

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

Thursday, April 7, 2022
UW-Stevens Point and WebEx Videoconference

REDI Chair Bob Atwell called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

Regents Atwell, Colón, Pasch, Peterson, and Tucker all were present; 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 10, 2022, meeting

The minutes of the February 10, 2022, REDI Committee meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Regent Pasch and seconded by Regent Colón.

b) UW System Regent Scholar Grants

Regent Vice President Karen Walsh joined the REDI Committee to honor UW System's newly selected Regent Scholar faculty 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. WiSys President Arjun Sanga noted that 16 faculty innovators 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.

Chair Atwell said that 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 was introduced by their own respective campus leaders (Chancellors and Provosts) and highlighted the benefit of the award funding that allows them to extend research opportunities and internships to undergraduate students much earlier in their academic careers, and in some cases, to include first-year students.

The 2022 Regent Scholars include Dr. Todd Hillhouse from UW-Green Bay, Dr. John Chan of UW Oshkosh, and Dr. Mark Levenstein of UW-Platteville. Their respective work in researching novel drugs to alleviate pain without addictive opioids, to support new antiparasitic drugs to support for disease resistance, and to develop new agrochemicals for crop protection all serve as prime examples of the Wisconsin Idea.

Chancellor Mike Alexander emphasized the dedication and impact of the work being done by his faculty award recipient and remarked that UW-Green Bay's Regent Scholar Dr. Chan has been with the university only for two years and accomplished his excellent work entirely during the pandemic. Chancellor Dennis Shields said that Dr. Levenstein's work is emblematic of a highly collaborative culture focused on supporting students to learn, to ask questions, and to discover. He said this culture attracts researchers such as Dr. Levenstein to the Platteville campus. Bob Atwell closed the segment by commenting on the inspirational nature and creative energies Regent Scholar recipients bring to the classroom and to student lab experiences, which facilitates excellent outcomes.

c) UW-Stevens Point Presentation on Building Prosperous Communities Through Research, Collaboration, and Innovation

College of Natural Resources Dean Brian Sloss introduced Student Regent Brianna Tucker along with a team of three UW-Stevens Point student presenters who provided an update on how their university applies 21st century education practices to build collaboration and to develop innovative solutions to support workforce development and economic growth. Together, they consistently articulated “sustainability” as a core tenet of the university, noting that it is a purpose-driven belief and not just a phrase. This sensitivity is deeply embedded both within the curriculum and in the work that faculty, staff, and students do on campus, and notably, within the community and well beyond.

Third-year forestry student Abigail Kreger pointed out that UW-Stevens Point was the first UW school to be certified as a “bee” campus, supporting the health of natural pollinators essential to agricultural production. Art student John Gonzales discussed the impact of putting on a dramatic production in a natural setting and its ability to powerfully help convey what is possible. Doctoral candidate Chelsea Dresen highlighted efforts to make the state’s widely heralded “Ice Age Trail” more open and accessible for marginalized communities.

Student Regent Tucker noted the long-term positive impact of the university’s strong partnership with stakeholders in the community and across the region, providing involvement and support particularly in rural and remote areas. Dean Sloss pointed out that everyone at UW-Stevens Point considers it a deep measure of pride for how well the university (and its campuses at Marshfield and Wausau) have embedded themselves as valued partners and collaborators across Central Wisconsin.

Regent Atwell thanked the presenters and adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.