

THE WISCONSIN INDEPENDENT

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)

WINTER 2021-2022 VOL. 53 NO. 4



INDEPENDENT INSIGHTS

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- Wisconsin Lutheran College

WAICU-member colleges and universities have long had a commitment to addressing issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Building on a rich history of moral and cultural commitment, these initiatives reflect a belief in educational opportunity and that education can change the world. Early ties to abolitionists and involvement in the sometimes dangerous civil rights protests of the 1960's are but two examples. I am in awe!

The WAICU Multicultural Group, comprised of faculty, staff, and students at WAICU colleges and universities, stepped up to organize an annual student diversity workshop. The leadership comes from within communities who have been left behind. WAICU's role is to support and respond. Recently, WAICU has taken our efforts to the next level. WAICU applied for and received a First

Opportunity Partners Grant from The Council on Independent Colleges (CIC) to create a WAICU Advancement Diversity Internship program to enhance diversity efforts among staff within WAICU-member Advancement offices.

WAICU members have identified a lack of a diverse pool of candidates applying for positions in advancement. The lack of diversity may be due to limited awareness of these types of careers and the opportunities that exist. Sometimes underserved communities embrace self-taught, individualized, approaches to giving. The systematic tradition of giving may be unfamiliar to them. For these and other reasons, individuals of color may not consider philanthropy as a career path.

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WAICU president to retire

Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President/CEO of WAICU, has announced that he plans to retire in the summer of 2022.

For nearly 17 years, Wegenke worked in economic development in the administrations of five Wisconsin Governors: Patrick Lucey, Martin J. Schreiber, Lee S. Dreyfus, Tony Earl, and Tommy Thompson, and then, starting in January 1992, he began over 30 years of successful higher education leadership with WAICU.

Wegenke stated, "I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to lead in the context of two of the most important issues of our times: economic development and education. A lot has happened in my more than 30 years as President of WAICU. WAICU's mission is 'Working together for educational opportunity,' and Wisconsin Grants totaling \$844,179,815 have gone to 478,066 Wisconsin college students during my tenure."

Nationally, WAICU has been known for its creative collaborative services—called "transformative" in the Congressional report, the *College Cost Crisis*. The 45+ cost-saving programs now in place have saved over \$230 million for WAICU-members and made WAICU a model for controlling college costs.

Wegenke, having served under 88 WAICU-member presidents, credits his success to two factors: The presidents of the 23 private, nonprofit colleges who serve as WAICU's Board of Directors "have been entrepreneurial risk takers and supported me over the years. I have also been the beneficiary of a dedicated and hardworking staff."

A national search firm will be conducting the recruitment process. The formal search will begin in early 2022, and the transition will be in July/August 2022.

Tom Still, President of the Wisconsin Technology Council said in a statement: "Rolf Wegenke should ... be remembered as a dedicated public servant from before his tenure with WAICU began, working in key economic development roles during the administrations of five Wisconsin governors, both Democrat and Republican. That experience helped Wegenke envision what Wisconsin's economy should become over time."

A president on the WAICU Board emphasized how much respect the Board has for Wegenke's leadership and integrity, and that the respect in which Wegenke is held all across the country benefits all of us. He said Wegenke is "irreplaceable in many ways" and expressed "gratitude and support" for Wegenke's leadership especially during challenging times.

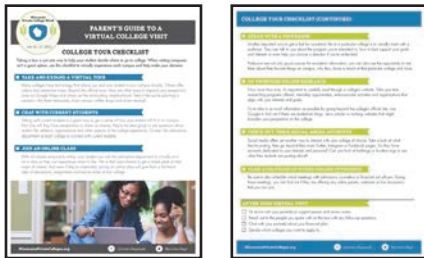
MID-YEAR COMMENCEMENTS

Guides to virtual college visits for parents and students

Visit the Student Resources section on www.WisconsinPrivateColleges.org to download a college tour checklist.

Two versions are available: one for students, and one for parents and support people.

The guides suggest questions to ask and what to research online during the college search process.



