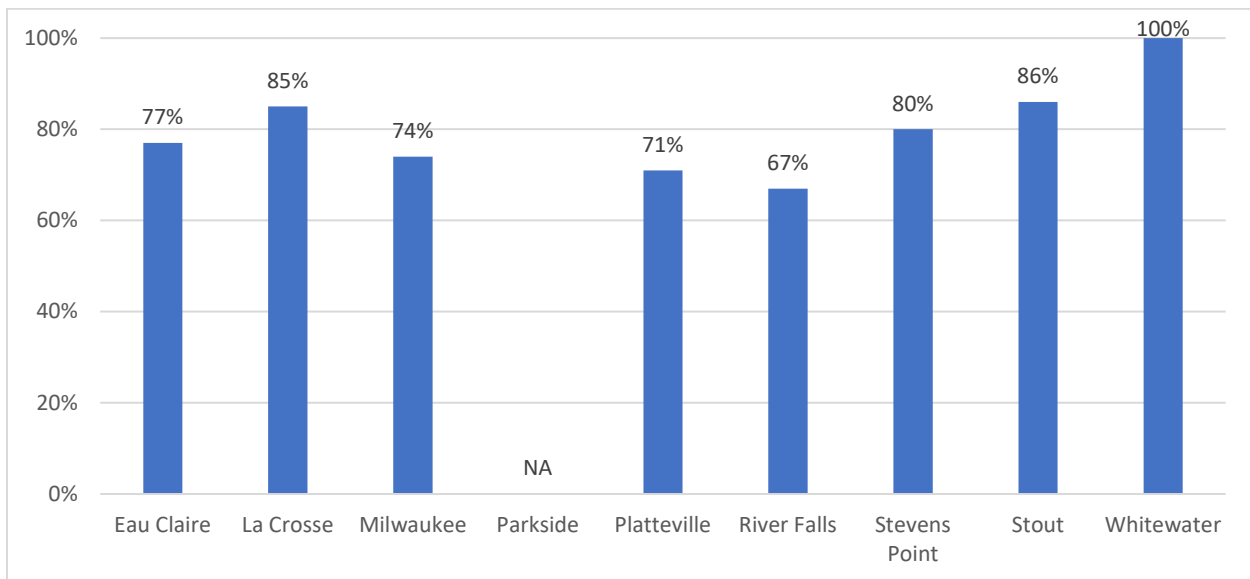
In 2023-2024, the Fostering Success programs continued to show impressive results on key student success metrics. This is the first year that this report includes grade point average (GPA) data from all Fostering Success programs, with particular attention to whether students remain above the 2.00 GPA needed for good academic standing. On the whole, Fostering Success students performed above this threshold. Fall semester average GPAs ranged from 2.23 to 3.01, with an aggregate average of 2.69 across all programs. The spring semester showed a slightly higher aggregate average of 2.76, with individual university averages ranging from 2.39 to 3.07 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Average Fostering Success Student GPA Fall 2023 and Spring 2024



Student retention and graduation rates are perhaps the most critical success measures to monitor when evaluating student success. Now that most programs have been in existence for two academic years, we were able to collect fall-to-fall retention data for Fostering Success students. As can be seen in Figure 3, between 67% and 100% of students who were engaged with these programs in fall 2022 either graduated or returned in fall 2023. The aggregate retention average of 80% is slightly higher than the 78% fall-to-fall retention average for full-time freshman students at the same universities—freshman to sophomore retention is a common metric of comparison that is tracked across all UW universities and nationally (Universities of Wisconsin Dashboard, wisconsin.edu/accountability/progress-and-completion/). This is an impressive accomplishment given what is known about the overall success rates of students with a foster care history.

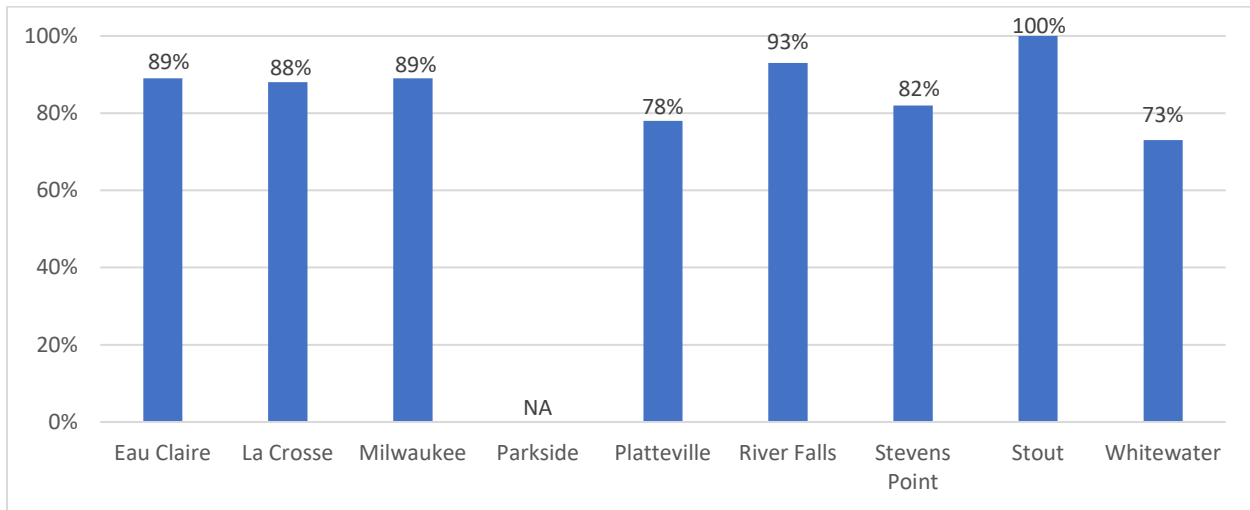
Figure 3: Percentage of Fostering Success Students Retained/Graduated—Fall 2022 to Fall 2023



NOTE: UW-Parkside began identifying and engaging with students in earnest during spring 2024 and is therefore not included in the retention/graduation metrics in this report.

Additionally, we continue to track retention within each academic year—in this case from fall 2023 to spring 2024 (see Figure 4). While these retention/graduation percentages were slightly lower than last year overall, Fostering Success students across the UW universities are still being retained across semesters at high rates, with an aggregate average of 87% and a range from 73%-100%. This report will continue to track retention and graduation data over longer periods of time in future years.

Figure 4: Percentage of Fostering Success Students Retained/Graduated—Fall 2023 to Spring 2024



NOTE: UW-Parkside began identifying and engaging with students in earnest during spring 2024 and is therefore not included in the retention/graduation metrics in this report.

Student Success Stories and Testimonials

To give a more personal voice to some of the outcomes, programs submitted quotes from students that spoke to their experiences. The quotes below highlight the profound impact Fostering Success programs can have on student success.

- "Throughout college, I tried to understand why life had dealt me such an intricate hand, and amidst this soul-searching, I found solace in service—or rather, solace through service. I devoted my time to mentoring youth in foster care and supporting college students facing similar challenges through an on-campus organization called Fostering Success....Thank you to my mentors, the faculty and donors at this campus who have fought hard to advocate for me, and other former foster youth, to the students who I've had the opportunity to meet, that have helped me with class notes, and sharing smiles and kindness, your compassion could change the world. Only 3% of foster children who age out of foster care in the United States complete college at a 4-year university. Thanks to all of you, I am now a part of the 3%."—UW-Eau Claire student
- "My parents couldn't really give me any pointers. I didn't really have anybody to look to for help with things like filing my FAFSA; I had to navigate that on my own. I mean, my mom helped me a little bit, but she didn't really know how to help me. The impact that this place has had on me is definitely life-changing. When I first came [to school], I was absolutely terrified, but after my first advising meeting, I felt a weight off of my shoulders."—UW-La Crosse student
- "[FS program staff] made my college life so much easier. Most people have parents who can tell them 'you need to do this, or think about that.' A lot of us don't have that parental figure who gives you a reminder about what you need to do and here's how you do it. I didn't realize how many people were at UWM who were in similar situations that I had. It made me feel so much more comfortable and so much more at home."—UW-Milwaukee student
- "I have had so many really great people guide me through this first year, which at first was very different, new, and intimidating. Everyone and everything, including FSI [Fostering

Success and Independence program], is meant to help you be the most successful you can be. I would recommend leaning into every opportunity you get to experience new things and meet new people. It will only benefit you in the long run.”—UW-Whitewater student

Program Funding and Structure

Beginning in 2022-2023, the Wisconsin biennial budget included an ongoing annual appropriation of \$500,000 to support foster youth programming across the Universities of Wisconsin. Each program currently receives an annual appropriation of \$50,000 to support program staff and activities.

In the first two years of program funding, nine UW universities were funded, based on meeting the qualifications of a request for proposal (RFP) process. These universities have been active in developing and leading Fostering Success programs at their universities and participating in a community of practice composed of coordinators from each program. A quarter-time technical support person—funded by the annual state appropriation—regularly convenes this group of program leaders and provides guidance, support, and subject-matter expertise to the universities.

With the ability to fund one additional program at current funding levels, a call for proposals was sent in spring 2024 to the UW comprehensive universities that didn't have a Fostering Success program. After reviewing applications, UW-Green Bay was selected as the 10th university to join the Fostering Success initiative. The UW-Green Bay program will begin in the 2024-2025 academic year.

While the state's Fostering Success program funding is a primary source of financial support, five of the nine programs reported a total of over \$140,000 in additional university-provided funding and staffing support from the following sources:

- Work study
- Admissions
- New student programming
- Other university funding

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

In addition to the \$50,000 state allocation provided to all Fostering Success programs, and additional university funding noted above, most programs also seek supplemental funding and support from outside their university to provide enhanced services and opportunities to their students. In 2023-24, six of nine Fostering Success programs reported receiving a total of over \$65,000 in non-university funding to support their programs, from the following sources:

- Donations from local businesses, community organizations, and university faculty and staff
- Grant funding
- Support from nonprofit organizations
- In-kind contributions
- Amazon wish list donations
- Clothing drives
- University foundation

An increasingly common way universities secured supplemental funding support was by collaborating with their foundation offices. Foundation staff have helped to coordinate campaigns

for renewable scholarships, donation commitments, and matching donation opportunities through outreach and marketing to potential donors and within existing donor networks. Foundations also assisted in collecting private donations and endowments and included Fostering Success programs as a category for an annual day of giving. Universities that reported funding secured through their foundation offices include UW-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse, UW-Milwaukee, UW-Stout, and UW-Whitewater.

