ALLIANT ENERGY
Erroll B. Davis, Jr.
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

ALLIANT ENERGY
James R. Underkofler
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS

2026

ALLIANT ENERGY FOUNDATION AWARD CEREMONY



Alliant Energy™ Foundation

Thursday, October 29, 2026
Pyle Center, Alumni Lounge, 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
702 Langdon St, Madison, Wisconsin



Program Highlights

Ceremony 2:00 – 4:30 p.m. | Award Presentation 2:30 p.m.
In Attendance:
Andy Kitslaar, Executive Director, Alliant Energy Foundation

WELCOME

Johannes Britz, Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Universities of Wisconsin

ERROLL B. DAVIS, JR. ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Award History

Ben Lipari, Vice President of Commercial Operations, Alliant Energy

Award Presentation with Remarks by Recipients

Johannes Britz

Student Recipients

Sylvia Klotz, Business Administration, UW-Madison

Brian Vazquez Sanchez, Mechanical Engineering, UW-Madison

JAMES R. UNDERKOFLER EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS

Award History

Ben Lipari

Award Presentation with Remarks by Recipients

Johannes Britz

Faculty Recipients

Nick J. Balster, PhD, Professor, Soil and Environmental Sciences, UW-Madison

Miyeon Kwon, PhD, Professor, Department of Mathematics, UW-Platteville

Scott Mobley, PhD, Teaching Faculty II, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison

Austin Polebitski, PhD, PE, Professor, Department Chair, Civil and Environmental Engineering, UW-Platteville

ERROLL B. DAVIS, JR. ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

In 2006, the Alliant Energy Foundation established an endowed fund, the Alliant Energy Erroll B. Davis, Jr. Achievement Awards. These awards annually honor outstanding scholarship and community service of undergraduate students from traditionally underrepresented minority groups pursuing a degree in Business or Engineering at UW-Madison. The award is being presented this year to two students selected by UW-Madison during the spring semester of their junior year. The students receive the award upon graduation.

Alliant Energy established these awards to recognize and honor Erroll B. Davis, Jr. (August 1944–April 2026), former CEO of the Alliant Corporation. Mr. Davis was the first African American to head a "Business Week 1000" company. He was also named one of the "50 Most Powerful Black Executives in America" by Fortune magazine in 2002.

From 1987 to 1994, Mr. Davis served as a member of the Board of Regents for the University of Wisconsin System.

JAMES R. UNDERKOFLER EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS

In 1990, the Wisconsin Power and Light Foundation (Alliant Energy's Wisconsin Utility) established an endowed fund, the Alliant Energy James R. Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards. These awards honor outstanding faculty and academic staff whose dedication to teaching and ability to inspire students exemplify the best values of the Universities of Wisconsin. The awards are presented annually to up to four recipients who teach at UW universities within the company's service area. Candidates are selected by their home universities.

These awards were established to recognize and honor James R. Underkofler (1923–2015), who served Wisconsin Power and Light for more than 48 years, retiring as CEO and Chairman of the Board in 1990.

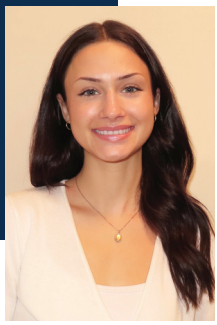
Mr. Underkofler was a staunch supporter of teaching excellence and believed in the importance of connecting public and private educational systems to enhance learning and motivate young minds. The James R. Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards reflect Alliant Energy's strong historical dedication to education and support the Universities of Wisconsin's longstanding commitment to excellence in teaching and providing high-quality education to people from throughout Wisconsin and the world.



2026

Alliant Energy Erroll B. Davis, Jr. Achievement Awards

RECIPIENT BIOGRAPHIES



SYLVIA KLOTZ

Sylvia Klotz plans to graduate in May 2027 from UW-Madison with a Bachelor of Business Administration, majoring in Accounting with a Certificate in Spanish for Business. As a freshman, Sylvia received direct admission to the Wisconsin School of Business and joined the Business Connect Learning Community, where she began exploring opportunities and connecting with fellow students. As a Mercile J. Lee Scholar, she has embraced the program's pillars of scholarship, leadership, and service on campus within a wide network of talented peers and alumni. She was also selected for the competitive Wisconsin International Scholars (WISc) program, which has strengthened her global awareness and cultural competency through international coursework, foreign language requirements, and engagement with peers' study abroad experiences. Sylvia served as vice president of Beta Alpha Psi, UW-Madison's accounting fraternity. Her leadership helped grow the organization from fewer than a dozen members into a full student chapter with an executive board, providing business students with opportunities for professional development and exposure to careers in accounting.

