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STUDENT VOICE

University of Wisconsin River Falls

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Clubs and initiatives have stumbled, but sustainability still lives at UW-River Falls

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UW-River Falls has been working hard to put itself on the map in terms of sustainability for a number of years. In 2013, the Environmental Corps of Sustainability club was created for the purpose of pressuring the UWRF chancellor and board of directors to divest – or pull money and assets – from the fossil fuel industry. Last fall a new sustainable justice minor was launched on campus that exposes students to sustainability on a trans-disciplinary level. In March, it was announced that UWRF had earned the gold rating in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

“Now, that doesn’t mean we’re done,” said Greta Gaard, a UWRF professor and coordinator of both the sustainability faculty fellows and the new sustainable justice minor. “We have lots more to do.” ECOS in particular has hit a bit of a stumbling block this semester. Up until the end of last semester, the club was doing fine; they had a lot of members, hosted bonfires and were having weekly meetings. However, club president Natasha Horsfall suffered a concussion recently and has found herself unable to focus on keeping ECOS active. “Reflecting on that,” Horsfall said, “I should have been training people to handle different responsibilities and keep ECOS connected so if I can’t do it or I graduate, ECOS will still have a presence.”

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Photo courtesy of Danny Saunders
ECOS was formed with the intent to pressure the UWRF chancellor and board of directors to divest from the fossil fuel industry. They continue to work towards a more sustainable UWRF.

UWRF Students develop an innovative company that helps restore dignity to senior citizens

Chris Gregg
Falcon News Service

Junior Reid Wilson has taken a personal situation and turned it into a research project. Wilson’s grandmother has struggled with incontinence issues for years and struggles to find adult briefs that can help with this issue. The project attempts to fix that. Juniors Reid Wilson, Forrest Close and Miles Peterson created a research project for the Innovation Challenge, which was sponsored by the College of Business and Economics, at UW-River Falls this semester. The goal of the project was to design an adult brief that addressed concerns from patients and their caregivers. The project won first place at the challenge and the team is preparing for the next round, the Wisconsin Big Idea Tournament. The three-member team conducted market research by visiting 10 nursing homes and speaking with residents, registered nurses, certified nursing assistants and purchasing agents. The topic of their discussions centered around issues with current adult briefs. “We’ll go and interview registered nurses and they will tell

us things that we didn’t know before that would have been missed if it wasn’t for the interview,” Close said. A theme that quickly emerged was one of difficult usage and embarrassment, which is where the name of the company emerged from. “What we are modeling this on is fixing the leakage and improving the ease of use, is feeding the central issue we are trying to address which is dignity (for the patients),” Close said. Songen is a word in the Japanese language that translates to dignity. The main goal of the company is to alleviate issues of embarrassment, particularly those living at assisted living homes. “There’s a lot of humiliation and discomfort associated with living at those assisted living homes,” Close said. “If we can at least help with this issue, an issue that is high on the list of the challenges that senior citizens face at these homes.” Another challenge users encounter is with the adhesive on the briefs. If the user or caregiver needs to make adjustments to the brief, the adhesive does not re-adhere, causing it to leak. The prototype designed by the students does not utilize adhesives in the design, thus eliminating the issue. The students are also employing another technique to con-

duct research to prepare for the next step in the challenge, the Wisconsin Big Idea Tournament. This technique involved the hiring of a salesman who is paid through commissions. “He will be going around to different nursing areas and trying to get letters of intent,” Peterson said. “That is a big key factor in winning the next leg of this race, a letter of intent from different businesses saying that if this product did go to market, they would definitely be interested in purchasing it.” The letters of intent allow the students to gauge interest and continue their product development. By placing the prototype in front of potential clients, they continue to improve the product. The students have two mentors: Dr. Marina Onken, associate professor in the College of Business and Economics, and Danielle Campeau, director for Center for Innovation and Business Development. Campeau mentored the team through the startup and development phases of the project. “This means referring the team to partners that have expertise in specific areas of need,” Campeau said. “This process forces teams to get out of the building and interview unbiased individuals about their business idea. This primary research provides critical information to the team as they make decisions regarding their business model.” Part of the company’s business model is built around research pertaining to the demand for the product. Peterson said that their research is showing that the baby boomer generation is driving demand for quality adult briefs. “It’s essentially medical. It’s something that you are not going to forgo because the economy is bad, you need that product no matter what,” Close added. While the market may be demanding quality adult briefs, the next challenge for the team is the Wisconsin Big Ideas Tournament that will be held on April 21 in Madison, Wis. The tournament is open to all undergraduate and graduate students at any of the UW System campuses. The winning teams will have the opportunity to compete at the International Business Model Competition in May. If Songen wins at the tournament, they would not be the first UW-River Falls team to compete in the international competition. AgSpy, a precision agriculture company, competed last spring. Regardless of the outcomes of the tournament, the students are accomplishing what they set out to do – giving some dignity back to senior citizens suffering from incontinence. “We want to address an issue,” Close said. “We want to help people and that is what this product is doing.”



Kathy Helgeson/University Communications
Forrest Close, Reid Wilson and Miles Peterson present their business idea and process for improving the lives of incontinent individuals to business leaders during the Innovation Challenge 2018. St. Croix Room, University Center, March 8.

