

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 7, 2019

Media contact:
Deb Dorshorst - WIPPS
Mobile: 715-581-6324
ddorshorst@uwsa.edu

WIPPS launches civic journalism training program for central Wisconsin youth

With the rise of the 24-hour news cycle, audience-tailored and politicized news, public trust in the media is at an all-time low. While website clicks and cable news ratings are up, this does not mean the public is better informed or there is more rational debate. To counteract the current media environment, the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service, in partnership with Midwest Communications' WSAU radio, is launching a civic journalism internship/training program for youth in grades 10-12.

"The public's distrust of the media is worsened by a growing vacuum of journalism and reliable news sources at the local level," said Eric Giordano, WIPPS executive director. "Regional media consolidation and the flight of local news sources is creating 'news deserts' across many areas of Wisconsin. Unless we can reverse these trends, we risk raising a new generation of uninformed and disengaged citizens - and declining health in democracy generally."

The WIPPS/WSAU Student Journalism Program will train motivated high school students to become reporters for local radio stations and provide "real world" training in writing, editing and interview techniques, as well as broadcasting and journalism ethics.

"These student reporters will be able to interact with radio broadcast professionals at WSAU 550 AM, have their stories read, watched and heard by the public and get paid for their work," said Chris Conley, operations manager for Midwest Communications-Wausau/Central Wisconsin.

"We are excited to offer this opportunity to area youth, not only because it will invigorate their involvement in the community, but also reinvigorate local news journalism and improve perceptions of journalism as a profession," Conley said.

Several students have already signed on for the program, and written local stories.

“I wanted to get involved with this project because I want to pursue a major in journalism/broadcasting in college,” said Amber Marten. “I reported for my high school newspaper for three years, which helped me find my passion for journalism, and am very excited to be a part of this program.”

Adam Peterson wanted to hone his writing skills, while gaining practical experience in the field of journalism. “I hope to be able to work on a few different ideas, and really start to understand the process involved with journalism and working in the media.”

Students of all backgrounds and abilities are encouraged to apply for the program. For more information, go to wipps.org/get-involved/student correspondent or email info@wipps.org.

###