Alverno College fall commencement will be held Saturday, December 18, 2021, in the Pitman Theatre.

Concordia University fall commencement will be held Saturday, December 18, 2021, in the R. John Buuck Field House.

Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) fall commencement was held November 20, 2021. Alumna Dana Guthrie '10 delivered the keynote address. MSOE's Winter commencement will be Saturday, February 26, 2022.

Mount Mary University's commencement will take place in-person at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, December 11, 2021, in the Alumnae Dining Room, and will be live streamed and recorded.

Viterbo University's winter commencement is at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, December 18, 2021, in the Fine Arts Center Main Theatre.

Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) will hold its mid-year commencement ceremony on Thursday, December 16, 2021, in the college's Recreation Complex. Dr. Daniel Ebeling, professor of chemistry at WLC, will be the ceremony's keynote speaker.

Wisconsin Education Fairs (WEFs)



WAICU was pleased to be among more than 150 exhibitors at the in-person and virtual Fall 2021 Wisconsin Education Fairs (WEFs). Approximately 6,300 students registered for the fall fairs, and spring fairs will be held both in-person and online in March and April, 2022. For more information and to register, please visit: www.wefs.org.



Enthusiastic students at the 2021 in-person Wisconsin Education Fairs.



WAICU at the annual WSCA Conference

Again this year, WAICU was pleased to sponsor the Wisconsin School Counselors Association (WSCA) Conference. The conference, now in its 57th year, took place November 10-12, 2021 at the Kalahari Resort & Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells. This year's theme was "reUNITED: One Community, Together Again" and the event provided a wide array of professional development opportunities for over 1,200 school counselors. WAICU's booth featured resources and information from WAICU-member colleges and universities. Visit www.WSCAweb.org for more information.



WAICU at the annual WSCA Conference.

MIAD announces retail gallery space at The Avenue in Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design (MIAD) will expand its footprint in Milwaukee by the end of 2021 with the opening of MIAD Gallery at The Ave, located along The Avenue's main entrance of the 3rd Street Market Hall. The gallery will feature and sell the work of current students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

"MIAD Gallery at The Ave is an exciting and significant expansion of our campus. It provides learning and professional development experiences for our students and alumni," says Jeff Morin, MIAD president. "It is a high-profile touchpoint with the potential of reaching the approximately one million people who are expected to visit The Avenue each year."

MIAD Gallery at The Ave provides an engaging platform to showcase the work of MIAD students, alumni, faculty, and staff in the college's five majors – Communication Design, Illustration, Interior Architecture and Design, Product Design and New

Studio Practice: Fine Arts. The work ranges from furniture design to new product development to digital technology and graphic design.

"Most people do not realize the breadth of creative majors we offer, so the gallery is an ideal way to visually tell our story," said Morin. "It is also an opportunity for community members, businesses, MIAD supporters, and others to access and purchase work at a variety of price points from some of today's best and brightest emerging artists and designers."

Like other galleries, a portion of the art and design work sales directly supports the artist/designer.

"I was recently introduced to a group of talented MIAD students through the MIAD Innovation Center when they designed amazingly creative booths for our selfie museum," says Josh Krsnak, CEO of Hempel Real Estate. "Based on



MIAD Gallery at The Ave is located in Milwaukee's downtown, near the new 3rd Street Market Hall.

that experience, we began to explore other partnership opportunities with MIAD and we have now added a year-round art gallery to our vibrant offerings at The Avenue."

MIAD Gallery at The Ave adds to the emerging arts and entertainment district on W. Wisconsin Ave. that currently includes the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Riverside Theater. ■

First-generation Hmong student 'trailblazes' her way to success

MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN

Kerchia "Asia" Lee is a first-generation college student. She is a Hmong American and Wisconsin native, and the first in her family to pursue a career in healthcare. She's also an accomplished pharmacy student completing her final year in the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW).

Now she has been honored as the inaugural recipient of the Mary Jane Shanks Trailblazer Award.