She applied her international coursework and Spanish fluency when she interned abroad in the previous summer through Sage Corps. She worked with an international team as a Business Development Intern for ChatWith.io, a tech startup founded in Madrid that creates WhatsApp tools for businesses around the globe. Most recently, Sylvia completed a summer Audit and Assurance internship with Deloitte in Milwaukee. She plans to sit for all four sections of the CPA exam to become a Certified Public Accountant before returning to Deloitte full-time next fall. Looking ahead, she is eager to build a career that draws on her global competency and fluency in Spanish to someday work on international client engagements.



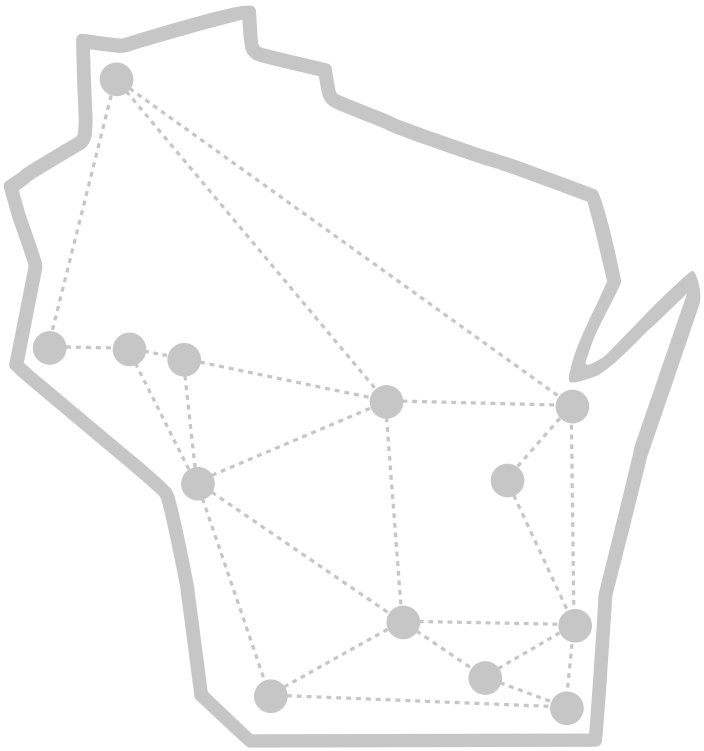
BRIAN VAZQUEZ SANCHEZ

Brian Vazquez Sanchez plans to graduate in December 2026 from UW-Madison with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. As a first-generation college student, Brian has developed a passion for engineering through hands-on experiences in design, manufacturing, controls, and entrepreneurship.

Brian has volunteered at St. Rose of Lima in Milwaukee, where he taught elementary school students STEM concepts through engaging activities such as building small-scale robots. He also founded MountMyBricks, a 3D printing business where he combines skills in product identification, 3D modeling, manufacturing, and business management to develop and sell products.

At UW-Madison, Brian worked as part of a team on a senior design project to develop a small autonomous bulldozer for the Simulation-Based Engineering Lab. The project provides a physical platform for real-world validation of simulations produced using Project Chrono and earned the team the Best Overall Award in Mechanical Engineering at UW-Madison. Brian has also gained professional engineering experience at Husco, a privately owned company specializing in hydraulic and electro-mechanical control systems, in roles including controls engineering and design engineering. There, he has applied his technical knowledge to real-world product development and engineering challenges.

Through these experiences, Brian has developed a strong combination of technical, entrepreneurial, and collaborative skills that he looks forward to bringing into his career as a mechanical engineer.



2026

Alliant Energy James R. Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards

RECIPIENT BIOGRAPHIES



NICK J. BALSTER

Dr. Nick J. Balster is a professor in Soil and Environmental Sciences at UW-Madison. He earned a PhD in Ecosystem Physiological Ecology from the University of Idaho, an MS in Forest Science from Michigan Technological University, and a BS in Forestry/ Environmental Science from North Carolina State University.

Dr. Balster employs a growth-oriented model of learning, inspiring students to go beyond their perceived limits and equipping them with critical thinking skills essential for success in life and the workforce. His teaching philosophy is rooted in the belief that learning is an iterative process where students feel empowered to persist, explore, and grow. Dr. Balster believes in the necessity of pairing effective teaching with individualized mentoring, connecting students to resources within and beyond the classroom to support students' growth, confidence, and success.

At UW-Madison, Dr. Balster developed the Madison Teaching and Learning Excellence (MTLE) program, a cohort-based, yearlong fellowship designed to help early-career faculty become efficient and effective instructors within a research-focused, decentralized institution. Since its launch, MTLE has become UW-Madison's flagship program in teaching and learning, serving more than 400 assistant professors from 82 departments and helping to spawn the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Mentoring under the Office of the Provost.