News Briefs:

UW-River Falls faculty receive four grants totaling \$511,105

March 29, 2018 – University of Wisconsin-River Falls faculty recently brought in more than half a million dollars in teaching and undergraduate research grants to the institution through four separate proposals.

“We’re very happy with the success we’ve had in obtaining money for worthy projects and programs at UW-River Falls,” said Diane Bennett, director of grants and research. “We’re especially pleased that so many of the grant proposals helping fund undergraduate research have been favorably considered. Encouraging research is a key university priority and we thank the granting agencies for helping us fulfill this key part of our mission.”

Brief summaries follow of the successful proposals.

WEITQ – Master Teacher Leaders of Secondary Mathematics grant (\$101,871)

Mathematics Professor Erick Hofacker has received a second-year continuation grant from the United States Department of Education, administered by the University of Wisconsin System.

Hofacker’s project, titled “Master Teacher Leaders of Secondary Mathematics,” began in 2017 and is funded as part of the Wisconsin ESEA Improving Teacher Quality (WEITQ) program. The project provides professional development for 20 secondary mathematics teachers from 13 different school districts in Western Wisconsin.

The project provides teachers an opportunity to deepen and expand their mathematical pedagogical content knowledge, develop mathematical habits of mind, use best teaching practices that promote productive discourse with their students, and create a strong awareness for implementing rich mathematical tasks that promote reasoning and emphasize mathematical modeling in their classroom.

Participants in the project are provided a pathway to earn graduate credits towards a master’s degree at UW-River Falls in mathematics secondary education. This provides them an opportunity to take a leadership role in mathematics education not only in their local district, but at the state level. This is evident in the fact that seven of the participants in the project will be presenting their work as part of the project at Wisconsin Math Council annual meeting in Green Lake in May.

Hofacker and his colleagues have been actively providing advanced professional development to K-12 mathematics teachers in Wisconsin with at least one funded project for each of the last ten years. These projects have helped forge partnerships with school districts and teachers throughout Western Wisconsin, which have impacted and strengthened both the undergraduate and graduate mathematics education programs at UW-River Falls.

National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates grant (\$194,932)

Associate Physics Professor Surujhdeo Seunarine and Physics Professor Jim Madsen collaborated on ongoing work with the international IceCube Neutrino Observatory and received a National Science Foundation (NSF) Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Program Grant that will provide funding for 18 ten-week research internships over three summers.

Each summer for three years, six undergraduates from around the country will come to UW-River Falls to undertake neutrino astrophysics research associated with IceCube. This year, about 100 students from around the country are expected to apply for the six internships.

The IceCube Observatory, located at the South Pole, searches for neutrinos, elusive particles that are produced in very energetic objects in the universe. The telescope could one day help reveal the origin of the highest energy particles in the universe and help resolve questions on dark matter and elementary particle physics. As part of their research experience, students will participate in a one-week software and astrophysics “boot camp” at the Wisconsin IceCube Particle Astrophysics Center at UW-Madison. The NSF award will support student stipends, accommodation, and travel expenses to River Falls.

While about 50 institutions nationwide have physics REU programs, UW-River Falls, which has partnered with the program since 2014, is one of only a handful of undergraduate institutions in the United States to host a physics REU site.

National Science Foundation Research at Undergraduate Institutions grant (\$174,302)

Computer Science and Information Systems Professor Jacob Hendricks has received a two-year grant totaling just over \$174,000 from the National Science Foundation.

The grant, titled “Explorations in the Self-Assembly of Distributed Biological Functions,” provides over \$90,000 in research stipends for undergraduate and graduate students.

The process of self-assembly is often observed in nature through individual components such as molecules binding to form more complex structures.

“Not only is self-assembly an important process observable in many natural phenomena, but it is also currently being utilized to manufacture nanotechnologies with molecular (if not atomic) level precision,” Hendricks said.

Through this grant, students will use mathematical models to study how communication between self-assembled components can yield functionality surpassing that of a single component. Eventually, this research may lead to techniques directly applicable to tile assembly systems which are applications that enable research in the field.

Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium Grant (\$40,000)

Associate Biology Professor J. Alfred Bonilla and Biology Professor Karen Klyczek have received a grant through the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium Higher Education Incentives program.

Titled “Space Phage: An Undergraduate Course-Based Research Experience for Investigating the Adaptation of Bacteriophages in the Spaceflight Environment,” this program will allow faculty and students to travel not only to the Wisconsin Space Conference in August 2018 and 2019, but also to visit

a launch site and make a research presentation at the annual conference of the American Society for Gravitational and Space Research.

The grant supports a pilot study that will identify which bacteriophage and bacterial hosts would be most feasible to send into space. The actual grant to be able to fund sending them to space is to be submitted shortly.

The ongoing study is conducted on the International Space Station and examines bacteriophages to discover possible changes in their physical, chemical, morphological, and genetic properties when exposed to microgravity.

A bacteriophage replicates within microorganisms such as bacteria and archaea. While they are viruses, some bacteriophages have therapeutic and diagnostic use. It’s estimated that earth contains more bacteriophages than all other organisms combined.

For more information, email diane.bennett@uwrf.edu or call Bennett at 715-425-3195.

UW-River Falls receives STARS gold rating for sustainability

March 19, 2018 - The University of Wisconsin-River Falls has earned a STARS gold rating in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

STARS, which stands for AASHE’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System, measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

This is the seventh year UW-River Falls has completed a STARS report demonstrating the university’s ongoing commitment to sustainability. Previous efforts resulted in silver ratings. This is the first time UWRF has received a gold rating.