The award was established to be given to a MCW female, non-binary, or genderqueer student juggling multiple responsibilities in addition to their education. Mary Jane Shanks was a talented and respected teacher in Rockford, Illinois, and a single mother with three children to care for during her education. Mary's family established the memorial scholarship to recognize the strengths of non-traditional students who thrive despite barriers to success.

"Like the namesake of this award, Asia is a talented and hardworking woman, mother, and leader," said MCW assistant professor Brianne K. Bakken in her nomination of Asia. "As her faculty mentor I have been so impressed with Asia's fortitude and continued work ethic while balancing her leadership responsibilities, research, and clerkship rotations, also while navigating being a new mom. Asia has so much potential and there is no doubt in my mind that she will make an outstanding pediatric pharmacist."

Asia has excelled in the classroom, served as a leader of the Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists, and conducted research exploring health disparities and inequities in the Hmong population. In June 2021, during final exam week for her last session of didactic courses, she gave birth to her first child.

Asia was selected for one of only two spots in the Longitudinal Advanced Practice

Experience (LAPPE) Program at Children's Wisconsin. After finishing the LAPPE Program and graduating with her PharmD, her professional goals include pursuing a residency in a children's hospital. ■



Kerchia "Asia" Lee, MCW pharmacy student and inaugural recipient of the Mary Jane Shanks Trailblazer Award.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Mount Mary awarded \$7.8 million in federal grants thanks to HSI designation

MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY

Two major federal grants have been awarded to Mount Mary University since August, a \$4.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education and a \$3 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

Both grants were awarded to schools designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI); Mount Mary became a HSI in spring 2020 and is one of two colleges or universities in Wisconsin eligible for such grants.

“Proyecto Descubrir,” or Project Discovery, is a four-year program to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income women enrolled in STEM programs by 10 percent. This \$4.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education will address a gap in Hispanic and low-income women enrolled in a STEM degree program through a multi-pronged approach to remove barriers and increase retention and completion.

“STEM by Design” is a program developed through a \$3 million grant from the National Science Foundation awarded in June. This program will introduce strong technology elements throughout the institution and offer a human-technology interface degree program.

“These grants confirm the caliber of the University’s programming and leadership, and highlight our trajectory,” said Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Julie Landry.

Another significant gain for Mount Mary’s campus community is a third recent award, Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS), a \$120,000 four-year grant through the U.S. Department of Education that provides funds up to \$1,000 per year to eligible student parents to cover childcare costs at an approved childcare

provider. One option will be the new on-campus Wauwatosa Day Care and Learning Center located in Trinity Woods that is slated to open in late fall 2021.

These new grants bring the five-year total to \$19.3 million in federal support. ■



Students in the Jewel Scholars program, pictured here in early 2020, receive scholarships funded through the National Science Foundation.

Longtime animal lover thrives in Carroll’s Animal Behavior Program

CARROLL UNIVERSITY

When a young Brittany Bloor told people she wanted to be a veterinarian, she really meant it. Now, as a senior



Senior Brittany Bloor found a career—and plenty of rescue dog companions—in Carroll’s animal behavior program.

in Carroll University’s animal behavior program, Brittany is thriving.

When Brittany was a senior at her high school in New Berlin, Wisconsin she began working at Humane Animal Welfare Society (HAWs) in Waukesha. There, she grew close to people in the animal caretaker department and began to understand how to connect people in the community with dogs in the shelter for adoption.

Once Brittany got to Carroll, she quickly discovered how much she loved the hands-on experience of working at the animal shelter, combined with dog training classes. HAWs eventually hired Brittany to be a kennel technician and then a training instructor, teaching basic manners for dogs or helping clients work directly with their pets – dogs, cats, or other small animals.

Eventually, Brittany fostered a rescue dog named Riley in her ANB 255 class, inspiring Dr. Josie de Hartog, associate dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, to consider pet adoption. Brittany used what she learned in the program to assess how Riley would do well alongside another dog in a smaller family, and ultimately determined that de Hartog’s home was the perfect environment for Riley.