Staffing

To support the work of Fostering Success programs, each university has a program coordinator who dedicates a portion of their time to the initiative. Since the coordinators typically do not hold full-time positions within their Fostering Success program, they have to balance their time with other job responsibilities. In addition to the coordinator role, many Fostering Success programs also have some form of student support through interns, graduate assistants, and/or peer mentors. Programs that do not have student support often rely on additional professional staff who dedicate a portion of their time to the program. While most Fostering Success program coordinators indicate that their staffing levels have been generally sufficient thus far, a continued rise in participants is already putting a strain on the ability of some programs to sustain desired service levels without additional resources. All participating universities have indicated that dedicating at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) staff person to their Fostering Success program would allow them to commit more time toward increasing engagement with eligible participants and expanding program offerings.

Challenges

While most Fostering Success programs have improved and standardized methods for identifying eligible students, a few programs are still working to solidify that process. Until they can develop clean and comprehensive lists of eligible students, they will be less targeted in their outreach and therefore limited in the amount of student participation they can generate. Programs also identified the need to further build collaborations with community partners to ensure eligible students are getting an intentional handoff during the transition experience.

As mentioned in last year's report, once eligible students are identified, the next challenge is to facilitate their engagement in Fostering Success programs in a way that recognizes this population's general lack of familiarity with higher education and often reduced levels of trust in people and institutions. While the rate of conversion from eligible to engaged students improved overall this year, some Fostering Success programs still reported challenges despite several events and resources being offered and many emails and other communications being sent. One university indicated that they specifically have trouble getting upper-level students in the Fostering Success program to engage. These and other challenges are discussed at monthly program coordinator meetings where colleagues support each other in sharing successful practices.

A final challenge to note for 2023-2024 was that two universities (Parkside and Platteville) with Fostering Success programs experienced university budget cuts, early retirements, and staff layoffs to address structural deficits. This impacted the Fostering Success programs as staff took on additional responsibilities within the university, stretching their capacity to provide adequate student supports, expand the program, and reach annual program goals established before the budget cuts.

Future Goals and Conclusion

As Fostering Success programs continue to gain momentum at UW universities, goals identified for 2024-2025 reflect a desire to continue to grow program reach. While most programs have now solidified their methods for identifying eligible students, student recruitment and program engagement remain high priorities for all. To help with these priorities, Fostering Success programs recognize the need for strong referrals from other student services offices on campus, as well as solid relationships with community partners to establish a student pipeline from high school. Other 2024-2025 priorities include soliciting more scholarships and donations to help with students' unmet financial needs and to create stronger and more formal feedback processes to gather student feedback on program strengths and potential improvements. Finally, Fostering Success programs are all hoping to improve common program outcomes such as student GPA, good academic standing, and retention and graduation rates.

As participation grows in Fostering Success programs, current funding levels are proving to be insufficient to support adequate staffing and programming needs. To continue to provide the type of support and services that lead to desired student success outcomes, achieving the goal of funding a full-time program coordinator at each university would help ensure that independent youth receive the attention and resources they need. Coordinators are the primary staff who provide individualized support, track progress, and connect students with necessary services. Extending program funding to all 13 UW universities would also ensure that foster youth throughout Wisconsin have equal opportunities for success, regardless of their location. This additional investment would benefit the broader economic and social fabric of Wisconsin. When independent youth are provided with the support they need to succeed, they are more likely to graduate and become contributing members of the workforce, thereby enhancing the state's economic stability and growth and reducing long-term social welfare costs by breaking cycles of poverty.

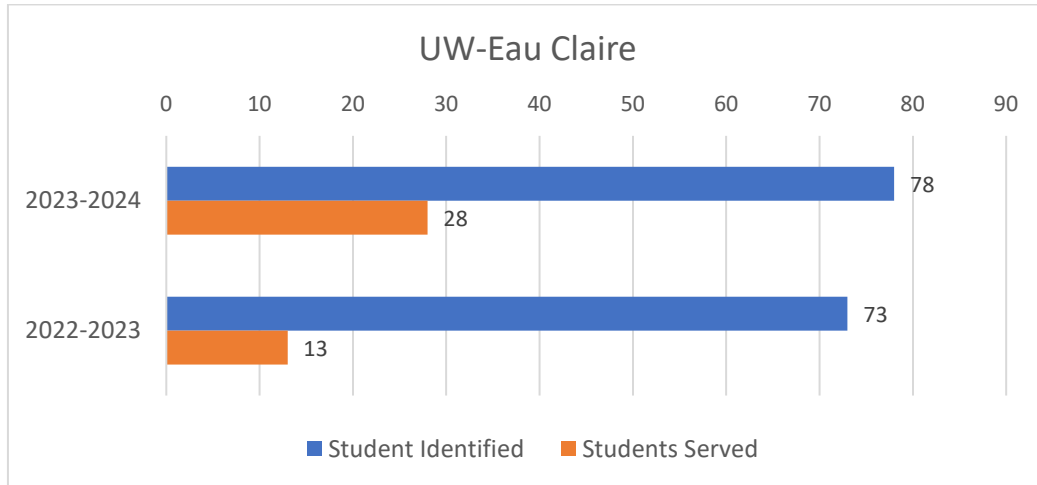
UW-Eau Claire: Fostering Success

Program Location: Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Program Coordinator: Jodi Thesing-Ritter (thesinjm@uwec.edu, 715-836-3651)

Website: uwec.edu/edi/edi-services-programs/fostering-success/

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

UW-Eau Claire engaged in a year-long process of increasing awareness of the resources that the Fostering Success office can provide. These efforts resulted in growing the number of participating students from 13 (2022-2023) to 28 (2023-2024) using the following strategies:

- Office tour, lunch, and training with all academic advisors and all summer orientation staff to familiarize them with the Fostering Success program.
- Multiple meetings with financial aid staff to showcase resource offerings, as well as intentional collaborations to identify potential students through FAFSA data.
- Developing pre-orientation survey questions so students can self-identify.
- Collaborating with orientation staff to get weekly lists of students coming to orientation who self-identified needs on a survey. Those students then received an email, text, and call inviting them to meet with Fostering Success staff during their orientation day.
- Daily tabling at the Student Services Fair during lunch on orientation days. (Student interns staff the table to increase connection with potential students.)
- Student panel and resource panel for faculty and staff through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to assist faculty and staff in understanding how to identify and refer students.
- Collaborating with area high schools and social workers to identify students planning to attend UW-Eau Claire for seamless handoff of students.
- Implementing an intake process through the university EAB Navigate system for tracking contact with students as well as referrals and information from faculty, staff, and academic advisors.

The Advising & Retention Office assisted in developing their EAB Navigate presence to maximize its usefulness. The office also assisted in ongoing training throughout the year to effectively track and communicate with all students in the program and connect with newly referred students. All these steps proved to be fruitful and helped to more than double the number of students served from year one to year two. The area of implementation that requires additional attention and improvement is collaborating with regional schools, social workers, and programs to make sure that students who would benefit from services get an intentional handoff through an in-person office visit and intake.

Programming and Services Provided

UW-Eau Claire had a strong year of program growth and was able to provide the following resources and services during the 2023-2024 academic year:

- Welcome kits with bedding, towels, laundry baskets, hangers, etc.
- Laptop check-out program
- Refrigerator, futon, microwave check-out program
- Support to participate in high-impact practices (e.g., common course experiences; community-based learning)
- Optional cohort course enrollment
- University store for free toiletries, school supplies, kitchen supplies, cleaning supplies, etc.
- Midterm care packages
- Monthly Meaningful Meals
- Halloween Haunted Corn Maze
- Sewing Workshop
- Food Share Registration Workshop
- FAFSA Workshop
- Budgeting Workshop
- Teatime with Erin (Monthly tea and mentoring with community mentor)
- Monthly Lunch with Randee (Community mentor who prepared a monthly lunch)
- Emergency Fund for books, car breakdowns, tires, unmet bills due to unforeseen circumstances, etc.
- Study Table
- Winter Break Gift Cards
- Community Service Project
- Résumé Writing Workshop and Handshake Enrollment with Career Services
- Fire Ball Etiquette Dinner
- Final Exam Baskets
- Summer Community Garden Project
- Cooking and Meal Prep Workshop
- Winter Hat, Coat, and Mitten Drive and Distribution

Program Goals 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Increase number of students served from 13 to 25.	28 total students were served in 2023-2024.
Increase number of students taking advantage of three or more services.	All 28 students enrolled in the program engaged in at least three or more services.

Enroll students together in an academic course and corresponding high-impact immersion experience.	Nine students enrolled in the course and participated in the immersion experience.
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Non-University Student Outreach

UW-Eau Claire’s Fostering Success staff met with social work staff from Chippewa, Eau Claire, and Dunn Counties to inform them of the university resources and to educate them on the referral process. They met multiple times with the Homeless Youth Coordinators at regional schools to increase their understanding of resources. They are in the process of expanding this outreach to include mentoring junior and senior students in foster care who attend the two local public high schools. UW-Eau Claire hopes to bring the mentoring program to fruition in fall 2024 and conducted meetings in summer 2024 to map out the programming. Close collaborations also occurred with the university’s regional Independent Living Coordinator to gain referrals. Finally, UW-Eau Claire developed a partnership with a nonprofit group, Tree House, to provide university tours for its students and start a service-learning program where Fostering Success students mentor weekly at Tree House. One such student at Tree House will attend UW-Eau Claire in the fall and has already completed orientation and accessed available resources.

