

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

Thursday June 9, 2022
UW-Milwaukee and WebEx Videoconference

REDI Chair Bob Atwell called the meeting to order at 8:46 a.m.

Regents Atwell, Colón, and Peterson 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 April 7, 2022, meeting

The minutes of the April 7, 2022, REDI Committee meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Regent Peterson and seconded by Regent Colón.

Before introducing the first discussion item, Regent Atwell thanked David Brukaradt for 10 years of service as UW System's Associate Vice President of Corporate Relations and Economic Engagement. Regent Atwell acknowledged Dave's role in furthering the third mission of the university in terms of outreach and community service. Brukaradt thanked the Regents for their enduring efforts to support faculty, staff, and student success in the areas of innovation, entrepreneurship, and talent development, all of which expand opportunities for career success, business collaboration, and economic growth for Wisconsin.

b) UW-Milwaukee: The Impact of Innovative Partnerships at UWM

The UWM presenter team, led by Senior Executive Director Jennifer Abele, outlined a series of high-profile initiatives introduced in recent years to highlight UWM's groundbreaking efforts to connect classrooms to the workforce and university-developed research to the market.

These efforts include the Connected Systems Institute with partners such as Rockwell and Microsoft, and the Northwestern Mutual Data Science Institute. Abele said an overall objective is to ensure every UWM degree is to some extent multidisciplinary and includes a "data element" in it. To help support increased employer interest in data-savvy student graduates, UWM has created two new degree programs, at the bachelor's and master's levels.

The UWM presenters highlighted a series of innovative Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives which actively encourage increased purchasing from underserved communities and the hiring of diverse UWM student talent by Milwaukee employers. The JobsWork MKE program, for example, focuses on providing economic lift in eight zip codes where 33 percent of residents live in poverty. As part of this effort, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) also provides technical assistance to support businesses seeking contracts or who may want to be suppliers. Regent Colón thanked the presenters for their inspiring work and encouraged efforts to further support Latino populations within the context of the programs highlighted.

The committee also heard an update on the Milwaukee Anchor Collaborative, which is working with more than 50 companies on a pilot program to provide paid internships for students who live and work in underserved regions within the City of Milwaukee. This initiative provides a high level of

service to participating partners, including networking events, interview and onboarding assistance for students, and payroll administrative support for employers. Regent Atwell suggested that the program might more quickly become self-sustaining if the fees to employers were increased. Chancellor Mone noted that the high level of demand for interns and baccalaureate talent offers opportunities for UWM to further leverage its initial successes for additional program expansion. The hope is for this innovative, “proof of concept” initiative to set the stage for a broad expansion of similar initiatives at UWM and across UW System.

c) UW-Stout: Strategic Visioning Energizes Career Pathways and Industry Outreach

UW-Stout’s unique structure as Wisconsin’s (and Minnesota’s) only polytechnic, along with its mission-driven attention to external stakeholder priorities, helps the institution to facilitate external engagement. Chancellor Katherine Frank led the REDI presentation which also included comments from Provost Glendalí Rodríguez and two business leaders who are alumni. They are a father and son team who run Moore Construction, a successful contracting business based in Menominee Falls, which employs several additional UW-Stout graduates. The polytechnic’s 98.4% placement rate is unsurpassed in both the UW System and among Wisconsin’s Technical Colleges. Recent data from the National Association for Career Mobility Survey also show that UW-Stout is a leader nationally in areas connected with career placement and alumni satisfaction. Its graduates report an average \$52,000 starting salary with 74 percent of UW-Stout students accepting a position from one to six months prior to graduation.

As a polytechnic, Stout’s educational framework across all majors results in graduates equipped with a career-focused education. This occurs through applied learning and active collaboration with business partners across every curriculum sequence. To highlight how deeply embedded this approach is within the institution’s DNA, Chancellor Frank presented a “first destination report” issued by UW-Stout in 1937, long before most other institutions were thinking about career placements.

Provost Rodríguez described Stout’s “experiential learning” approach which puts industry experienced professors in the classrooms and places students into business settings early in their careers. The provost herself is a registered architect, a fact highlighted by one of the other UW-Stout speakers who had taken her class as an undergraduate several years earlier. In the discussion afterwards, Chancellor Frank also highlighted UW-Stout’s ability to provide a proper balance of the technical aspects and liberal arts courses through the polytechnic education process. This blended approach ensures Stout’s graduates hone their soft skills, their critical thinking abilities, and their leadership skills which are highly sought by employers. UW-Stout’s FOCUS 2030 strategic plan includes the goal of producing “triple threat” graduates—students who graduate with a degree, plus experiential learning, and a professional certification.

In closing, REDI Chair Bob Atwell commended both UWM and UW-Stout for their forward-thinking, collaborative approach to education and business outreach. He also noted these two campuses are working together on some of the initiatives discussed during the meeting. Regent Atwell said he is encouraged to see this type of cross-functional, cross-organizational behavior more frequently becoming the norm, and not the exception, across UW System. Kudos to all for their efforts in this regard, he said.

Regent Atwell thanked the presenters and adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.