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## **State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski Announces \$900,000 for Scholarships and Grants to UW System**

### *Funds Help Make College More Affordable for Wisconsin Students*

MADISON, Wis. - State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski and the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) announced today an annual distribution of \$900,000 for scholarships and grants for the University of Wisconsin System this year - *nearly doubling the amount from last year*. This distribution comes from the Normal School Fund, a trust fund managed by the BCPL.

"As college students embark on an unprecedented school year, I'm proud the BCPL is able to provide \$900,000 in scholarships and grants to help make college more affordable for Wisconsin students," said State Treasurer Godlewski. "As the Chair of the BCPL, we will continue to work to ensure our investments are managed effectively to ensure a strong return our beneficiaries can rely on year after year. I'm very proud that we were able to nearly double the distribution this year to help Wisconsin students."

This distribution provides funding for a variety of different programs and initiatives throughout the UW system. One of which is the Community Environmental Scholars Program (CESP) through the Nelson Institute at UW-Madison. This program connects students with community-based environmental organizations with a goal of linking students' passions for the environment with challenges their communities face. With funding from the Normal School Fund, between 25 and 30 CESP students receive substantial scholarships each semester. Treasurer Godlewski recently joined Matt Dannenberg, a recent CESP graduate and Board of Visitors member for the Nelson Institute, for a conversation about the impact of the program.

"Coming from a blue-collar family, paying for college was a big challenge. This scholarship allowed me to have more peace of mind and pay down my student loans by the time I turned 30," said Matt Dannenberg. "The financial stability also allowed me to embark on a career I was passionate about."

With the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the financial security of many Wisconsinites, it is even more significant that the BCPL is able to provide this record distribution that will help students complete their education and reduce the need for student loans. This distribution is split among four beneficiaries in the UW system; the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at UW-Madison, UW-Stevens Point's environmental program, UW Extension, and merit-based scholarships for Wisconsin residents attending UW schools.

*The federal government provided Wisconsin with a grant of over 3 million acres of land, a majority of which were sold before 1900. The profits from these sales went to establish the Normal School Fund, which developed into an important source of funding for normal schools in Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin, as the successor of the original normal schools, is the beneficiary of the Normal School Fund.*

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