Additional Program Highlights

UW-Eau Claire’s Fostering Success program experienced growth in both the number of program participants and their engagement in weekly programming of some kind. The students built strong connections with each other, and retention numbers and grade point averages were points of pride from UW-Eau Claire. Staff are working to build their program enrollment for fall 2024 and had already enrolled six new students within the first week of orientation. They also helped several students move from their foster home or group home into the residence halls in May 2024 for summer employment and engagement. These students participated in a summer community garden project and Meaningful Meals. Finally, a Fostering Success graduate was selected as the commencement speaker for the College of Arts & Sciences, where she shared her foster care story and the success she had at UW-Eau Claire because of her support from the Fostering Success program. This support included a scholarship to study abroad, which was a lifelong dream of hers.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

UW-Eau Claire engaged in a giving campaign with its foundation and received over \$15,000 in donations. UW-Eau Claire also collaborated with its foundation gifts officers to seek scholarship donation commitments for four-year \$5,000 scholarships. In 2023-2024, two donors committed to making \$20,000 donations to provide renewable scholarships. These have been awarded to two incoming first-year students.

Looking ahead, UW-Eau Claire has a goal to build the scholarship funding project to provide 10 renewable scholarships annually to incoming students, and it has secured matching donors for its 2024-2025 giving campaign, which will double all the contributions it receives. UW-Eau Claire is working on a video to share with potential donors, and the program coordinator has gone with the gifts officers on multiple visits to engage with potential donors. One current donor committed to writing a letter for this year's campaign, as she has served as a community mentor and has developed intentional relationships with current students to see first-hand the impact of her donations. The video of the speech given by the Fostering Success graduate chosen as

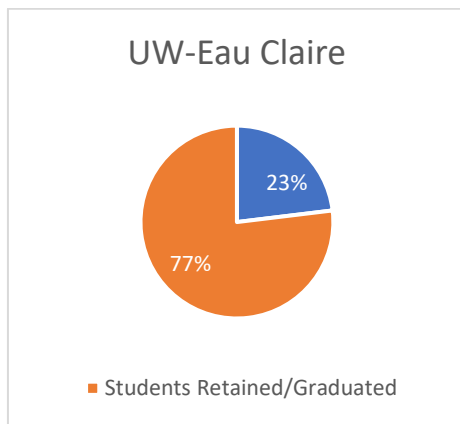
commencement speaker will further highlight the impact of donors on the program and the students they serve.

Staffing

- Student Services Coordinator
- 2 Student Interns

Common Program Metrics

The average grade point average of UW-Eau Claire Fostering Success students served was a 3.01 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 3.07 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 13 students served in fall 2022, 10 students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated.



University-Specific Program Metrics

The following metrics are also being tracked across program participants at UW-Eau Claire to further evaluate the impact of programming in supporting student success:

- University employment
- Enrollment in a common academic course and participation in a corresponding high-impact immersion experience
- Number of services accessed
- College coach assigned and utilized
- Community mentor assigned and utilized
- Participation in Meaningful Meals and workshops

Future Recruitment Strategies

In addition to the strategies implemented to date, UW-Eau Claire plans to roll out a mentoring program at the two local high schools to provide application writing, FAFSA and scholarship application assistance, and tutoring to local youth enrolled in foster care attending those schools.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Increase participation in the Fostering Success program from 28 students to 45 students.
- Develop and implement a mentor program at Memorial and North High Schools serving at least 10 foster youth.

- Secure three additional four-year renewable scholarships from donors.
- Collaborate with UW-Eau Claire Foundation to execute a fundraising campaign to raise \$20,000 in program and emergency funds for the Fostering Success program.
- Secure enough College Coaches (faculty/staff) and Community Mentors (adult members of community) so that each Fostering Success student who wants one or both of these supports can be matched.

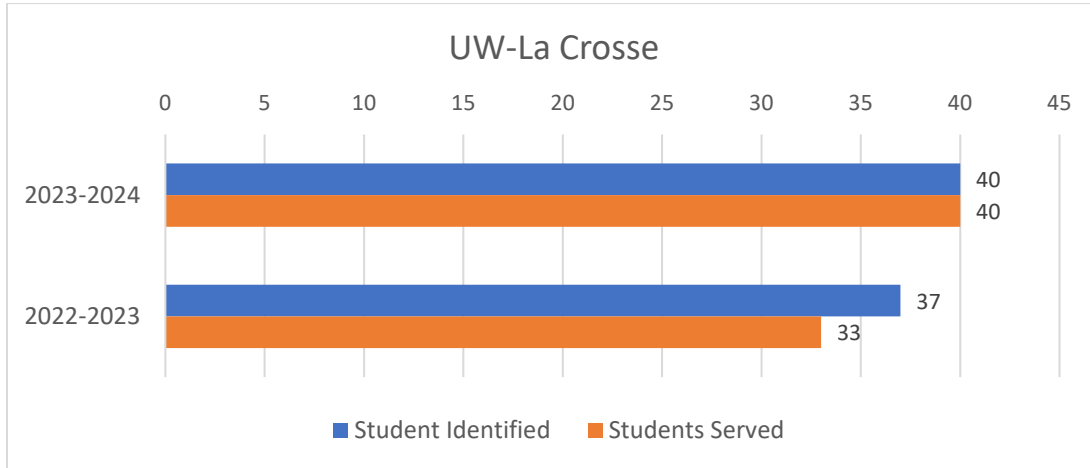
UW-La Crosse: Fostering Success for Independent Scholars (FSIS)

Program Location: Division of Diversity and Inclusion; TRIO Student Support Services

Program Coordinator: Luke Fannin (lfannin@uwlax.edu, 608-785-8538)

Website: uwlax.edu/student-support-services/fostering-success-for-independent-scholars/

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

At UW-La Crosse, the names of eligible Fostering Success students are provided to the TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Director by the Financial Aid Office. The director reaches out to students via email to inform them about the Fostering Success for Independent Scholars program and, if they are not already enrolled, invites them to apply for TRIO Student Support Services as well. The Fostering Success coordinator then follows up regularly with monthly check-in emails and notifications of upcoming shopping trips, events, etc. For those enrolled in Student Support Services and using those services, UW-La Crosse has had some limited success engaging them in the Fostering Success program via the Student Support Services advisor, but the majority of successful outreach and engagement occurred when UW-La Crosse was able to make direct, face-to-face contact with students to talk about their needs.

All 40 students identified as eligible engaged in some way in 2023-2024, an increase from 33 students engaged in the previous year.

Programming and Services Provided

- Academic support & tutoring
- Fostering Success student employment in TRIO Student Support Services
- Fostering Success scholarships (\$750 each)

Program Goals 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Build a sense of community by establishing a regular family dinner and forming a counseling group.	While program participants expressed general interest in the idea, UW-La Crosse had a challenging time getting students to commit to a date, citing lack of time. UWL did hold one group lunch in conjunction with winter supply pickup, with four students attending.
Work with UWL Counseling & Testing to create a Fostering Success support group.	General interest did not translate into anything concrete, as students could not attend planned exploratory meetings. Again, lack of time was the main reason cited for being unable to attend.
Continue to work with La Crosse Community Foundation to secure additional funding and create internship opportunities for Fostering Success participants around the greater La Crosse region.	Meetings with donors in December led to an additional \$3,500 in private donations.
Maintain or improve all program metrics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistence: 35 of 40 students persisted from fall to spring (slight percentage decline from 32 of 33). • Average GPA: 2.93 (improvement from 2.70). • Grade D/Grade F/Withdrawal rates: 23.4% (slight improvement from 24.2%). • "First landing" job placement or graduate enrollment: Unable to collect data (only one survey response). • 4-6-year graduation rates: Still too early to collect.
Establish a monthly community/cultural event.	3 Fostering Success participants attended UW-La Crosse's International Banquet and the Latin American Student Organization Fiesta. Students again reported not having time to attend other events offered.

Non-University Student Outreach

UW-La Crosse's outreach to non-university students mainly came through university visits. When high school groups arranged visits through the admissions office, they indicated whether they were bringing populations who would benefit from services provided by TRIO Student Support Services and Multicultural Student Services offices, and whether they would like to schedule presentation time with respective program representatives. When TRIO Student Support Services was invited to present, they always included information about the Fostering Success program as well.

Additional Program Highlights

N/A

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

In academic year 2023-2024, UW-La Crosse received private donations to the program totaling \$3,500. UW-La Crosse plans to continue to work with its fundraising entity, the UWL Foundation, to

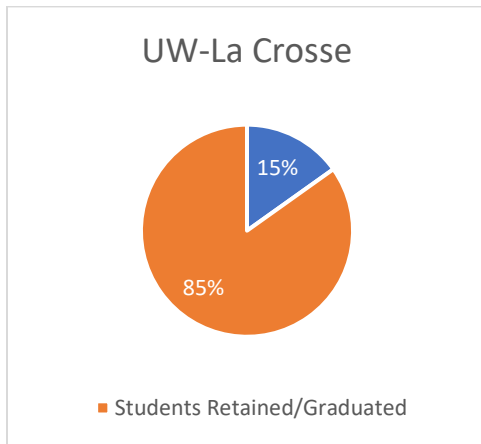
spread the word about the Fostering Success for Independent Scholars program among its donor networks.

Staffing

- TRIO Student Support Services Director & Fostering Success for Independent Scholars Coordinator
- 3 Peer Tutors
- 3 Peer Mentors

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-La Crosse Fostering Success students served was a 2.88 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.93 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 33 students served in the fall 2022 semester, 28 students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated.



University-Specific Program Metrics

The following metrics are also being tracked across program participants at UW-La Crosse to further evaluate the impact of programming in supporting student success:

- Persistence
- Good academic standing
- D/F/W rates (Grades of D or F, or withdrawal from course)
- Job placement/graduate program enrollment rates
- Student engagement with service offices (advising, career, counseling, personal needs, etc.)

