

Minutes of the Research, Economic Development & Innovation Committee
University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
June 7, 2018

Chair Dr. Eve Hall convened the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 10:50 a.m. Regents Hall, Tyler, and Millner were present. Also, in attendance: Regent Cris Peterson, Dave Brukardt, and Rebecca Deschane.

a) Approval of the Minutes of the April 5, 2018 Meeting of the Research, Economic Development and Innovation Committee

Regent Hall asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2018 REDI Committee meeting. Motion made by Regent Tyler, seconded by Regent Millner, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

b) UW-Milwaukee: Building UWM's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Engine. Chancellor Mark Mone opened the UWM presentation.

Brian Thompson, President, UWM Research Foundation and Director, Lubar Entrepreneurship Center, provided an update on UWM's efforts to increase engagement with local, regional, and global business entities. UWM has established an international reputation for excellence in research, community engagement, teaching, and entrepreneurship. Over the past several years, UWM has made significant strides in providing opportunities for students to participate in internships and other hands-on work experiences. Brian Thompson was joined by several distinguished colleagues:

- Alexander Arnold, Ph.D., Associate Professor, UWM Chemistry & Biochemistry
- Ilya Avdeev, Ph.D., Co-Founder and Executive Director, UWM Student Startup Challenge
- Doug Stafford, Ph.D., Director, Milwaukee Institute for Drug Discovery
- James Van Eerden, UWM Student Affairs IT Intern, Light Fruit Company – UWM Student Startup
- Taffanie Johnson, Untangle – UWM Student Social Innovation Startup

Presenters highlighted UWM's issuance of 73 product and service licensing and options agreements; the development of 15 student and faculty startup companies; and the growth of business partnerships with Rockwell, Eaton, Microsoft, Johnson Controls, and others. Also highlighted: the support from Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) for the development of the Connected Systems Institute being developed on campus to support artificial intelligence initiatives.

Doug Stafford described the work of Pantherics, an innovative drug design company that delivers innovative solutions for asthma sufferers. Stafford noted his company is the beneficiary of a 2013 REDI Committee incentive grant for innovation in chemistry. He highlighted his company as a prime example of university success in moving innovative concepts from the academic laboratory to product commercialization.

Thompson noted progress on the construction of the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center. Funding is provided by Sheldon Lubar, who is a visionary Milwaukee business leader. Ilya Avdeev highlighted the campus focus on student entrepreneurship through UWM initiatives with K-12 student entrepreneurs. Finally, UWM student James Van Eerden described his successful startup “Light Fruit Company,” which produces a tasty, dehydrated watermelon snack.

c) UW System: Preparing for the Future – Perspectives on How Internships Help Build a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

A panel of distinguished Milwaukee-area leaders and students discussed the importance of internships designed to grow workforce development in Wisconsin. Panelists included:

- Griselda Aldrete, President & CEO, Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee (HPGM)
- John Daniels, Chairman Emeritus, Quarles & Brady and Founder of MKE Fellows Program
- Michael Diego Vazquez, UWM Student and Milwaukee County Court Intern
- Payton Wade, UW-Madison Junior Majoring in Business and Intern with the Milwaukee Bucks, Community Relationships Program

One of the aspirational goals of the UW System Strategic framework, *2020FWD*, is for students of various backgrounds to have numerous pathways to internship experiences. The REDI committee heard a report on two existing internship programs: one through the MKE Fellows Initiative and one through the Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee.

Chair Eve Hall opened the panel discussion with this question: With UW System efforts to increase its focus on talent development, career readiness and internships, how do we do it better?

John Daniels said it is critical to have senior leadership support on campus. He thanked President Ray Cross and the UW System for steadily increasing support of internships. John Daniel called this the single best method for entry into the work world. He noted that the MKE Fellows program continues to expand across the UW System campus. In his experience with MKE Fellows program, the diverse student participants have achieved graduation rates exceeding 80 percent.

Griselda Aldrete highlighted the need to meet students where they are, beginning in the freshman year. Her organization has worked with 11 students across the region, including chapters at UWM and UW-Madison. UW-Madison student Payton Wade highlighted her highly positive experience as an intern with the Milwaukee Bucks. UWM student Michael Diego Vazquez said his internship experience, the summer after his freshman year at the Milwaukee County Court System, was a significant factor in building his communication and leadership skills.

Regent Regina Millner thanked John Daniels and thanked Michael for “demystifying” internships. Regent Mark Tyler commented that interns in his company are securing more than one experience while in school and noted this is becoming more common.

Dr. Eve Hall concluded the meeting by reiterating UW System support for internships. She mentioned that UW System's Carl Hampton will lead an exploratory initiative to find new ways to connect diverse students with employers who can provide internships. This effort will focus on determining best pathways forward, including the prospect for private funding and match grants to support external internship programs for UW System students along the lines of the MKE Fellows program described by John Daniels.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.