“Achieving the STARS gold rating is a milestone for the university and is made possible through the commitment and work of many faculty, staff and students on the UWRF campus,” said UW-River Falls Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “The entire campus community deserves credit for a great achievement.”

“I am incredibly proud of our gold rating,” said Mark Klapatch, UW-River Falls sustainability and custodial supervisor. “There is not one specific aspect of UWRF that makes us sustainable. It’s a lot of separate university commitments which add up to a sustainable campus that’s worthy of this recognition.”

UW-River Falls demonstrates its commitment to sustainability through student experiences including new student orientation, student life, programming, employment opportunities and student organizations; education abroad experiences that focus on sustainability; multiple undergraduate programs showcasing sustainability including majors, minors and certificates; and a campus which is utilized as a living laboratory in multiple course offerings.

With more than 800 participants in 30 countries, AASHE’s STARS program is the most widely recognized framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university’s sustainability performance. Participants report achievements in academics, engagement, operations, planning and administration and innovation and leadership.

“STARS was developed by the campus sustainability community to provide high standards for recognizing campus sustainability efforts,” said AASHE Executive Director Meghan Fay Zahniser. “UW-River Falls has demonstrated a substantial commitment to sustainability by achieving a gold rating and is to be congratulated for its efforts.”

The STARS program is open to all institutions of higher education. The criteria that determine a rating are transparent and accessible to anyone. STARS allows for internal and external comparisons with similar institutions because it is a program based on credits earned.

The UW-River Falls report is available on the STARS website at <https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-wisconsin-river-falls-wi/report/>.

For more information on sustainability efforts at UW-River Falls, visit <http://www.uwrf.edu/Sustainability> or email mark.klapatch@uwrf.edu.

Hippo Campus will headline Finals Fest at UW-River Falls May 4

April 2, 2018 – The Midwest is Best Finals Fest event at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls will showcase two acts on Friday, May 4. Wisconsin Comedian Pete Lee will open at 7 p.m. with headliner Hippo Campus performing at 8:15 p.m. The event, on the University Center mall (outdoors), is free and open to the public.

The event will kick off with a “Party on the Patio” beginning at 6 p.m. featuring free Midwest cuisine, outdoor games, student organization pop up performances, bodypainting, bonfire stations with s’mores, DIY t-shirt creating (t-shirts available for purchase), a local artist garden, and more. Arrive early to catch the championship game of the Bean Bag Toss Tournament which begins at 5 p.m.

Beverages, Holy Donuts, and grilled food will be available for purchase during the concert. Alcohol is prohibited. In the case of rain, the event will move to the Falcon’s Nest in the University Center.

For more information about Finals Fest, visit <http://go.uwrf.edu/FinalsFest> or visit the facebook event page “Finals Fest 2018” or call Elise Koop in the Student Involvement Office at 715-425-4747.

Hippo Campus

A spirited indie rock quartet based out of the Twin Cities, Hippo Campus deliver angular and melodic guitar-driven pop that falls somewhere between the collegiate Afro-pop/garage rock of Vampire Weekend and the post-punk nerviness of

Bombay Bicycle Club. The band formed in 2013 made up of frontman Jake Luppen, co-frontman/guitarist Nathan Stocker, bassist Zach Sutton, and drummer Whistler Allen (on-stage the band uses the code names Stitches, Beans, Espo, and Turntan), all of whom met in high school in St. Paul. Hippo Campus wasted little time infiltrating the local scene, with their high-energy live sets eventually attracting the attention of the management team behind fellow Minnesotans Trampled by Turtles and Low.

Pete Lee

Pete Lee might be the nicest person in New York City, but that’s because it’s impossible to sound aggressive with a Wisconsin accent. Pete was raised in Janesville by divorced parents and a 19-inch television which is probably why he pursued a career in entertainment. Thanks to his highly rated Comedy Central Presents half hour special, Lee has packed venues at over 500 colleges and universities across the country. Lee has also been a standout on NBC’s Last Comic Standing and played a doctor on the CBS soap opera As the World Turns. His hit YouTube series titled “Pete Lee’s Internet Freak Show” attracted the attention of television executives. He was quickly hired to be a writer and cast member on FUSE TV’s Video on Trial and cast member on VH1’s Best Week Ever. Lee is a rising star in the college market and on television, but he is also really fun to have dinner with at your town’s Applebee’s.

Travis named provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at UW-River Falls

March 29, 2018 – David Travis, dean of the College of Letters and Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, has accepted an offer to become provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Travis’ first day on campus will be June 15.

“There was strong support for the candidacy of Dr. Travis with feedback citing his student-centered mindset, support of inclusivity, and positive and enthusiastic approach,” said UW-River Falls Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “I personally look forward to working with him and am confident that he will provide excellent leadership and will bring some new ideas to our campus.”

Travis holds both a bachelor of science degree and a master of science degree in geography from the University of Georgia and a Ph.D. in geography from Indiana University.

He has worked at UW-Whitewater since 1994 as a professor, department chair and associate dean for two different colleges before taking his current position, which he has held for five years.

Student Senate Update: Apr. 3

Student Government elections are coming up. Petitions to run for SGA were due April 4 and the general elections will be held April 17-19.