Future Recruitment Strategies

Moving forward, UW-La Crosse plans to have periodic check-ins with local and regional organizations that are working with youth in potential Fostering Success populations (Family & Children's Center, Independent Living/Workforce Resource, RHYMES, etc.). UW-La Crosse also hopes to have continued coordination with its Financial Aid & Admissions departments for assistance in identifying prospective eligible students.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Establish family dinner (deepen community building efforts).
- Bring in UWL's Underserved Populations Coordinator for wraparound support for Fostering Success participants.
- Provide targeted, customized career day events for program participants.
- Maintain or improve all program metrics.
- Engage 50% of program participants in at least one community/cultural/career event during the 2024-2025 academic year.

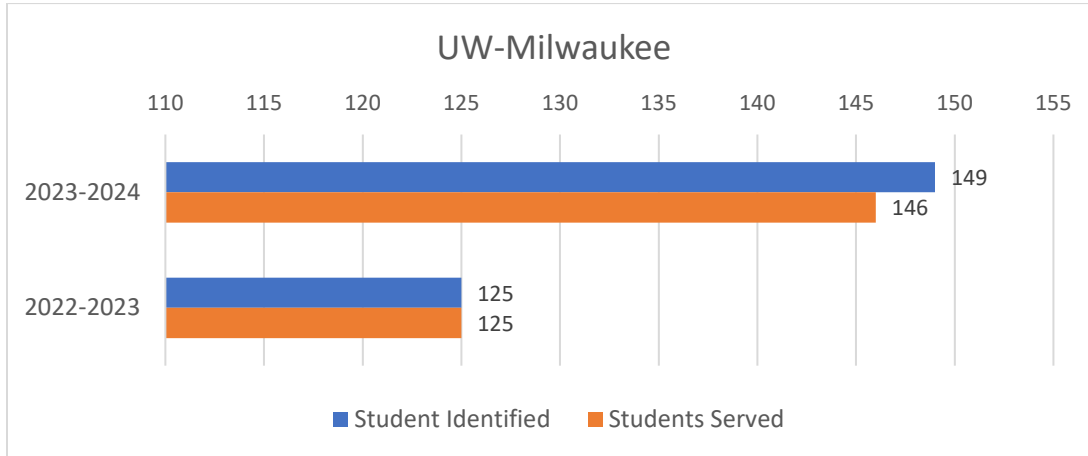
UW-Milwaukee: Fostering Success at UWM

Program Location: Division of Enrollment Management; Student Success Center

Program Coordinator: Tawney Latona (tawney@uwm.edu, 414-229-4624)

Website: uwm.edu/fosteringSUCCESS

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

In 2023-2024, UW-Milwaukee used the following strategies to connect with and engage eligible Fostering Success students:

- Active Outreach and Communication
 - Personalized contact: Fostering Success makes direct contact with students through phone calls, emails, texts, and face-to-face interactions. Personalized communication helps in building connection and trust. Reaching students through phone calls can be challenging, and text messages seem to be the preferred method of communication.
 - Collaborations: The program partners with local foster care agencies, schools, and community organizations to identify and reach eligible students.
 - Social media and online presence: This year, UW-Milwaukee created an Instagram account and is in the process of re-developing its website to have two platforms, one for current students and one for prospective students and local partners.

By implementing these strategies, Fostering Success at UW-Milwaukee was able to effectively engage with the majority of eligible students, providing 146 students (compared to 125 last year) with the support and resources they needed to thrive in their academic and personal lives.

Programming and Services Provided

In 2023-2024, UW-Milwaukee's Fostering Success program organized a range of events aimed at enhancing student well-being and community engagement. Peer Advocates led group outings to various on-campus events, providing opportunities for students to connect and participate in university life. They also hosted monthly meals, creating a space for students to socialize and engage in discussions on educational topics, fostering both community and academic growth. Additionally,

they provided mid-term care packages, welcome baskets, birthday bags, and cakes, which helped to build a supportive environment, alleviate stress, and ensure that students felt valued and celebrated throughout their academic journey. Below is a full range of programs and services provided.

- Supportive services and resources
 - College coaching: Providing individualized support through case managers who help students navigate university systems, access resources, and create personalized academic plans.
 - Emergency funds and mini grants: Offering financial assistance for emergencies, helping students cover unexpected expenses that could disrupt their education.
 - Basic needs support: Assisting with food security, housing, and other basic needs to ensure students have a stable foundation to focus on their studies.
 - Supply closet (birthday and welcome items).
- Community building and peer support
 - Peer networking: Facilitating peer support networks where students can connect with others who have similar experiences, fostering a sense of community and belonging.
 - Social events: Organizing social activities and events that allow students to build relationships in a relaxed setting, reducing feelings of isolation.
 - Student lounge.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Establish a team of 4-6 student employees to help manage the growth of the program.	Successfully hired a team of 4 students to develop and maintain a new Instagram account, develop a new logo and marketing materials, organize various events, and complete multiple projects to advocate and support students.
Create a Mini-Grant Award Process.	Implemented a comprehensive application process for mini grants and held 14 student interest interviews. Of the students who expressed interest, 8 students applied, and 6 were awarded grants.
Develop a University Advancement Plan for Private Outreach.	Conducted several meetings with University Advancement and provided information for two projects. Although no projects have been completed, the most promising one is scheduled to resume in the fall.
Expand the Scholarship Mentor Program.	Despite a successful FAFSA and General Scholarship Application Campaign, the expansion of the Scholarship Mentor Program has been postponed to late July 2024 to avoid stress due to FAFSA delays and a shift to an earlier scholarship deadline at UWM.
Strengthen Community Connections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened partnerships with Wellpoint Care Network and Bridge to Brighter, including hosting student visits, virtual meetings, and attending career fairs. This fall, UW-Milwaukee plans to welcome multiple students from these organizations. • Conducted two outreach campaigns targeting homeless liaisons, group homes, and Foster Care Coordinators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered special assistance to Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) unaccompanied homeless youth for the Schoolhouse Connection scholarship. • Collaborated with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to update the Brighter Star and FAFSA instruction sheet to be distributed statewide.
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Non-University Student Outreach

UW-Milwaukee engages non-university students in several ways. First, UWM holds monthly virtual coaching meetings with prospective students via Teams to help them with their next steps in the college admission process and to address common concerns related to independent students. Next, UWM provides campus tours and site visits specifically for independent students to familiarize them with the university environment and available resources. Individual or small group appointments tended to work better for them than a large group event. Finally, UWM hosted events and workshops on topics relevant to foster youth such as financial aid, scholarship opportunities, and transitioning to college life.

Additional Program Highlights

UWM has experienced a 400% increase in enrollment in the Fostering Success program since Fall 2022, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced support for independent youth. The current coaching staff, though dedicated, is overextended, jeopardizing the quality of assistance provided to each student. Securing funding for an additional Fostering Success coach is critical to maintaining comprehensive success coaching, emotional support, and life skills training for these students. This investment would not only promote academic and personal success, but also align with UW-Milwaukee's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment. UW-Milwaukee Fostering Success leadership will continue to make necessary adjustments to align services with current staffing levels, while also advocating at both the university and state levels for additional staffing support.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

UW-Milwaukee received a variety of item donations from local businesses, community organizations, and university departments and staff. UWM also received 27 financial contributions this year to its UW-Milwaukee Foundation account.

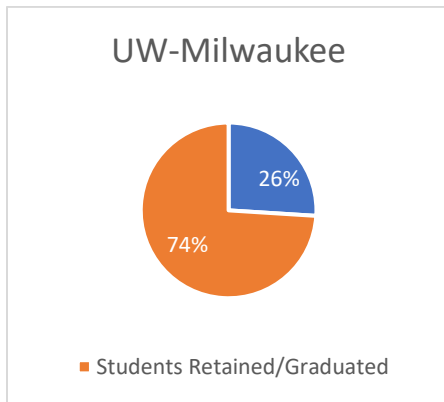
UW-Milwaukee plans to seek additional non-university support for 2024-2025. UWM is currently preparing a grant application and will launch a fundraising campaign in April. Additionally, UWM will reach out to community organizations for donations.

Staffing

- Fostering Success Coordinator
- 2 Graduate Assistants
- 2 Peer Advocates

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Milwaukee Fostering Success students served was a 2.44 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and 2.62 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 100 students who were enrolled and engaged in the Fostering Success program during the fall 2022 semester, 74 students were either retained for fall 2023 or graduated, and one student passed away.



University-Specific Program Metrics

The following metrics are also being tracked across program participants at UW-Milwaukee to further evaluate the impact of programming in supporting student success:

- Number of coaching appointments
- Number of prospective student meetings

Future Recruitment Strategies

Moving forward, UW-Milwaukee will continue to use previously successful recruitment practices, including collaborating with various university partners, such as Undergraduate Admissions, Student Financial Services, and others, to refer students to their program and generate leads. Additionally, UWM plans to engage with district homeless liaisons, group homes, foster care coordinators and regional supervisors, school counselors, and programs for runaway and homeless youth. UWM organizes monthly meetings with prospective students starting a year before enrollment, and those meetings provide coaching through the admission process, next steps, and available opportunities. Those meetings also help students to build essential skills before starting at UW-Milwaukee. Finally, UW-Milwaukee will host university visit programs, participate in career fairs for local foster care organizations, and offer presentations upon request.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Develop a tiered strategy to manage limited resources and accommodate population growth effectively.
- Enhance the average GPA of Fostering Success students by 0.2 points.
- Collaborate with the Center for Student Experience and Talent to improve career awareness and inform students about available services.
- Engage with the UW-Milwaukee Foundation and other community partners to secure donations for Fostering Success.

