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UW System Prepares Young Professionals in Madison

By Dr. Ray Cross

President, University of Wisconsin System

“Being able to shadow officers during their daily meetings and tasks helped me better understand how an embassy functions. I was able to get advice from current professionals and build my network of contacts.”

-Ruth Lied, UW-Madison Student

Young professionals are a vital component of Wisconsin’s workforce and economy. The UW System continually works to ensure that students are prepared to enter the workplace and meet the needs of employers upon graduation.

This week, the UW System joins the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the rest of the state in celebrating Young Professionals Week (YP Week). YPWeek recognizes the contributions young professionals make in Wisconsin – and many of them developed their skills and knowledge on a UW System campus.

The UW System graduates more than 36,500 degree-holders every year, contributing more than \$41 million each and every day to our economy. However, data shows that over the next 30 years, 95% of Wisconsin’s population growth will be people age 65 and older, while the state’s working age population between the ages of 18 and 64 is projected to remain essentially flat.

The UW System remains focused on creating the best educational opportunities possible to provide students with the experience, skills, and knowledge they need to have an immediate impact in our current and future economy and workforce. To that end, a goal in the UW System’s [2020FWD strategic framework](#) is to provide every student with the opportunity to experience at least two high-impact learning practices, including internships and undergraduate research. Every time a student interns with a Wisconsin employer, the likelihood they will stay in Wisconsin state increases because internships often turn into job offers.

Ruth Lied is a senior at UW-Madison preparing to enter the workforce as young professional with degrees in International Studies and French. Last summer, Ruth worked as an intern at the U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia, through the U.S. State Department. Her time at the U.S. embassy provided invaluable insight into which positions she might want to pursue and how to navigate the application process. She is interested in a career in diplomacy after graduation.

About eighty-five percent of UW System students stay in Wisconsin after graduation, raising their families and keeping Wisconsin a great place to live and work. We will continue to focus on a quality education, and we are proud UW-related internships create a meaningful job experience for many young professionals across our state.

Dr. Ray Cross is the seventh president of the University of Wisconsin System. He also served as Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin Colleges and University of Wisconsin–Extension from 2011-2014. Cross served with the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was awarded four medals for his service.

- Visit UW System’s [For Wisconsin](#) webpage for more stories about how the UW is shaping young professionals across Wisconsin
- Visit www.ypweek.com for more information on YP Week
- To connect with young professionals in Madison, please visit <http://www.ypweek.com/communities/madison>.

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