



## University Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

# Investment in UW System capital projects would increase STEM and health graduates, accelerate business growth in local communities

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MADISON, Wis.—The University of Wisconsin System is seeking investment in campus infrastructure that would modernize classroom and lab space; lead to an increase in science, engineering, technology, mathematics (STEM) and health graduates; and accelerate business growth in local communities.

Over the last 10 years, the number of UW System graduates in STEM and health programs grew by more than 40 percent.

“Not only do we need classroom and lab space for the next generation of students, some of our programs are bursting at the seams,” said UW System President Tommy Thompson. “With improved and sometimes new buildings, our universities will be better positioned to assist their communities and the entire state in growing a modern economy.”

The business community agrees.

### **UW-River Falls Science and Technology Innovation Center**

“We have a longstanding relationship with UWRF ... and collaborate with them in many ways. For example, their expertise was invaluable to our businesses during the pandemic, and the region as a whole benefits from their presence. Our view is UWRF is the engine that drives our western Wisconsin economy in the fastest growing part of the state. This proposed project would only enhance that and address key workforce shortage issues facing our employers.”

—Rob Kreibich, Executive Director, New Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce

### **UW-Green Bay Cofrin Technology & Education Center**

“The Cofrin Technology & Education Center will be the technology and Innovation hub for the UW-Green Bay campus. Through innovative maker spaces, interactive labs, and cooperative technology studios, the new Cofrin Technology & Education Center will become an important piece of the growing technology innovation space in the Northeast Wisconsin economy.”

—Craig Dickman, Managing Director, Titledown Tech

### **UW-La Crosse Prairie Springs Science Center, Phase II**

“We have a very high demand and critical need for a workforce that is well-prepared and educated for STEM-centered jobs (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). With

the completion of the new science center, graduates from UW-La Crosse will be better equipped with the skills and experiences needed to fill essential careers based in technology, engineering, and advanced manufacturing. Now more than ever, we need graduates who approach problems from all contexts using quantitative, collaborative, innovative, and logical analysis rooted in STEM.”

—Steve Loehr, Vice President of Support Center Operations, Kwik Trip, Inc.

#### **UW-Milwaukee Northwest Quadrant Health Sciences**

“This project will commence a critically important expansion of needed health care talent, research and partnership in Wisconsin. UWM plays a critical role in preparing Wisconsin’s next generation of highly skilled health care professionals. Remodeling the Health Sciences Building (will lead to) offering a faster and more efficient path to graduation.”

—Dr. John R. Raymond, President and CEO, Medical College of Wisconsin

#### **UW-Madison Engineering Building Replacement, Phase I**

“We can’t grow our company without continuing to innovate and develop new technologies, and we want more UW-Madison engineers coming in to help us do that.”

—John Pfeifer, President and CEO, Oshkosh Corporation

Previous investments in UW System infrastructure are now paying dividends, as evidenced by UW-Parkside’s SC Johnson Integrated Science Lab. UW-Parkside professors and students use the lab in collaboration with local industry.

“These renovated spaces have given our faculty and teaching staff the opportunity to be innovative in teaching and laboratory exercises for their courses, allowed faculty to engage students in forefront research within their fields with 21<sup>st</sup>-century tools, and enabled independent study activities for students with top-of-the-line scientific instrumentation. Students are taught and work with instrumentation they will see upon graduation and employment in their fields. The concept of an integrated science laboratory, outfitted with modern scientific equipment, is encouraging cross-disciplinary work, attracting partnership with, and providing services to, small businesses in the region. These partnerships and services present independent study and internship opportunities for our students, leading to employment upon graduation.”

—Emmanuel O. Otu, Dean, College of Natural and Health Sciences

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*The University of Wisconsin System serves approximately 165,000 students. Awarding nearly 37,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin’s talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. Nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin’s culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.*

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