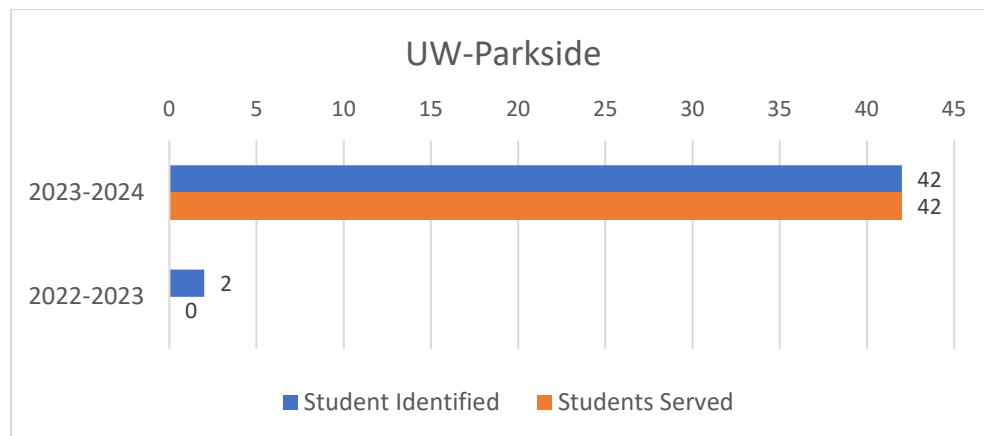
UW-Parkside: Fostering Success Program

Program Location: Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid

Program Coordinator: Kristina Klemens (klemens@uwp.edu, 262-595-2004)

Website: uwp.edu/apply/admissions/fostering-success.cfm

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

UW-Parkside sent an electronic survey asking students what types of needs, wants, housing challenges, etc., that they have experienced. UW-Parkside also set up a Fostering Success email address, which is monitored by the Fostering Success committee members. The financial aid office sent information to potentially eligible students encouraging them to connect with a financial aid counselor to discuss possible financial assistance. Success coaches, academic advisors, and the dean of students were asked to refer potentially eligible students to the director of financial aid.

Programming and Services Provided

UW-Parkside did not provide direct programming this year while it investigated the needs expressed by the students identified as eligible for Fostering Success. Direct financial assistance was provided to students to assist with campus housing costs, food needs, and emergency assistance for medical and other expenses.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Identify eligible students and catalog their needs.	UW-Parkside used a survey sent through EAB Navigate to identify and track eligible students.
Assist with basic needs (food, housing, and emergency expenses).	UW-Parkside provided aid to assist students with demonstrated need through financial aid, food pantry, and housing on campus.
Support Fostering Success alongside other student support programs.	Several student support programs on campus overlap with the Fostering Success population, helping with outreach, connection, and further assistance.

Non-University Student Outreach

N/A

Additional Program Highlights

UW-Parkside has several student services offices and programs focused on providing supports to various populations of students (underrepresented/underserved populations, first-generation students, students with disabilities, low socioeconomic students, etc.). Many of the students who are eligible for the Fostering Success program are also eligible for these programs and participate in their cohorts and activities. Because students have competing priorities, UW-Parkside does not expect that students will have the time to actively participate in all of the programs open to them. Considering this, UW-Parkside anticipates that its priority with the Fostering Success program will be to provide those who need connection with other students that opportunity through other available programming, and the greater focus will be on assisting with their basic needs (housing, food, personal care) through financial supports to ensure their ability to stay enrolled and graduate.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

UW-Parkside did not receive any non-university commitments or other support to assist its program. The newly hired program coordinator will explore seeking donations to the program supply closets and other potential support.

Staffing

Support for Fostering Success students is provided through a committee model, including the following roles:

- Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services
- Assistant to Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services
- Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services
- Dean of Students

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Parkside Fostering Success students served was a 2.71 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.61 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 42 students served, all 42 students were either retained from fall 2023 to spring 2024 semesters or graduated.

Since UW-Parkside did not have students in its Fostering Success program in 2022-23, no retention numbers are available to report for fall 2022 through fall 2023.

University-Specific Program Metrics

N/A

Future Recruitment Strategies

With the UW-Parkside program moving to the Admissions Office (where the Program Coordinator will be located), UW-Parkside envisions educating the Admissions Counselors about the Fostering Success program so that they can include the program information in their high school visits, on-campus events, and engagement with high school counselors. UW-Parkside will also ensure that

Success Coaches (funded through a Title III program) who are assigned to all newly enrolled first-year and transfer students on campus are aware of the Fostering Success program so that they may refer students who are eligible.

Program Goals 2024-2025

UW-Parkside will work with the newly hired Program Coordinator to establish student/program goals for Fiscal Year 2025. In general, those goals will focus on the following action items:

- Identifying/developing a cohort of eligible Fostering Success students.
- Developing a series of engagement activities and events (educational and social) for the academic year.
- Establishing and defining procedures for the Fostering Success Supply Closet.
- Establishing a referral system for prospective and current students.
- Determining direct financial needs.

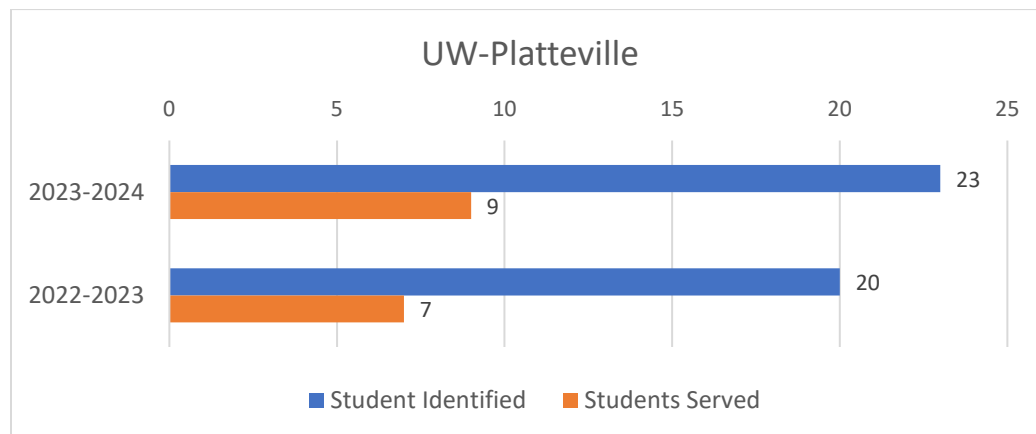
UW-Platteville: Fostering Success

Program Location: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; TRIO Student Support Services

Program Coordinator: Quentin Sprengelmeyer (sprengelmeyq@uwplatt.edu, 608-342-1814)

Website: N/A

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

- With assistance from the financial aid office, students were identified using question 52 on the FAFSA application (at any time since you turned age 13, were both your parents deceased, were you in foster care, or were you a dependent or ward of the court?). All eligible students received follow-up emails inviting them to participate in the Fostering Success program.
- Academic advisors were informed about the program and encouraged to refer any eligible students.

Programming and Services Provided

Direct services offered to students participating in Fostering Success included the following:

- Academic advising and coaching
- Financial literacy advising
- Individualized tutoring
- Peer mentoring
- Opportunities to participate in social/cultural activities
- Short-term housing opportunities over academic breaks
- Gas and grocery cards
- Access to a cabinet that provides free food, school supplies, and hygiene products

Fostering Success participants also had the opportunity to earn a \$400 stipend each semester. This stipend was earned when participants successfully completed engagement opportunities. For example, students were expected to attend three TRIO workshops each semester, meet with their Fostering Success advisor and peer mentors twice monthly, and attend one joint cultural event and two monthly community meals to earn a stipend for that semester.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
80% of participants served by the Fostering Success program will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the academic year.	88% persistence was achieved.
85% of all enrolled participants served by the Fostering Success program will meet the academic performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the grantee university.	87% good academic standing was achieved.
50% of incoming participants served in the Fostering Success program will graduate with a bachelor's degree or equivalent within six years.	100% graduation rate was achieved to date (1 student).

Non-University Student Outreach

N/A

Additional Program Highlights

Students were recruited and given opportunities to connect with each other. Some of the participants became friends and socialized outside of the program, and they became a support group to each other through difficult and stressful times. Being at a small university, the students were able to bond and form a tight community.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

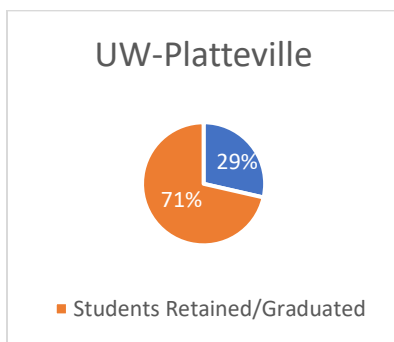
UW-Platteville did not receive any non-university commitments or other support to assist its program.

Staffing

- Advisor
- 3 Peer Mentors

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Platteville Fostering Success students served was a 2.95 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.75 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the seven students served in fall 2022, five students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated.



University-Specific Program Metrics

The following metrics are also being tracked across program participants at UW-Platteville to further evaluate the impact of programming in supporting student success:

- Persistence rate
- Good academic standing

Future Recruitment Strategies

UW-Platteville will continue to identify eligible students through the FAFSA application, and it will email all eligible students about the program. UW-Platteville plans to reach out to all academic advisors on campus to give them information about the program and encourage them to refer any eligible students. Program staff also plan to partner with the admissions office to host a Foster Student Resource Day for area high school students. Finally, they plan to host a Fostering Success open house. Potential students will be able to meet with staff and participating students, learn about the program, and tour the Fostering Success student lounge.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- The Fostering Success program will serve at least 12 students.
- 80% of participants served by the Fostering Success program will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the academic year.
- 85% of all enrolled participants served by the Fostering Success program will meet the academic performance level required to stay in good academic standing at the grantee university.
- 50% of incoming participants served in the Fostering Success program will graduate with a bachelor's degree or equivalent within six years.