What’s next for this animal lover? Brittany is currently taking Carroll’s behavioral ecology course, conducting research on elk at the Milwaukee County Zoo. In the future, consulting as an animal trainer is a real possibility for her. But for now, she would love to remain in the shelter setting, due to her love for helping displaced animals and people find companions in one another. ■

Viterbo University and Aquinas Catholic Schools: three years to bachelor's degree

VITERBO UNIVERSITY

Viterbo University and Aquinas Catholic Schools announced a new educational partnership in the Catholic tradition that will allow Aquinas High School students to take tuition-free classes at Viterbo and provide them with a guaranteed opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree at the university in three years after high school graduation.

The formal agreement was finalized by Viterbo President Rick Trietley and Aquinas Catholic Schools President Ted Knutson at a signing event on September 14. Both Viterbo and Aquinas High School are located in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

"This is a very exciting time for the students of Aquinas Catholic Schools," Knutson said. "This partnership with a highly respected university like Viterbo will enhance our commitment to academic excellence and servant leadership. I would like to thank Viterbo University, their



Aquinas Catholic Schools President Ted Knutson and Viterbo University President Rick Trietley sign the agreement formalizing the new partnership.

leaders, and their faculty for their vision in making this partnership a possibility."

Highlights of the agreement:

- Aquinas High School students may take Viterbo courses for free during their normal high school day as part of their official class schedule.
- Participating Aquinas graduates will have the opportunity to complete a

Viterbo bachelor's degree in three years, guaranteed.

- Aquinas students may complete a full year of college credits prior to high school graduation. These credits can be used at Viterbo or other colleges.
- Students will benefit from Viterbo's college and career preparation workshops and leadership development.
- Aquinas and Viterbo students will come together for service and faith formation experiences.
- The two organizations will share some staffing and open each campus for the other's use.

"This partnership represents both institutions' commitment to academic excellence, Catholic identity, and community engagement," said Trietley. "We are proud of our relationship with Aquinas and look forward to additional partnership opportunities in the future. I offer my sincere gratitude to everyone who made this initiative a reality." ■

Lakeland University's award-winning Cooperative Education program benefits students and regional employers

LAKELAND UNIVERSITY

Lakeland University (LU) has partnered with employers of all sizes – from Sheboygan County's companies to myriad nonprofits – to give students access to full- and part-time employment through the Cooperative Education (Co-Op) program. Students can earn up to 30 credits for working toward graduation.

Lakeland advises students on financial management, encouraging them to use their earnings from working to help pay for their tuition, putting them in position to graduate with little or no debt.

Local employers, many of which are struggling to fill positions, have found a new workforce source in Lakeland's Co-Op program.

For example, Lakeland partners with Sargento Foods to create job opportunities for students. Lakeland students work 16

hours per week, typical for students who work for any organization while taking full-time coursework. These part-time positions pay over \$21 an hour and offer tuition benefits after 90 days of employment.

This fall, Lakeland expanded its Co-Op program to Milwaukee. A dozen students make up the inaugural student cohort enrolled in the Milwaukee Co-Op Year, a new LU initiative for Milwaukee-area students who need an affordable pathway to college. The Milwaukee program also removes some barriers to "make it happen."

These students are taking tuition-free Lakeland courses for one year, earning college credits by working through the



Several Lakeland students worked this summer at The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, one of numerous Co-Op partner companies.

Co-Op program and developing a plan for their future.

Lakeland helps students find employment at one of Lakeland's Milwaukee-area Co-Op employer partners. Lakeland mentors students

individually, helping them develop their academic, professional, and personal success plans.

After year one, students will have several pathways, and Lakeland will provide personal mentoring to help individual students develop the best plan for their future. ■

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

MSOE experiential learning project benefits Blue Lotus

MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

The Blue Lotus Farm and Retreat Center near West Bend, Wisconsin has a new bath house featuring a hydraulic-assisted lift table, wash station, and changing area thanks to five Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) students. Blue Lotus serves those with profound life challenges of any age by providing accessible outdoor recreational and therapeutic opportunities in a caring, accepting, and inspiring 64-acre day camp setting. Ethan Buechel, Willem Gauthier, Maxwell Jenney, Jeff Makowski and Justin Meseberg, all construction management majors, took on the bath house as their capstone project under the guidance of Assistant Professor Mark Rounds and MSOE's CREATE Institute.

