



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

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NEWS RELEASE

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WCMA Announces New and Advancing Staff as Member Services Grow

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) has welcomed Grace Atherton as its new Director of Communications. In this position, Atherton will guide the organization’s messaging, develop a variety of outreach materials and content, and communicate with consumer and industry media outlets.

Atherton joins the member services team led by Rebekah Sweeney, WCMA Senior Director, Programs & Policy, and overseen by Executive Director John Umhoefer. These team members, along with Business and Membership Manager Sara Schmidt and a new supporting coordinator, will expand WCMA communications, education programming, and advocacy efforts.

“WCMA delivers member services that are unmatched in the industry, from educational resources and networking opportunities, to targeted advocacy and business development grant opportunities,” said John Umhoefer, WCMA Executive Director. “During this time of growth for the industry and our organization, we’re investing in extraordinary people to build new ways for members to engage with WCMA and improve their teams and businesses.”

Most recently, Atherton served as the Communications Director at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP). Previously, she managed the legislative office of State Representative Dave Considine during his first two terms, including his time as ranking member on the Assembly Agriculture Committee. Atherton hails from Madison and graduated from the University of Wisconsin.

“I’m grateful and excited to join the WCMA team. Every day, dairy processors bring high-quality food and so much more to consumers around the world. I am honored to have the opportunity to support, elevate, and share their work,” Atherton stated.

In this expanded structure for member services at WCMA, Rebekah Sweeney advances to the Senior Director, Programs & Policy role to lead the organization’s work in services, outreach, and advocacy. Sara Schmidt advances to Business and Membership Manager to lead a new Membership Committee that will bring fresh ideas for programs and membership to WCMA.

To learn more about WCMA services and membership, visit WisCheeseMakers.org.

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Media Note: Please feel free to use the attached head shot of Grace Atherton in connection with this news release.

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