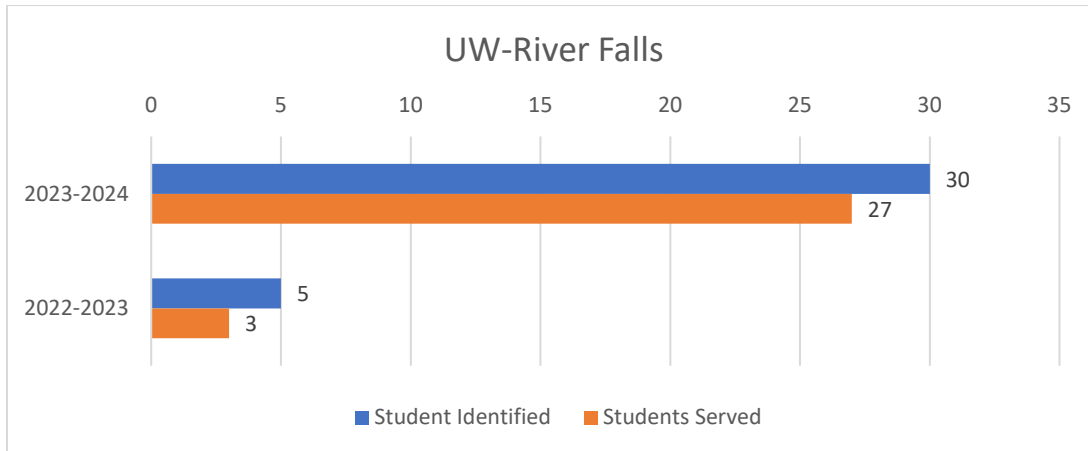
UW-River Falls: Falcon Links Fostering Success

Program Location: Academic Affairs; Social Work Department

Program Coordinator: Tammy Kincaid (tamara.kincaid@uwrf.edu, 715-425-3376)

Website: uwrf.edu/falcon-links/

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

UW-River Falls has reached out directly to students during involvement fairs; made connections with counseling services, admissions, student success services, financial aid, housing staff, dean of students, and other offices; and connected with regional county social workers and social workers in area high schools. All outreach methods have yielded a few students. The Fostering Success program is working to get a more direct referral list from Financial Aid staff in the future.

Programming and Services Provided

- Monthly dinners
- Food shelf/donation supplies
- Welcome baskets
- Assistance with Medicaid/SNAP applications and housing applications
- Emergency funds
- Transportation assistance
- Driver's license assistance
- Obtaining birth certificates and proof of eligibility to work
- Job search support
- Weekly study groups
- Academic advising
- Life and financial planning
- Counseling about family issues (often discussing abusive connections or lack of connections)
- Assistance with orders for protection
- Mental health support and referral
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills group offered twice monthly

UW-River Falls Fostering Success program staff also provided significant mental health and referral support to Fostering Success students in crisis, in collaboration with university counseling services. They note that it has been beneficial to have licensed social workers on their staff to provide this additional support, given the complexity of issues many Fostering Success students experience.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Engage 20 students in the program as active participants in individual and group meetings.	27 current students were actively engaged. In addition, 6 prospective or potential re-entry students were engaged during the year.
80% of Falcon Links students will maintain full time enrollment from semester to semester.	89% of engaged students maintained enrollment in higher education.
80% of students will graduate with a bachelor's degree.	The first cohort of eligible students are on track for 2024 graduation.
80% of engaged students will report satisfaction with the program.	All students have verbally indicated satisfaction when directly asked.
50% of prospective students will enroll in any college.	Exactly 50% of prospective students have enrolled in any college (half at UW-River Falls and half elsewhere).

Non-University Student Outreach

The UW-River Falls Fostering Success staff meet with any referred high school student who might be eligible for the program, including students who do not plan to attend UW-River Falls. As a result, they have engaged with nine non-students, four of whom are registered to attend UW-River Falls, two who are planning to attend UW-Eau Claire, one who is not eligible for college until fall 2025, and two others who have not finalized their decision. Staff will be reaching out over the summer to continue to connect with these students and are planning an engagement event when students come to campus in the fall.

Additional Program Highlights

UW-River Falls has taken the approach of "no wrong door" for any student who has been referred for assistance. In doing so, the Fostering Success program staff often help students who are not technically eligible for the program but would benefit from some form of assistance (such as food or housing insecurity). They believe the strength of their program lies within the use of licensed social workers who can both identify and help students connect to resources on and off campus, but also provide social-emotional support for students who have difficult relationships with family members. Program staff are experienced child welfare social workers who can help students understand family dynamics and set appropriate boundaries. In addition, mental health concerns often underlie some of the students' problems that contribute to an inability to stay in school. Staff are careful not to duplicate services that already exist but rather to provide additional support, particularly when a student is having a mental health-related crisis. The UW-River Falls program is looking to become more actively involved with the Dean of Students office, as well as other student success offices, and to ensure that the entire university knows about its services. Program staff work to balance their departmental collaborations with the sense of confidentiality that students have indicated they appreciate about the program. The Fostering Success staff do not share any information with

anyone without explicit student consent, and, due to the location of the program in an academic building, students have indicated they do not feel "outed" by visiting the office. This was the first year that UW-River Falls had a full-time staff member working in the program. As UW-River Falls identifies more eligible students, it anticipates needing to add another staff member to its team.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

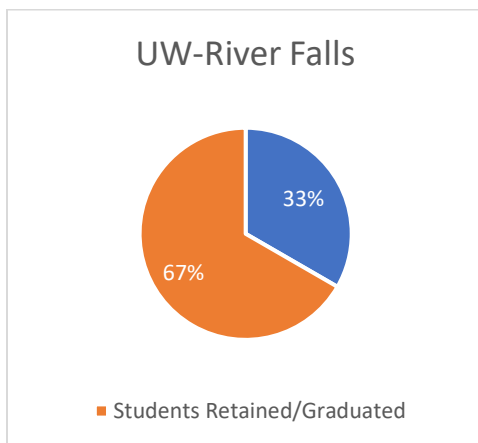
UW-River Falls regularly gets donations from several religious organizations in the community. It is also involved in a nonprofit organization for the City of River Falls that seeks to support residents in unique ways that other programs do not fund. Additionally, the university has an Amazon wish list of items that students have requested, and those items often get donated anonymously. UW-River Falls has applied for a SERV grant but has not yet heard back. UW-River Falls tries to consider in-kind contributions like space or mentoring from other professional organizations. Moving into the next academic year, the university is actively working on creating a foundation account to receive donations from alumni or other donors, as well as applying for several grants that could assist either funding staff or specific student needs.

Staffing

- Social Work Faculty Member
- Social Work Intern

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-River Falls Fostering Success students served was a 2.48 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.71 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the three students served in fall 2022, two students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated. Additionally, one student did not re-enroll at UW-River Falls but was enrolled instead at a community college in Minnesota.



University-Specific Program Metrics

N/A

Future Recruitment Strategies

UW-River Falls plans to continue working closely with Admissions and other student success offices on campus. It will be proactive in working with the Financial Aid Office to identify eligible students and to hold financial aid information sessions for all students who may be struggling to pay their bills, anticipating that some of those students may be eligible for the program.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Engage 40 students to actively participate in the program.
- 80% of students will maintain enrollment from semester to semester.
- 75% of students will ultimately graduate with a bachelor's degree.
- 70% of prospective students will pursue a degree at any college or tech school.
- 80% of students will report at least one factor that has contributed to their success in college.

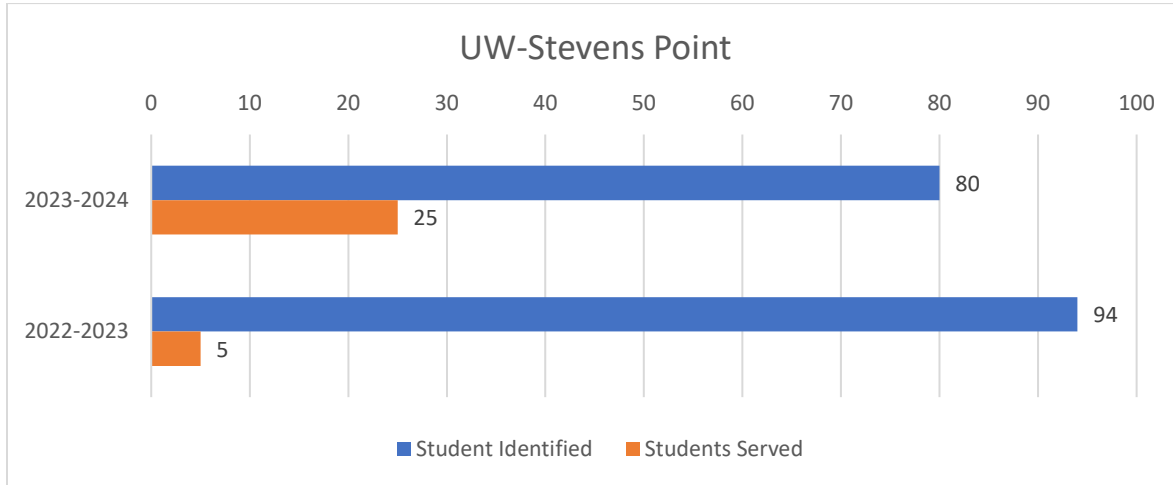
UW-Stevens Point: Fostering Success Program

Program Location: Division of Student Affairs; Student Success Center

Program Coordinator: Samantha Samreth (ssamreth@uwsp.edu, 715-346-4076)

Website: uwsp.edu/diversity-and-college-access/student-success-center/

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

Summer Bridge and First-Year Experience: First-year students who applied and were accepted to the LEAD Summer Bridge and First-Year experience participated in a weeklong program before fall semester began. Each day was structured with success skills discussion, critical thinking, student involvement, employment, social media etiquette, and career enrichment activities.

Peer Mentorship: Each student had a peer mentor throughout their academic year. They were able to connect with their mentor twice per month with one-on-one or group meetings to continue to support their transition with academic, personal, or other needs.

Monthly program meeting/engagement activity: The peer mentors, Fostering Success students, and the Fostering Success coordinator stayed connected using various group chats. By using this method, the peer mentors could put a note in the group chat or message the coordinator individually if anything came up that needed quick attention. In addition to the chat, the Fostering Success coordinator also sent essential information to participating students, such as registration dates, add/drop dates, and withdrawal dates, as well as information about upcoming events, meetings requests, and the availability of emergency supplies. This effort was successful, and the coordinator also was able to get a few other Fostering Success-eligible upper-level students to come to the center for support.

Programming and Services Provided

- Monthly program with dinner (part of LEAD program).
- Advising and coaching with the program coordinator.