"Lives are changed by this organization. Bettering [visitors'] time and experience here is fantastic," Buechel said of the project. "Knowing we're making a positive impact not just today or tomorrow but 10 years down the line is wonderful."

The team enlisted Ramlow/Stein Architecture + Interiors to design the facility; worked to get zoning approval and permits; and contracted with landscapers, electricians, carpenters, plumbers and laborers to bring the project to life. Students served as the construction/project managers and oversaw the entire project and its budget, often rolling up their sleeves to pitch in and help.

"There's something about when we call on MSOE that ensures both a guarantee and a relaxed attitude. We just know that the students get the backing to do it right, and we enjoy watching the students take it, embrace it, and treat us like clients," said Jacqueline Janz, executive director of Blue Lotus. "They're already doing professional work, so they are well set to go off into the workforce, wherever they go."



MSOE students designed a new bath house complete with a hydraulic-assisted lift table for Blue Lotus Farm and Retreat Center.

The bath house, changing area, and lift table make it easier for campers and their caregivers when changing in and out of swim clothes. This is the latest project MSOE students have completed at Blue Lotus over the past 13 years. ■

Stitch recognizes Milwaukee leaders Dr. Mary and Ted Kellner

CARDINAL STITCH UNIVERSITY



Dr. Dan Scholz with Dr. Mary and Ted Kellner.

Cardinal Stritch University made two significant announcements to recognize the generous support of respected leaders in the Milwaukee business and philanthropic communities, Dr. Mary and Ted Kellner.

The University has created a new academic structure to better reflect how it serves students.

The new structure includes:

- The Dr. Mary Kellner College of Education, Literacy and Leadership
- The Ruth S. Coleman College of Nursing and Health Sciences
- The College of Arts and Sciences, that will include the School of Business

Dr. Mary Kellner earned a doctoral degree in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning and Service from Stritch in 2007. She has been a member of the Stritch Board of Trustees since 2009 and currently serves as the Board's co-chair.

The University also will rename its renowned Literacy Center the Kellner Family Literacy Center in acknowledgment of the family's longtime devotion to improving literacy among Milwaukee and Wisconsin's children.

Stitch is a pioneer in literacy research, intervention, and instruction. In 1943 the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi opened a reading clinic – one of the first in the country – to help children overcome difficulties and develop their literacy and language skills. The Literacy Center has offered innovative, individualized instruction for close to 80 years.

"We are incredibly grateful for the Kellners' investment in our University and are proud to recognize them in these significant and lasting ways," commented Dr. Dan Scholz, president of Cardinal Stritch University. "The Kellner Family Literacy Center and the Dr. Mary Kellner College of Education, Literacy and Leadership will be tangible reminders of Mary and Ted's commitment to Cardinal Stritch University for current students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and partners, as well as generations of future students and members of the Stritch family." ■

The goal of the WAICU Advancement Diversity Internship program is to encourage more diversity in Wisconsin's private, nonprofit college and university advancement offices by offering a meaningful, experiential learning opportunity for students of color. Interns will receive valuable professional experience and networking opportunities with leaders in the advancement field who will serve as mentors, as well as a community of support with fellow interns from the program. This program is designed to provide experiences to students of color to expose them to systematic philanthropy as a career option.

This effort will improve the career preparation of individuals who may be considering a career in this field of work and/or expose them to an opportunity not previously considered. It could also improve the retention and graduation rates of students of color by further connecting students to the institution themselves and enhancing their skillset for career preparation.

The WAICU Advancement Diversity Internship program is scheduled to roll out in the summer of 2022, and WAICU is coordinating a series of trainings for WAICU Advancement staff in advance of the rollout. Registration for the first training for Advancement officers, being held virtually on December 15, 2021, was sent in early December. The second training is scheduled for February 15, 2022. We are grateful to CIC for selecting WAICU for this important program. WAICU will share updates on the program in future editions of the *Independent*. For now I just want to say that the initiative and the recognition belongs, not to WAICU, but to those in the trenches who act.