The Student Senate discussed Mental Health Awareness Week, which is underway. Guest speaker Kevin Hines had to cancel unexpectedly due to unforeseen complications. The SGA said that they hope to reschedule him to come to campus as soon as he’s available again. In the meantime, the rest of the events are still going ahead as planned.

New bylaws for the Student Media Committee were brought up as an introductory motion. They will be voted on at a later date.

There was brief discussion regarding the Green Fund.

The information in this update comes from the minutes posted to the Student Government Association Falcon-Sync page every week and from the live tweet posts gathered by Student Voice staff. The Student Senate meets every Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Willow River Room of the University Center.

Weekly UWRF Crime Report

Wednesday, March 28

- A motorvehicle accident was reported at 561 S 3rd St at 4:08 p.m.

Thursday, March 29

- Information was reported at 600 Wild Rose Ave at 1:21 p.m.

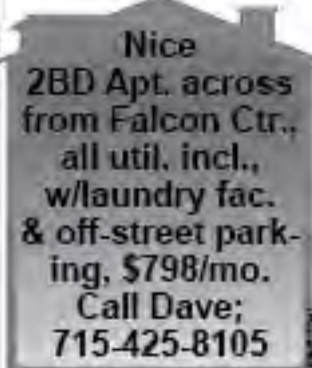
Friday, March 30

- Information was reported at the University Center at 1:21 p.m.

Sunday, April 1

- Theft was reported at Chalmer Davee Library at 12:01 a.m.

Editor’s Note:
Information for this section is taken from the UW-River Falls Police Department



STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT/VICE PRESIDENT OPEN FORUM

ASK QUESTIONS AND
MEET CANDIDATES!

APRIL 11 @ 7 P.M.
NORTH HALL
AUDITORIUM

Presented by:



NEWS
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Music enhances focus, boosts memory and cognition

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Conducting his experiment with 80 student participants, all of whom volunteered to help with the research, Westholm provided two different sets of conditions.

“In both conditions they are instructed to create a list on Spotify,” he said, “and one condition gets to play their music while the other one doesn’t. The other one is told to listen to a pre-made playlist.”

Shortly after the music began playing, participants in both groups had to accomplish a computer-simulated multitasking assessment, which required high levels of focus and concentration. Suspecting the group that got to choose their music is the group that performed better on the assessment, Westholm is still in the process of analyzing the experiment data and cannot yet confirm the official results.

“There’s evidence to support that when people have control over their environment – just like the things that they’re doing in their daily schedule – they’re happier and they feel good,” he said. “It’s like you’re your own boss type of thing. But when you’re going through life and you know what you have to do but you don’t have much control, that generally produces more of a negative effect.”

Another factor that helps determine the different effect music will have on people has to do with its connection to memory.

“People have memories, obviously, and memories are interesting things, because it’s not like a filing cabinet where you go back and pull out a memory and it’s the same thing. Your brain recreates the memory each time. That’s widely supported; that’s not up for debate,” Westholm said. “When you recreate your memory each time, anything that’s linked to it will help you get back to it, and researchers found that some of the strongest things that link people back to memory is music.”

Grateful for the strong relationship between music and memory, UWRF freshman Jacob Traynor recalls how it has helped him to reflect on some of life’s most difficult circumstances in a way that prepared him for future challenges.

“I’ve been an outcast my whole entire life, and the thing about music is it helps you bring back memories; it helps you

recall times that you might consider as being dark in your life but helped shape you into the person you currently are,” he said.

“It’s really cool when you listen to a song, and all the emotion just floods right back into you. You can either get the same feelings that you had before, or you can realize how much difficulty you’ve gone through and how much you were able to cope with all that through the gift of music.”

In addition to helping him reflect, Traynor also believes that music is a factor that significantly improves his cognitive abilities.

“I just finished writing an English paper, and I listened to Disney songs the whole time I was writing it because the music helped me concentrate and focus on it,” he said. “As (the music) was going in my ears, I would get inspiration from it. I’d be looking at the paper, not knowing what to write about, and then a certain song played and I’d get more ideas in my head.”

Desiring to help college students like Traynor and/or elderly patients like the man with Alzheimer’s, Westholm hopes to eventually apply his knowledge of music and psychology in a clinical practice setting. Accepted to begin a graduate program at Augsburg College as early as next month, he intends to pursue a master’s degree in music therapy.

“I don’t know the details of which specific disorders music therapy helps, and I’m hoping to get more research on that through the graduate school I’m going to,” he said, “but definitely Alzheimer’s and dementia – those things can be really affected by music, and music therapy specifically.”



Nathan Lukasavitz/Falcon News Service
UWRF senior Brandon Westholm using a whiteboard sketch in the music education room at Kleinpell Fine Arts to explain a multitasking assessment he conducted.

Initiatives have stumbled, but sustainability still lives

Continued from page 1

There are other factors playing into the situation. Horsfall pointed out that the subjects ECOS wants to bring to the public eye are difficult ones to talk about, and it takes a lot of work to get people to engage.

“That can take an emotional and time-consuming toll on our members when trying to work with campus,” Horsfall said. “Activism is a full-time job that you don’t get paid for and have to do after a long day of school (or) a long shift at work and with a group of people who all have different schedules.”

Connections between clubs, she added, are also not as robust as they could be. She said she’s noticed a high number of sustainability clubs on campus over the past couple years. However, not all of them are very active or easy to reach.

