

**Profile of
Custodial Services
University of Wisconsin–River Falls
2022 Regents University Staff Excellence Program Award Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- The University Staff in Custodial Services have developed detailed work task guides and procedures to facilitate efficient and comprehensive custodial services. This group of employees not only do their cleaning tasks but also take great pride in serving the students, the campus community, and visitors.
- This program employs 50+ student custodian employees, including a student hiring coordinator and student trainers.
- Professional supervisors and custodians work together with the significant student custodian staff to provide excellent service to campus. A further benefit is that these students get co-curricular experience that will benefit them in their future careers.
- Custodial Services staff do more than traditional custodial work. They embody the spirit of campus core values and contribute positively to the university's mission of helping prepare students to be productive, creative, ethical, engaged citizens and leaders with an informed global perspective.
- Custodial units adapted their job responsibilities and increased cleaning procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic, finding new ways of doing their work, even when understaffed.
 - As one example, they helped to empty and clean a large residence hall in one week so that it was ready for COVID-19 quarantine and isolation.
 - Early in the pandemic, while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was still trying to firm up recommendations for personal protective equipment for employees, the UW-River Falls custodians were on campus every day keeping the campus clean, safe, and in operation, exhibiting their deep commitment to students and UW-River Falls.
- Campus visitors consistently say they are very impressed with the cleanliness of the university buildings. Many also comment on the friendly, welcoming personality of a custodian they may have asked for directions or encountered in a building.
- The university recently performed a study to analyze whether keeping custodial services in-house was the most sustainable long-term solution.
 - It was determined that it was sustainable, for financial reasons and because the university community expressed how much the Custodial Services employees contribute to the positive and caring campus climate.
- Custodial Services earned the first Chancellor's Recognition Award for University Staff in 2021.

In the words of colleagues:

- "Custodial Services plays a crucial role in supporting the success of UWRF students. Hundreds of our students benefit from campus employment in this department. The professional staff all go above and beyond to mentor the student employees, not just on how to perform the custodial work, but also in qualities like leadership, professionalism, and how to live out our campus values. The entire department is characterized by a strong work ethic combined with a deep understanding that we are all here for the students."
—*Maria Gallo, Chancellor, UW-River Falls*
- "The custodial staff working in the residence halls [are] dedicated to not only providing a clean living environment, but in creating relationships with the students in their individual buildings.... Each custodian received lots of positive feedback and stories about how they have helped students and made a difference in the building they work in."
—*Michelle Sponholz, Associate Director of Residence Life-Business Operations and Facilities, UW-River Falls*