As chair of the Environmental Sciences Major at UW-Madison, a major that he helped to create, Dr. Balster has played a pivotal role in shaping one of the university's most interdisciplinary and rapidly growing programs. His mentorship has guided students toward careers in academia, environmental policy, and industry, many of whom credit his support as critical to their success. His efforts to connect K-12 students with STEM opportunities exemplify the Wisconsin Idea in action, bridging the gap between higher education and community engagement.



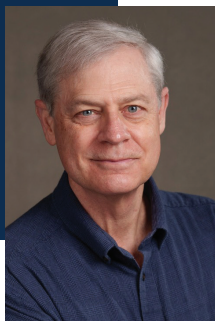
MIYEON KWON

Dr. Miyeon Kwon is a professor in the Department of Mathematics at UW-Platteville, where she has taught since 2004. She earned a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Alabama and a Master's in Mathematics Education from Korea National University of Education. Dr. Kwon teaches undergraduate courses across introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels; mentors students through advising and research; and conducts research in functional analysis.

Dr. Kwon uses strategies to encourage students to view mathematics as a way of thinking. She is recognized for exceptional course design and creating an engaging classroom atmosphere. Students highlight her qualities of clarity, approachability, enthusiasm, and support for diverse learning needs.

Dr. Kwon developed concept assessment tests for freshmen, a streaming course that improved student engagement and retention, and an asynchronous course tailored for flexible learning. She uses technology, such as the open educational resources of WeBWork and GeoGebra, to enable and promote active learning. Her scaffolded skill-building exercises support diverse learners, and the skeleton lecture notes she created maintain student engagement throughout a class period. The research projects she has developed contribute to interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

Dr. Kwon has attended both the Wisconsin meetings of the Mathematical Association of America and the National MathFest meetings, where she learns current and innovative teaching methods for her field. She contributed to the organization of the annual Mathematical Modeling Contest at UW-Platteville and has conducted exam seminars and served as a local supervisor for the national Putnam Mathematical Competition.



SCOTT MOBLEY

Dr. Scott Mobley is a teacher of history and political science at UW-Madison who explores the cultural, political, and technological influences that shape America's past and present. A retired naval officer and warship captain, he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and went on to earn an MA in national security affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School and a PhD in history from UW-Madison.

As a member of the Political Science Department teaching faculty, he teaches courses that examine international security and civil-military relations. Dr. Mobley grounds his pedagogy in a three-part model of cognitive insight, affective skills, and practical skills designed to help students cultivate enduring knowledge and skills. His learning-centered approach empowers students to acquire and apply knowledge themselves. Within this model, he promotes five essential values and practices that frame his approach to teaching: focusing on durable student learning rather than instructor teaching; assessing to promote learning and discourage student grade fixation; leveraging diversity as a foundation for learning; building trust and community in the classroom; and innovating at a measured pace to deepen the student learning experience.

Dr. Mobley incorporates classroom simulations and games to deepen students' understanding and to sharpen their affective skills. These activities model real-world friction, contingency, and consequences to stimulate critical thinking and build empathetic capacity. As Dr. Mobley describes the result: "The games transform abstract course concepts into lived experiences, making learning both rigorous and 'fun-enhanced.'"

Dr. Mobley wrote an award-winning book, *Progressives in Navy Blue, 1873-1898,* and his work has appeared in academic and professional journals, an edited volume, and influential online platforms.



AUSTIN POLEBITSKI

Dr. Austin Polebitski is a professor and department chair of Civil and Environmental Engineering at UW-Platteville. He earned his PhD and Master of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Washington, and his Bachelor of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Seattle University. Dr. Polebitski's current research interests include urban and rural water use, water resource systems management, the use of forecasting tools in short- and long-term decision making, and the impacts climate change will have on statewide natural resources. Prior to joining UW-Platteville, he was a research assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and worked for King County's Solid Waste Division.

Three themes have become central to his educational philosophy: hands-on/real-life applications, the importance of interdisciplinary work, and the use of technology to help students master complex material. He teaches students how to apply concepts through design work that reflects complexities of local environmental conditions and state codes. He seeks out regional environmental challenges and creates projects to expose students to these challenges.

In addition to teaching regular curriculum courses, he has created four courses to meet emerging topic areas for students, including courses on fish passage, hydropower infrastructure, data science/analytics, and uses and stakeholders of the upper Mississippi River. Over the last three years, he has been active with the Engineers Without Borders chapter at UW-Platteville, first as a lead mentor and now as the faculty advisor. In that time, he has traveled three times to Ghana with students to construct two new middle school buildings.

Dr. Polebitski is an active member of the Environmental & Water Resources Institute, the American Water Resources Association, and the International Conference on Engineering and Ecohydrology for Fish Passage. He is a registered Professional Engineer.




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