

## BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

I.4. Research, Economic Development,  
and Innovation Committee

Thursday, April 10, 2014  
UW-River Falls  
University Center  
Riverview Ballroom BCD  
River Falls, Wisconsin

10:45 a.m. Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee

- a. Approval of the Minutes of the February 6, 2014 Meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee
- b. Economic Development Incentive Grant Project Update – UW-La Crosse Expansion of Statistical Consulting Center to Service Business Needs – Dr. Barbara Bennie
- c. LEAP Education/Business Compact Discussion – Led by Regent Tracy Hribar
- d. REDI Committee Strategic Plan Review and Discussion – Led by Regent Tim Higgins
- e. UW-River Falls Undergraduate Research, Economic Development, and Business Outreach Discussion – Led by Chancellor Dean Van Galen

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE GRANT PROJECT UPDATE –  
UW-LA CROSSE EXPANSION OF STATISTICAL CONSULTING CENTER TO  
SERVICE BUSINESS NEEDS**

**BACKGROUND**

University of Wisconsin System institutions are deploying \$22.5 million over the next two years to support increased economic growth and a stronger Wisconsin workforce. This effort represents the Wisconsin Idea. The UW Board of Regents approved the Economic Development Incentive Grant program last fall and reallocated existing university one-time funds to be used in fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for innovative and sustainable economic and workforce development projects.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Information only.

**DISCUSSION**

The UW-La Crosse Statistical Consulting Center received \$126,248 in funding under the Economic Development Incentive Grant Program to expand its program outreach to area businesses, an area of growth identified by the Center. Economic development will be addressed directly by providing professional statistical consulting services to Wisconsin businesses, industries, and organizations, as well as indirectly, through business growth that may result from these services. The program will provide an increased number of cooperative work experiences for students studying statistics at UW-La Crosse and will support an increase in the number of bachelor's and master's degrees awarded in statistics. Additionally, the funds will serve to develop and expand a client base from which sustainable revenues could be generated beyond the grant period through an economical, fee-for-service model.

Program discussion will be led by Dr. Barbara Bennie, Associate Professor of Mathematics at UW-La Crosse.

**RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

Not applicable.

## **LEAP EDUCATION/BUSINESS COMPACT DISCUSSION**

### **BACKGROUND**

The UW System is a leading partner with the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) in conjunction with its LEAP Campaign (Liberal Education and America's Promise). LEAP focuses on making high-quality learning a high-profile, national priority as employers increasingly seek college graduates with a broad set of critical-thinking and leadership skills and knowledge to help fuel the innovation-driven economy. AAC&U has conducted research into what employers are seeking in college graduates, which guides the LEAP Campaign initiatives in significant ways.

### **REQUESTED ACTION**

Information only.

### **DISCUSSION**

LEAP Wisconsin works to fulfill the program initiative goals by working to ensure that UW System students are provided with the essential learning tools and skills they will need to be successful in their work, civic, and personal lives.

The UW System is signatory to AAC&U's Employer-Educator Compact; this is one avenue by which the System hopes to conduct better advocacy. The Compact joins college, community college, and university presidents with local and national business and non-profit leaders to sponsor events and campus programs.

Signers commit to advocate and communicate LEAP messages, including the need for increasing student achievement and advocating for the role of higher education institutions in developing programs that provide students with broad knowledge and leadership skills, coupled with hands-on work experience.

Regent Tracy Hribar is the first Wisconsin business owner who has signed onto the Compact. Regent Hribar will discuss her role in launching this communication and advocacy role and the UW System efforts to broaden and expand its reach and influence with small and large business owners and organizations statewide.

### **RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

Not applicable.

## **REDI COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

### **BACKGROUND**

At the June 6, 2013 meeting of the UW System Board of Regents, President Michael Falbo directed Board Committees to review and affirm their goals and priorities. At the August 26, 2013 and December 6, 2013 meetings of the REDI Committee, Regent Tim Higgins led discussions of the REDI Committee planning, performance tracking, and strategic initiatives. In his follow-up reporting to the Board, he noted that the Committee had continued to make progress toward setting and achieving goals in line with its strategic priorities.

### **REQUESTED ACTION**

For discussion only.

### **DISCUSSION**

The discussion will focus on specific REDI Committee program elements and performance milestones. In December 2012, the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee adopted a strategic plan that provided a practical and quantifiable road map with a focus on three goals:

- Raising the awareness of and commitment to research, economic development, and innovation by the UW System;
- Identifying and building stronger connections that link UW System talent and research activities with established businesses, entrepreneurs, economic development agencies, and other resources for capital; and
- Accelerating investment in UW-generated innovations so that ideas can be more rapidly developed and businesses can be built more quickly.

These goals reflect the university's commitment to the Wisconsin Idea, whereby the boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the state. The action plan includes 20 specific recommendations designed to energize and guide the development of programs, policies, and initiatives that are characterized by collaborative outreach to a wide range of stakeholders. These include Chancellors, Provosts, faculty, academic staff, students, existing and start-up enterprises, governmental agencies, and the general public.

Strategies outlined in this plan relate directly to leveraging the talent pool across the UW System with a focus on business creation and retention, including the facilitation of research, technology transfer, and business innovation.

Progress toward goal completion is reported to the REDI Committee at each regularly scheduled meeting, as is reflected in the attached report. To date, the plan has led the implementation of the 2013-2015 Economic Development Incentive Grants, recapitalization of WiSys, and has generated matching grants and in-kind contributions of nearly \$4.5 million from statewide business and industry partners in key industry priority sectors and from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC).

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Information only.

**RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

Not applicable.

**UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT RESEARCH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
AND INNOVATION AT UW-RIVER FALLS**

**BACKGROUND**

The St. Croix Valley has a dynamic economy and includes a rapidly growing region of Wisconsin. There is great opportunity for UW-River Falls to continue to increase engagement with regional businesses, and to provide opportunities for students to participate in internships and to learn about business and entrepreneurship.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Information only.

**DISCUSSION**

UW-River Falls recently opened the Center for Business Innovation and Development (CIBD) in space provided by the City of River Falls. The CIBD will provide services to the region's businesses and entrepreneurs through the Small Business Development Center and through the director of the new CIBD, an economic development specialist. The director of the CIBD will work with regional Economic Development Corporations (EDCs) and will connect students enrolled in the College of Business and Economics' new full-time MBA program with regional businesses to work on projects as part of their degree requirements. Establishing the CIBD is part of a larger vision for a business incubator that UW-River Falls is developing in partnership with the City of River Falls, regional EDCs, and business partners.

Additionally, UW-River Falls has developed strengthened partnerships with specific high-growth businesses in River Falls that has led to:

- Paid internships for students as part of a structured opportunity to learn about and interact with leaders of high-growth businesses;
- A program for entrepreneurs and leading scientists from high-growth businesses to teach a course at UW-River Falls that connects business with the student's area of academic study.

The following individuals will join Chancellor Dean Van Galen to provide additional information on these initiatives and/or be available to answer questions:

- Shannon Zimmerman, founder and CEO of Sajan, and member of UW-River Falls Chancellor's Advisory Council and UW-River Falls Foundation Board of Directors
- Glenn Potts, Dean of the College of Business and Economics, UW-River Falls
- Scot Simpson, City Administrator, City of River Falls

**RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

Not applicable.