- Mentorship by the peer mentors (one-on-one or group): Peer mentors had ongoing leadership training and engagement so they could better support their mentees and each other. A peer mentor started an art engagement activity that had a couple of students attend, with plans to continue and grow in 2024-2025.
- Cultural engagement activities with different identity groups' national holiday celebrations.
- Leadership Development: The program worked with Fostering Success students to create a new student organization called Neurodivergent and Disabled Student Union (NDSU).
- Professional development:
 - The Diversity and College Access (DCA) department took students to the Madison 365 Leadership Conference to help enhance student leadership development.
 - Résumé development and interviewing skills: One Fostering Success first-year student worked on résumé and interview skills and was able to obtain summer employment with the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station.
- Emergency supply pantry.
- Two intramural sports teams were created for DCA students to participate (including Fostering Success students).
- Referrals of students to appropriate resources, as needed, such as the counseling center, academic and career advising, financial aid office, bursar's office, and Dean of Students office.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Recruit 25 eligible first-year students into the Fostering Success program.	11 first-year students joined the program, which was more than double the total participants from 2022-23. Additionally, 14 upper-class students engaged with the program this year.
Build a comprehensive academic support system.	Fostering Success students were connected with academic advisors, tutors came into the center to provide services, and three career enrichment activities were held off campus for students.
Strengthen financial literacy and aid support.	4 hybrid sessions were held each semester with different financial literacy topics, and an online literacy program (Grad Ready) was offered to students. Communications were also sent about scholarships and emergency grants.
Enhance student retention and graduation rates.	80% persistence rate from fall 2022 to fall 2023, and 81.8% persistence rate from fall 2023 to spring 2024.
Foster a strong university community and equity commitment.	A significant number of programs and services were added that helped increase student engagement. Referrals were also made to other university resources such as mental health, food pantry, housing, etc.

Non-University Student Outreach

The following four major outreach opportunities occurred in the 2023-2024 academic year.

- Structured on-campus programs were held by the admissions office including UW-Stevens Point Orientation Day, ViewPoint Day, Admitted Student Day, University Tours, and Visit Day.

Representatives from the Fostering Success program attended to talk about programming and to participate in the resource fairs.

- The Fostering Success Peer Mentors tabled at the Dreyfus University Center (Student Union) to recruit and inform students, faculty, and staff about the program.
- The UW-Stevens Point Upward Bound staff visited high schools weekly with Fostering Success program information for the students, counselors, and administration staff. Next year, the Fostering Success program coordinator plans to attend these visits as well.
- An open house was held for university partners, community members who work with foster youth, and anyone else who was interested in learning more about the program.

Additional Program Highlights

The Fostering Success program at UW-Stevens Point was given a comfortable and welcoming suite for students' engagement, which also allowed for advising and coaching to be conducted in a closed-door space within the suite. The suite was newly painted and decorated with fun, bright colors. The suite is called the Student Success Center (SSC), and it houses the Fostering Success and LEAD Summer Bridge/First Year Experience programs. The Student Success Center has a kiosk where students can swipe their ID card to track attendance. Using EAB Navigate was also encouraged as a means to communicate with students so that data could be tracked. A total of 358 messages were sent via EAB Navigate (note phone calls were not tracked in EAB Navigate). The total attendance in the Student Success Center was 157 students. Seventy-nine of those students were seen by the program coordinator, and 61.05 hours were spent advising those 79 students.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

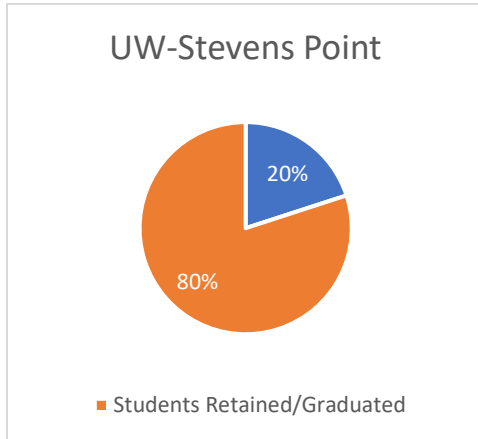
- Stevens Point Area School Public School District helped to provide welcome care packages to Fostering Success students.
- Continued partnership with the Independent Living Program of Central Wisconsin helped to support the program.
- The Noel Family pledged up to \$10,000 to the program for emergency student need, and they will work with the Holy Spirit Parish to help support students who are out of foster care.
- Commitments were sought from local community partners in the Portage County area as well as partnerships with local organizations such as Goodwill and the Salvation Army.

Staffing

- Student Success Center Coordinator
- 4 Peer Mentors

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Stevens Point Fostering Success students served was a 2.23 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.39 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the five students served in the fall 2022 semester, four students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated.



University-Specific Program Metrics

N/A

Future Recruitment Strategies

Community Outreach

- Fostering Success staff will partner with Stevens Point Area High School (SPASH) to create awareness about the availability of the Fostering Success program and the resources it provides. The goal of the partnership is to establish a direct connection with high school students who may be considering transitioning to a college or university setting, to inform them about Fostering Success and its offerings to ensure they are aware of the support available if they choose to attend UW-Stevens Point. The hope is to establish a seamless transition between the high school experience and enrollment at UW-Stevens Point.
- TRIO Upward Bound staff will continue to visit other central Wisconsin high schools (eight total high schools) weekly to share Fostering Success information with students, school counselors, and administration staff. The Fostering Success Coordinator plans to continue this in the 2024-25 year.
- Outreach will be made to the Boys and Girls Club in Stevens Point, local area churches, and the City of Stevens Point and community areas.

On-campus Outreach

- Conduct more frequent outreach to different departments on campus to share information about the program. This includes offices such as admissions, academic and career advising, financial aid, counseling services, tutoring and learning center, etc.
- Use structured programs through Admissions Office: UW-Stevens Point's Orientation Day, ViewPoint Day, Admitted Student Day, University Tours, and Visit Day.
- Provide information through tabling at the Dreyfus University Center (Student Union) to recruit and inform students, faculty, and staff about the program.

- Create an announcement for the university news that goes to all students, faculty, and staff about the Fostering Success program at the beginning of each semester.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- *Outreach and Recruitment:* Recruit 25 eligible students into the Fostering Success program. The new coordinator and planned outreach and recruitment strategies will help UW-Stevens Point to reach this goal.
- *Build a comprehensive academic support system:* The primary goal is to continue building a strong academic support system for Fostering Success students. This includes fostering strong relationships with faculty, enhancing tutoring services, providing effective academic advising, and facilitating exploration of careers and majors/minors. A focus on optimizing these resources will ensure Fostering Success students receive the necessary support to excel academically.
- *Strengthen financial literacy and aid support:* Enhance efforts in promoting financial literacy among Fostering Success students. By leveraging university and community resources, students will be empowered with the knowledge and skills to make informed financial decisions. Students will also be actively connected with scholarship opportunities and ensure they have access to all available financial aid resources.
- *Enhance student retention and graduation rates:* Building on the previous year's retention goal, the aim for 2024-2025 is to further increase the retention rate of Fostering Success students. Peer mentorship and engagement with Diversity and College Access (DCA) Success Coaches will continue to be provided, while also focusing on fostering a sense of community and belonging on campus. Through social and cultural engagement events and supportive services, barriers will be proactively addressed to support and create an inclusive environment that promotes student persistence and success. Furthermore, academic progress will be monitored and targeted interventions will be provided to ensure students are on track to graduate within a reasonable timeframe.
- *Data Tracking:* Use EAB Navigate to monitor the number of upper-level Fostering Success fall 2024 eligible students as enrolled cohort-year students to determine how many return the following year.
- *Assessment:* Send a survey to eligible Fostering Success students to see what services, support, and activities they would like to have for academic year 2024-2025.

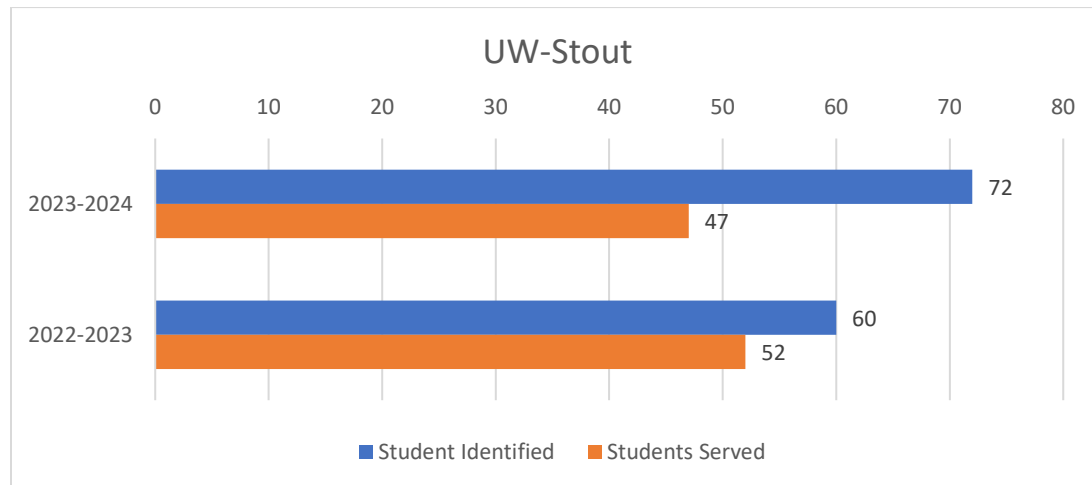
UW-Stout: Fostering Success

Program Location: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; TRIO Student Support Services

Program Coordinator: Jessica Brooks (brooksje@uwstout.edu, 715-232-5253)

Website: uwstout.edu/life-stout/fostering-success

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

Fostering Success staff participate in first-year registration and orientation (FYRO) in June. UW-Stout's orientation coordinator sends a survey with eligibility questions for Fostering Success and TRIO Student Support Services to all students to complete when selecting their June date for FYRO. A list of eligible students is created from survey responses, and Fostering Success uses this list to initiate contact with eligible students via email. On their selected FYRO date, Fostering Success staff are present at the resource fair and in the course registration labs to connect with students. Post-FYRO, follow-up emails are sent to all eligible first-year students. This approach has been successful for the program to date.

