

**MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION COMMITTEE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS**

Thursday, April 8, 2021
WebEx Videoconference

Regent Bob Atwell called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. Regents Cris Peterson, Eve Hall, Becky Levzow and Kyle Weatherly were present. Regent Atwell provided an opportunity for committee members to declare any conflicts of interest; none were so stated.

a. Approval of the minutes of the February 4, 2021 meeting.

On a motion by Regent Hall and seconded by Regent Weatherly, the minutes of the February 4, 2021, REDI Committee meeting were unanimously approved.

b. UW-Stout: How a Polytechnic Applies 21st Century Technology in the Development of Innovative Solutions to Support Workforce and Economic Growth

Randy Hulke, Manufacturing Outreach Center (MOC) director at UW-Stout, set the stage for this presentation and introduced Chancellor Katherine Frank, who highlighted the ingenuity and teamwork of the campus presenters. As Chancellor Frank said, Wisconsin's polytechnic teaches students to "take a problem and turn it sideways." She noted that 100% of UW-Stout students graduate with at least one "experiential" opportunity that prepares them to be highly sought after in the workforce. UW-Stout faculty, staff, and students demonstrated how cross-disciplinary collaboration has resulted in students using applied learning to solve immediate problems in an industry setting. They previewed the "Buzz Digital Project," an online simulation that incorporates "lean" manufacturing principles to shift learning that is typically completed in-person to a virtual format.

Ted Theyerl, a UW-Stout senior manufacturing engineering expert, said his son's video game originally inspired the idea for the simulation, and it is among the first of its kind to use gaming simulations as an instructional training tool for use in manufacturing settings. Significantly, the development of this simulation has led to co-op and internship opportunities for students in addition to providing a path to valuable industry solutions which can be scaled and adapted to a variety of situations all across the U.S.A.

c. UW System Regent Scholar Grants

President Thompson joined the REDI Committee to honor UW System's newly selected Regent Scholar award recipients. This program provides prestigious, one-time grants to individual faculty or campus programs that undertake undergraduate research projects having the potential to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and talent development. Faculty from across UW System submitted entries for consideration and the submissions were evaluated by a statewide committee of reviewers from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and from industry leaders with technical, scientific, and business backgrounds. WiSys provided project oversight and Regent Kyle Weatherly served as chair of the evaluation committee.

Each year, innovative faculty selected for the award represent the best and brightest among talented faculty across UW System. Following individual video vignettes of their work, each of the faculty scholars spoke and highlighted the benefit of award funding that allows them to extend research opportunities to undergraduate students much earlier in their academic careers, and in some cases, to include first-year students.

The 2021 Regent Scholars include Dr. Francis Mann from UW-Parkside, Dr. Haijian Sun of UW-Whitewater, and Dr. Ava Udvardia of UW-Milwaukee. Their respective work in biology, autonomous vehicles and gene therapy serve as prime examples of what President Thompson calls the New Wisconsin Idea, as UW System campuses and their business partners combine the power of research and collaboration to improve lives, provide innovative solutions, and to build a strong economic future for all Wisconsin residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.