Sincerely,



Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.
President



WAICU BULLETIN BOARD

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE)** launched a podcast called "Rethink What's Possible." It is available on all streaming platforms and at msoe.edu/podcast.
- **Ripon College** has received a significant donation of laboratory assets from Luxerin Laboratories LLC in Fond du Lac. The donation includes equipment, chemicals, glassware, textbooks, and supplies valued at just over \$54,000.
- **Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD)** was named a finalist for the BizTimes Nonprofit Excellence Award's Collaboration of the Year, for its collaboration with TRUE Skool and its Designed Awareness program for high school youth.
- **Mount Mary University's** Fashion Archive, a historic collection with 10,000 items, will soon be available to the public online. The project is funded by a two-year, \$249,960 grant from the Council on Library & Information Resources (CLIR).
- **Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE)** biomolecular engineering senior Muskan Kanungo and biomedical engineering senior Noah Hutchinson tied for first place at the annual American Chemical Society Milwaukee Chapter poster competition. Their work was part of the National Science Foundation's Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program. Kanungo's research was on "Development of Gelatin-Coated Microspheres for Novel Bioink Design," and Hutchinson's was "Biosynthesis of Gold Nanoparticles Using Upland Cress and their Biochemical Characterization and Assessment."
- During the 2021 fiscal year which ended June 30, **Ripon College** achieved its most successful and largest fundraising year in its history. More than \$16.5 million in new gift production was realized.
- More than 300 students, faculty and staff visited 17 organizations for **Cardinal Stritch University's** annual Stritch Service Day on October 8.
- **Alverno College** has been awarded a \$499,983 grant from the National Science Foundation to launch and support the college's Truchan STEM Community Impact Program, which is designed to improve student retention in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math and educate women to succeed in these in-demand careers.
- The International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (IWSH) Foundation awarded **Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE)** students Sarah Ceurvorst and Katie Ashley with the 2021 IWSH Award for their work developing the design of handwashing stations for the Navajo Nation. The stations include a 200-gallon tank of water to serve a six-person household for one month. They provide the Navajo people with an immediate source of sanitation to help combat the spread of COVID-19.
- **Beloit College, Carthage College, Edgewood College, Lawrence University, Marquette University, Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE), Northland College, Ripon College** and **St. Norbert College** were named to the Princeton Review's "Best in the Midwest" List in website feature: "2022 Best Colleges: Region by Region"
- **Marquette University** earned "Emerging HSI" status, a designation for institutions with Hispanic or Latinx students making up between 15 percent and 24.9 percent of their undergraduate student body.

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*“The highest result of
education is tolerance.”*

Helen Keller

WAICU: WISCONSIN'S PRIVATE, NONPROFIT COLLEGES WORKING TOGETHER FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

THE WISCONSIN INDEPENDENT

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BULLETIN BOARD

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NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- **Mount Mary University** has revised its MBA program for fall 2021. Students may earn stackable certificates in high-demand topics (such as diversity, equity, and inclusion in business, and small business management) that can lead to a full MBA.
- **Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD)** Future Designers program is expanding upon the success of a 2021 collaborative graphic design internship program with Hanson Dodge. This year, the internship program for BIPOC high school youth is expanding from one company and 14 students to include design internships at Core Creative, Engberg Anderson Architects, Hanson Dodge, Maker LLC, and RINKA+ for 44 high school youth.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Ripon College's** Board of Trustees announced that Dr. Andrea Young will serve as the interim president of the College beginning in January 2022.

NEW CALLINGS

- Christine Pharr, Ph.D., president of **Mount Mary University**, announced September 15 that she plans to retire on June 30, 2022.
- **Ripon College** President Zach Messitte announced that he will leave his position at the end of the fall 2021 semester and return to his hometown of Washington, D.C. Messitte became the 13th president of the 170-year-old institution in 2012.