“This spreads the clubs very thin and makes it hard to collaborate,” she said. “Honestly, I wish the leaders of these clubs would get together and talk about collective goals for the university and each of our members.”

Gaard, who is also the adviser for ECOS, brought up a lot of the same points as Horsfall when asked why the club has fallen off the map. On top of these issues, she pointed out that communication between ECOS and faculty like herself has broken down lately. The sustainability faculty fellows, for example, regularly hold meetings where they discuss and make plans.

“The students are invited to come to those meetings,” Gaard said, “and they are not coming.”

However, it’s an understandable lapse of communication, Gaard said. Like Horsfall, she brought up the fact that activism is a time-consuming, full-time job. ECOS members are not paid for their work in the club, and so they have to find the time and will power to act on a volunteer basis.

“This is the first time that leadership has fizzled,” Gaard said, “and it happens.”

A handful of things could be done moving forward. One that both Gaard and Horsfall brought up was a more consolidated office of sustainability on campus. This used to exist at UWRF; it was called the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development, and it did things like collecting in-

formation for the STARS report, planning sustainable facilities and giving faculty trainings on how to better incorporate sustainability into coursework. At the time, it was run by its creator, Kelly Cain, and two additional office staff.

In 2015, UWRF underwent a state-mandated budget cut of \$1.7 million, and programs across the board had to be cut. The three positions working with the SCISCD were split up and reduced to a half-time sustainability position that was coupled with facilities (Mark Klapatch) and a quarter-time position centered around planning curriculum (Gaard). The SCISCD, meanwhile, moved off-campus and became an independent organization simply called the St. Croix Institute.

Many initiatives – like the STARS rating system – have held on through the work that Klapatch, Gaard and others have put in. According to the AASHE website, only 31.2 percent out of around 300 rated institutions that submit STARS reports get the gold rating that UWRF earned. The only higher rating is platinum.

Unfortunately, other things like monetary incentives for faculty to participate in the sustainability training program went away with the SCISCD. The effect, Gaard said, has been to create a “closed system” around the idea of sustainability. Fewer people get involved because they don’t realize how all-encompassing the concept is.

UWRF also lost momentum with its Climate Action Plan from 2012, which had aimed primarily to eliminate or offset greenhouse gas emissions from UWRF as much as possible. The end goal was to be at net zero by 2018.

“Unfortunately, while they were formally adopted and signed by the Chancellor, not much action has been taken due to the budget cuts,” said Mark Klapatch, UWRF Sustainability and Custodial Supervisor. “We have actually gone backwards from what the plan laid out for campus. We have reduced our spending on renewable energy specifically in the form of UWRF purchasing renewable energy credits.”

The effect, he went on, was to reduce UWRF from a “leader” in sustainability efforts among colleges and universities to more “middle of the pack.”

Bringing back a more consolidated, centralized office of sustainability, Horsfall said, could be a great help to sustainability

efforts on campus. A full-time sustainability director and an actual office in the Involvement Center could help clubs come together to collaborate. Gaard said she agrees – such a thing could also help promote visibility for sustainability initiatives.

In the meantime, Horsfall and Gaard have some plans for ECOS and overall sustainability efforts on campus. ECOS has been working with Student Senate in the hopes of getting the Green Fund put in place, and the club has set up a petition on its website calling for UWRF to divest from fossil fuels. The newly-formed sustainability justice minor is also a chance to promote the multi-dimensional nature of the issue.

Next semester, ECOS is also hoping to work with Gaard on an “eco bus tour.” The idea, Gaard said, would be to load a bunch of people onto a bus and drive around River Falls to look at all of the sustainability efforts going on around town, such as the solar garden and Eco-Village.

The audience they hope to get on the bus would be faculty and freshmen students interested in sustainability. These interested parties would be accompanied by faculty and students from UWRF who are already involved in sustainability. By mixing everyone together, Gaard said she hopes this will serve to connect people to programs that they might be interested in.

“This would be a really positive opportunity to get students aware and involved from the beginning,” Horsfall said.

Moving forward, Horsfall said that she would like to see more support from the university on working towards divestment, full time staffing of the sustainability coordinator and food waste composting. She also said that there are a lot of people who are passionately concerned about sustainability who need to be working closer together to make the system more efficient.

“This will happen through unification of clubs, intersectional collaboration and letting people know that their presence and individual passions at River Falls matter,” Horsfall said.

ECOS will be hosting a regathering bonfire near the end of the semester. All are welcome to attend, Horsfall said. ECOS can be found through their Facebook page @fossilfreefalcons, their website at <http://act.gofossilfree.org/act/university-of-wisconsin-river-falls> or their portal on Org Sync.

EDITORIAL

UW-River Falls is predicted to grow, so where are we putting people?

Last semester, UW-River Falls was severely overpopulated. The incoming freshmen class was one of the largest in the last decade, and the dorms were not sufficient to handle the overflow. Up to six students per room were being housed in study lounges while they waited for rooms to open up, and it wasn't until near the end of the semester that everyone was out of extended housing.

Next semester, admissions has predicted the incoming freshman class to be as big as or exceed this year's population. The university, however, has made no overt plans to build new dorms. Their main plan, so far, is to change Prucha Hall rooms from one-bedroom to two-bedroom residence, and the chancellor said that upperclassmen that qualify to live off-campus will be encouraged to leave the dorms.