Programming and Services Provided

UW-Stout's Fostering Success program provided biweekly Family Dinners (free meals), scholarships and emergency aid, and access to its "Foster Closet," which provides free items such as school supplies, hygiene products, dorm supplies, non-perishable food items, and more. Fostering Success students who were part of the TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program also received programming in the areas of financial aid/literacy, career development, academic skill building, mental health, and tutoring. Lastly, they built a Fostering Success Library, which is made up of books that focus on topics related to foster care, adoption, homelessness, child welfare, and other related subjects. Students can check out books from the library at any point during the school year and return them at their convenience.

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Fill open staff position.	A new program coordinator was hired.
Recruit new eligible first-year students to the program.	New students were recruited, although net number of students served decreased slightly
Cultivate new donor relationships.	Secured an endowment of \$30,000.

Non-University Student Outreach

UW-Stout runs a summer program in collaboration with UW-Eau Claire for Wisconsin foster youth in high school to provide information on all post-secondary options and available funding sources.

Additional Program Highlights

UW-Stout's Fostering Success program received the Ann Lydecker Educational Diversity Award from Governor Tony Evers in October 2023. For more information, visit: <https://www.uwstout.edu/about-us/news-center/uw-stouts-fostering-success-program-leaders-recognized-gov-evers>.

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

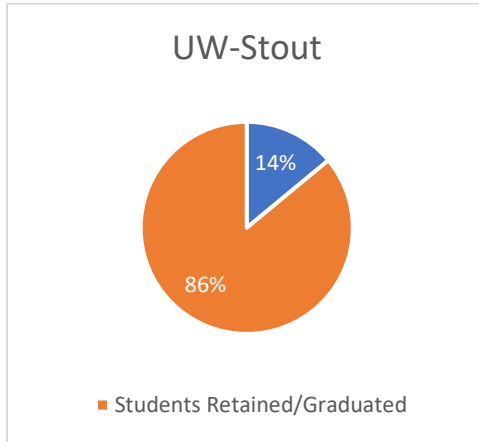
Over the years, the work that the Fostering Success program has done to cultivate relationships with the UW-Stout Foundation has resulted in two endowed accounts and several one-time private donations. During the 2023-2024 academic year, UW-Stout secured a \$30,000 endowment and received \$6,093 in private donations. UW-Stout will continue working closely with its university foundation to cultivate donor relationships and participate as a highlighted fund in the annual Stout Day of Giving.

Staffing

- Student Support Services Director
- Student Support Services Advisor
- 3 Peer Mentors

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Stout Fostering Success students served was a 2.86 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.94 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 50 students served in the fall 2022 semester, 43 students were either retained for the fall 2023 semester or graduated.



University-Specific Program Metrics

UW-Stout is logging Fostering Success group programming attendance and charting individual student Fostering Success Advisor meetings in EAB Navigate. UW-Stout also has new students complete an intake form through Microsoft Forms, which collects relevant data about each student and their needs.

Future Recruitment Strategies

UW-Stout plans to continue its current strategies because it has found them to be successful. A pre-orientation survey will ask eligibility questions, and a list of eligible students will be created from survey responses and used to initiate contact via email. Follow-ups will be done at orientation, during both the resource fair and the course registration labs. After orientation, communication through email will continue, including introduction and invitation emails from Fostering Success Peer Mentors to incoming eligible students.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Establish a formal feedback process.
- Develop dedicated programming for Fostering Success students separate from TRIO.
- Build community connections with local high schools and county workers.
- Increase the number of individual advising meetings.
- Collaborate with UW-Eau Claire to develop an overnight camp for foster youth in high school.

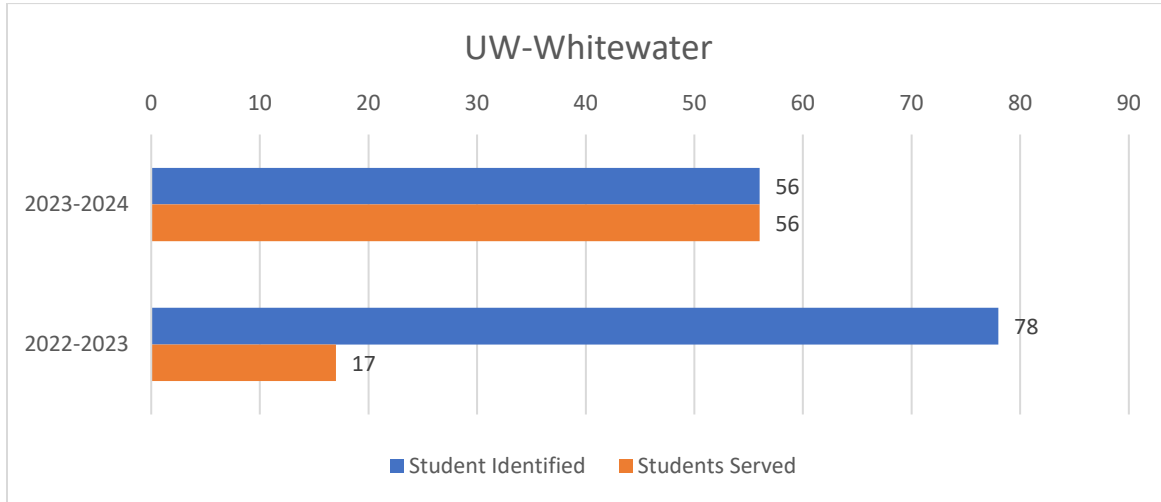
UW-Whitewater: Fostering Success and Independence

Program Location: Division of Student Affairs; Dean of Students Office

Program Coordinator: Malayna Oswald (OswaldMP01@uww.edu, 262-472-1533)

Website: uww.edu/dean-of-students/support-services/fostering-success-and-independence

Fostering Success Students Identified and Served



Strategies for Connecting with Eligible Students

UW-Whitewater sent out emails on a routine basis informing students of events, contacts, or other valuable information. The university did tabling events (put signs on tables in dining halls or in the University Center), put flyers in the dorms, and hosted all-community events. Staff also had a booth at university tour days and SOAR (student orientation, advising, and registration) events.

Programming and Services Provided

- Open house in fall 2023
- Thanksgiving dinner with Fostering Success students
- Donuts for breakfast event
- Warhawk Pantry Awareness event
- Study Baskets
- Self-care and social events

Program Goals and Outcomes 2023-2024

Goal	Outcome
Develop a trained peer mentor program based on UW-Stout's program and other models that have demonstrated fidelity and evidence-based practices.	A program has been developed but will be enhanced in the 2023-2024 school year.
Offer early arrival orientation for fall 2023.	This was not completed but is a goal for the future.

Raise awareness of the program and remove barriers to in-kind and financial donations for items that cannot be purchased with grant funds.	This goal was met and will continue to be addressed.
Collaborate with admissions to develop marketing and promotional materials (signage for school visits with admissions, brochures for prospective students, foster parents, high school homeless liaisons, promotional kits for on-campus recruitment events, etc.).	A new admissions liaison has improved the relationship with the Fostering Success program.
Host on-campus recruitment events.	This goal was met and will continue through the 2024-2025 school year.
Develop a tracking system to gather information on enrollment, retention, graduation rates, eligible Fostering Success students, program participation, referrals, case management, and outreach to pre-college students.	The tracking system was put into place and will inform future programming.
Collect data on pre- and post-learning on trauma-informed practices training.	Completed.

Non-University Student Outreach

UW-Whitewater’s Fostering Success staff have spoken at Delavan High School and Beloit High school about the program, and they continue to reach out to homeless liaisons in the high schools. The admissions department also talks about the program with all incoming students who are eligible for Fostering Success. The admissions department, with the hiring of a new homelessness liaison, has taken an active role in identifying eligible students. Fostering Success staff have a booth at SOAR and student tour days, and they hand out information both about the program and how to donate to the program.

Additional Program Highlights

N/A

Non-University Commitment or Additional Support

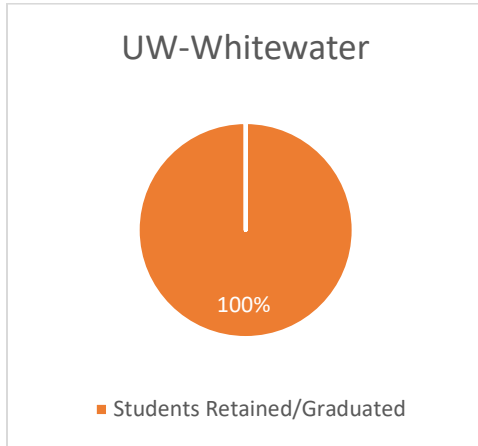
A drop-down menu on the UW-Whitewater Foundation giving page allows individuals to give directly to the Fostering Success account. UW-Whitewater also continues to promote its Amazon wish list for in-kind donations, where it continues to obtain gifts, and held a winter jacket drive that received over 15 jackets and other warm winter gear for students. Moving forward, UW-Whitewater is working with its foundation to recruit donors, and one donor has already expressed interest in making a significant contribution to the program. UW-Whitewater also will continue with the Amazon wish list and UW-Whitewater Foundation alumni giving account.

Staffing

- Assistant Dean of Students
- Admissions Counselor
- Undergraduate Peer Mentor

Common Program Metrics

The grade point average of UW-Whitewater Fostering Success students was a 2.68 GPA in the fall 2023 semester and a 2.83 GPA in the spring 2024 semester. Out of the 17 students served in fall 2022, all 17 students were retained to the fall 2023 semester.



University-Specific Program Metrics

In addition to the common program metrics tracked by all universities, UW-Whitewater further evaluates the impact of programming in supporting student success by tracking the amount of touchpoints that are made with students.

Future Recruitment Strategies

UW-Whitewater has budgeted for welcome baskets. It has not given welcome baskets for several years but previously found they were an effective way to get students interested in the program. UW-Whitewater also will be doing early outreach, including communications in the summer and during the first week of classes.

Program Goals 2024-2025

- Have participating students evaluate the program and provide feedback on program needs.
- Recruit a higher number of students.
- Provide more scholarships.