The Student Voice does not see this as a sufficient or fair plan. One of the roots of this problem is the two-year residency rule. This is a UW System policy, and it requires that first and second-year students must live in the residence halls. There are exceptions for anyone over 21 years of age, veterans, married students or people with extenuating financial circumstances. Students can also opt out of living in the dorms if they have a permanent address within the approved commuting zip codes.

The reasoning the UW System gives for this policy is to encourage students to utilize their campus resources and services and to make connections among their peers. This is reasonable to a point, but we think that the policy is too strict and tends to cause more problems than it solves.

The two-year requirement should be a recommendation to the UW System universities, not a requirement. UW-Milwaukee has a one-year requirement and the rule doesn't apply at UW-Madison at all. There are clearly exceptions, so we think it would be prudent to remove this blanket policy and allow universities to decide for themselves.

Each community in the UW-System is very different. At UW-Eau Claire, for example, the city's housing isn't as concentrated around the university, and it would be more efficient for students to live on campus. In River Falls, however, almost all off-campus housing is located within a few blocks of the university and is often cheaper than the dorms. Living off-campus also allows students to opt out of meal plans, which can be both expensive and unsatisfactory.

That being said, our recommendation for UWRF would be a one-year policy like UW-Milwaukee has. This gives students a chance to grow relationships on campus and transition from high school. However, this also allows sophomores to make their own decisions regarding housing and reduces some of the burden from the university to provide dorm space. This makes far more sense than suggesting upperclassmen leave a place they want to be in order to make room for sophomores who don't want to be there in the first place.

It is great that our campus is growing. However, it's irresponsible for the university to take on additional freshmen if it doesn't have a plan for housing them. It is understandable that we may not have the funds to build new dorms, but this simple change to the two-year policy would alleviate overpopulation and open up room for growth.

Editorials represent the opinions of the Student voice Editorial Board and are prepared by the editorial staff.

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The House on the Rock: Where mystery and magic thrive

Sophia Koch

Columnist

There are a lot of magical places left in the world. I could try to convince you by going on at length about the beautiful cities, forests and lakes that have persuaded me, but in the end, there's really only one place that I need to tell you about to make my point: House on the Rock.

I've taken several different angles in describing the House on the Rock. Most commonly I tell people, "If a hoarder with an affinity for circuses and Victorian age decorations had enough money to make a museum, this would be the result." Even that, though, is a gross oversimplification.

Seeing the House is generally viewed as a requirement for anyone living in Wisconsin. The fantasy/horror writer Neil Gaiman featured it as a meeting place for immortals in his book "American Gods," and if you know Gaiman's style, you'll get a bit of an idea what the House is like.

According to its website, the House on the Rock was originally built in the 1940s by a man named Alex Jordan who originally meant for it to be a personal weekend retreat. Over time, however, the strange architecture and the fact that the building was precariously perched atop a 60-foot chimney of rock started to attract curious visitors, and Jordan eventually decided to start charging people to view the house.

Jordan was a longtime collector of odd things, and so he decided to start adding to his original house and arranging his strange collections into a huge tourist attraction. According to the website, however, he wanted the place to be more than just a museum: "The House on the Rock is more of a trip through the wild and fantastic imagination of Alex Jordan than a visit to a dusty, lifeless museum."

When you drive up to the House, you pretty much immediately know that you're in for something strange. Giant pots standing eight or ten feet tall and decorated with little dragon statues guard various entrances, and the bits of the House that poke from the surrounding forest look to be Japanese in design.

Inside, you have the option of buying a ticket for the full experience (about \$30), or just admission to the first or sec-

ond parts of the tour. I would recommend the full experience; the first and second sections are interesting, but a lot of the really good stuff is definitely in part three.

The first section consists of Jordan's original house. I get the feeling, after winding my way through the dimly-lit, low-ceilinged labyrinth of hallways and small cubbies, that Jordan liked caves. I was vaguely reminded of a rabbit's warren or an ant's nest. Everything was carpeted and decorated with strange statues, and had there not been a marked route, I probably would have gotten turned around and lost.

Once you leave Jordan's living quarters, things start to get really interesting. Like Jordan's house, the museum part is dimly lit with yellow and red lights and often labyrinth-like in design. Shadows dominate the edges of the rooms, and detailed carvings, dioramas and statuary fill almost every nook and cranny you care to look at.

You wander through a tiny, fully-furnished village that might have existed sometime in the 1920s, and from there you end up in a series of rooms that each feature a self-playing orchestra that you can activate with a little gold token. Faint, off-key carnival music often plays softly in the distance, and almost everywhere you look there's either a doll, Santa, mannequin or statue staring at you.

It's a place where magic and mystery thrive. Each room is packed with details, hidden stories and untold depth, and it's all-too easy to imagine that creatures out of ancient mythology might actually be hanging out in the shadows. After three hours of wandering this place, I didn't know what to focus on. I'd seen a whale statue that was three stories tall, medieval mannequins engaged in battle with an armored elephant, a spread of circus dioramas that probably could have filled my high school gymnasium and the biggest indoor carousel in the world.

In the end, there's no good way to describe the House on the Rock. It's too big, too complicated and too thoroughly magical. You just have to see it for yourself.

Maybe don't go if you're claustrophobic or afraid of dolls, though.

Sophie Koch is a journalism major and biology minor at UWRF. She spends way too much money on books, gets lost a lot in the woods and periodically drops her phone in the river.



Sophia Koch/Student Voice

The House on the Rock features the world's largest carousel, which dominates one wall of the room and extends all the way to the ceiling, March 17.



Sophia Koch/Student Voice

An entire room of the House on the Rock is devoted to dozens of highly-detailed dollhouse dioramas, March 17.

STUDENT voices

Compiled by Alayna Rudolph

“What was your reaction to the snow yesterday?”



Tony Bednarek
(Freshman)

“Sad and Frustrated.”



Oliver Stinson
(Freshman)

“Pretty happy. I like the snow.
I was surprised by it coming so
late in the season.”



Briar Golden
(Sophomore)

“It happens, it’s Wisconsin.”



Lacey Seidl
(Freshman)

“I hate it, I need to move.”



Traci Langan
(Junior)

“Yuck.”



Lauren Smith
(Sophomore)

“Not fun at all, I didn’t enjoy
walking to class.”

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Student Senate live tweets Tuesday nights

Falcons softball uses timely pitching to split two-game series with St. Mary’s 10-9, 3-6

Zach Dwyer

zachary.dwyer@my.uwrf.edu

The Falcons softball team split a series against St. Mary’s University last Thursday in their first action since spring break. UWRF took a high-scoring game one by a score of 10-9 but fell to the Cardinals 6-3 in game two.

The game was originally scheduled to be played as UWRF’s home opener, but snow and difficult weather conditions forced the switch to play in Winona, Minn. The Falcons already had their doubleheader against Northwestern cancelled on Wednesday, so they were willing to make the change to get a game in.

“It’s always disappointing when you can’t play at home, but it wasn’t as disappointing because we’ve known for weeks that (cancelling) it was going to happen,” head coach Amber Dohlman said.

Dohlman said that the fields in Winona were in great condition before the start of the game. Both teams came up scoreless in the first two innings of game one, with the first run coming from Cardinals freshman Tara Nikolich in the third inning. The Falcons responded with strong bats in a similar fashion as the rest of the season, scoring six runs in the fourth and fifth innings. Kai Dorn hit her third homerun of the year to make the game 2-1 in the fourth, and Maddie Studnicka drove in two RBIs in the fifth to go up 8-1.

“(Dorn) had a great game with the four RBIs, and her homerun was a rocket,” Dohlman said. “She’s a competitor and a fire, and she’s had a great year for us so far. She finds a way to get on base and start things for us.”

However, the game changed when the Falcons usual closer Studnicka came in for starting pitcher Hannah Stegeman after 3.2 innings pitched and only one run allowed. Studnicka currently leads all of Division III in saves, but in game one she could only last a third of an inning, giving up five runs on four hits after facing only six batters. Dohlman said it was “probably the roughest outing she’s had this year.”

She added that the team battled with illegal pitching in the game, so it took everybody a while to calm down and adjust to the umpire’s strike zone. Luckily for the Falcons, their usual starter Payton Speckel came in for Studnicka and closed the game out by only allowing three earned runs over her three innings of work.

“I usually start and set the pace, so coming in to close was definitely different for me,” Speckel said. “I’ve never been in that role, but it was fun for them to count on me and trust me to finish the game.”

The Falcons hitters helped out by getting crucial runs in the sixth and seventh innings to give Speckel a 10-8 lead to hold onto entering the seventh. UWRF currently sits at fifth in Division III for batting average at .391, which Speckel said definitely gives her more confidence when she’s on the mound.

Speckel only allowed one run in the seventh inning, picking up a crucial win over the 5-8 Cardinals to give herself a 7-1 record on the season.

“This year I’ve had a stronger changeup, and the drastic change in speed has kept batters imbalanced,” Speckel said. “I definitely have more confidence when I’m pitching this



Kathy Helgeson/University Communications

Payton Speckel has a record of 7-1 in her 12 starts this year. UWRF is 14-4 this season.

year because I’m stronger, faster and have another year of experience under my belt.”

Dohlman said that the team hasn’t had this much quality depth at pitchers in the last couple of seasons. Dohlman said that she’s able to mix and match her pitchers because they’re completely different and complement each other well.

Along with the stability and depth the pitching staff of Speckel, Studnicka and Stegeman has provided, Speckel said the transition between pitchers can be challenging for opposing batters.

“Between me and Maddie (Studnicka), there’s a huge difference in our styles of pitching,” Speckel said. “She has a lot of movement on her ball, while I throw a lot faster. It’s hard to adjust from the speed and for batter to adjust their hands and timing for the swing.”

Unlike most games for Speckel, she came out in game two having already thrown to almost all of the Cardinals batters. She came out strong in the first two innings, allowing only three hits and no runs.

“Our fielders did a good job of being on their toes and being ready to go,” Speckel said. “Starting that second game I was giving them more pitch selection so they couldn’t see the same thing all over again.”

Speckel still went her usual six innings throughout the two games, but finally allowed the Cardinals to jump on top of her when they strung together five singles in the third inning to take a 3-0 advantage. UWRF battled back in the fourth as Ali Krohn hit a two RBI single and Aiyana Ledwein drove in a run to tie the game at 3-3.

Stegeman had a tougher time for the Falcons in game

two after a strong opening performance in game one, giving up three runs in the fifth to give St. Mary’s a 6-3 lead that wouldn’t be overcome. Speckel and Dohlman both echoed the fact that the UWRF hitters couldn’t seem to find any gaps on the day and were hitting the ball directly to the Cardinals’ fielders.

“It wasn’t like they were overpowering us, but they had more timely hitting,” Dohlman said.

Studnicka made up for her game one performance by striking out six batters in only two innings of work, but the Falcons couldn’t get the bats going before falling 6-3.

“I think we definitely could’ve taken both games,” Speckel said. “We could’ve adjusted sooner and hitting the gaps will be important moving forward in the season.”

Speckel also thought the defense still has room for improvement. If that can come together with their strong baserunning and hitting, “That could bring us all the way to the WIAC tournament at the end of the season,” Speckel said.

UWRF now stands at 14-4 overall as they approach WIAC play this weekend. With tougher tests approaching, Dohlman said there’s still work to be done.

“I’m never pleased with a split,” Dohlman said. “We’re better than that team, and we should be beating average teams on a daily basis. We’re too good to settle for a loss like that right now.”

The Falcons will have a chance to open up their WIAC season this Saturday and Sunday when they travel to UW-Whitewater and UW-Oshkosh for doubleheaders, weather permitting.



Kathy Helgeson/University Communications

Payton Speckel and head coach Amber Dohlman meet at the mound in a game against UW-Stout last April.

Sports Schedule

April 7 women’s tennis vs St. Catherine University, 12 p.m.

April 7 softball at UW-Whitewater (doubleheader), 2 p.m.

April 7 men’s track and field at UW-La Crosse

April 7 women’s track and field at UW-La Crosse

April 8 women’s tennis at St. Norbert College, 9 a.m.

April 8 women’s tennis vs Concordia University (Wis.), 12 p.m.

April 8 softball at UW-Oshkosh (doubleheader), 1 p.m.

Home games in **BOLD**

Sports Recap

Men’s and women’s track and field

UWRF had a successful first meet of the outdoor season for both the men’s and women’s teams at St. Mary’s University last week. Colton Sorensen set the pole vault record at UWRF with a vault of 16 feet, five inches higher than his previous school record vault. Kyle Dorosz placed fifth in the 100m with a time of 11.2 seconds, and Justin Barnes finished third in the javelin. On the women’s side, Linsey Tolkkinen finished first in the 3000m run with a time of 10:43. The Falcons were also represented in the 1500m run as Katelyn Moore finished sixth, Nikki Jurik in eighth and Emmy Farago in ninth. Abigail Bakken also finished sixth in the hammer throw, while the women’s 4x400m relay also finished in sixth.

URSCA office helps allow for applied research in CAFES

Zach Dwyer

Falcon News Service

When Lissa Schneider-Rebozo started at UW-River Falls in 2005, she was a literature and film professor with extensive experience as an author. She was involved with undergraduate research from the time she first arrived, but opening an entire office dedicated to it was something she hadn’t even considered.

Now, UW-River Falls is celebrating the five-year anniversary of the office for Undergraduate Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity. Schneider-Rebozo became the founding director of URSCA in the winter of 2013, having already worked with students on research in upper-level classes.

She will be one of the faculty members who will accompany 23 students to present research at the UW System Symposium on April 20. This will allow students to present their research and be rated for their performance.

Schneider-Rebozo used her past experiences as a full-time professor to help start up the URSCA program five years ago; pretty much every class she taught as a professor included research projects, from an English 100 class to an upper-level multi disciplinary class. She said that it wasn’t always the case where she picked the best project, but it depended on how motivated the student was. She also picked projects from students regardless of major, so by the end of her time she had advised on projects with 16 or 17 different majors.

“It’s really rewarding for the students. As a professor, I have always loved (research),” Schneider-Rebozo said. “It makes the teaching process more meaningful.”

She also described how UWRF has a list of high-impact practices (study abroad, internships, writing-intensive classes, etc.) that they stress. However, undergraduate research holds a special place among them.

“Every study has shown that it is the highest impact,” Schneider-Rebozo said. “If you could only do one thing, it’s more important than all the others combined.”

While most of the URSCA projects in the College of Arts and Sciences focus mainly on pure knowledge or theory, most of the work coming out of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences is applied research. CAFES research is more hands-on and includes trying to find solutions or new products in their respective field.

Nathan Grosse is a conservation and environmental planning major that said he has always been enthusiastic about insects. Last year he found a scholarship that could be used for research and worked to find out how to use his passion and combine it with agricultural economics. He eventually decided on looking at the economic value of pollinating insects.

“Most people know that bees pollinate flowers, but usually people just think about honey bees,” Grosse said. “There’s about 4,000 different species of bees that are wild in the United States, and they do a lot of pollination of native plants and cultivated crops.”

Scientific articles have been showing that bee populations have been decreasing in recent years, whether it be through habitat loss, diseases or pesticide use, according to Grosse. He said that not many people are paying attention to this problem, which was highlighted by the fact that there has never been a published list of the different species of pollinators in Wisconsin.

Grosse decided to fix this problem by starting the research himself. He picked a bunch of agricultural locations in Pierce and St. Croix counties, including farm co-ops, commercial agriculture sites, a winery, prairie restorations and cattle farms. He set up traps over the course of the whole summer to see how many different species he could catch.

Grosse caught a total of 257 different specimens, which included almost 70 different species of pollinators. He also worked to compare the overall richness and diversity of the seven sites that he visited. He wasn’t able to determine if land

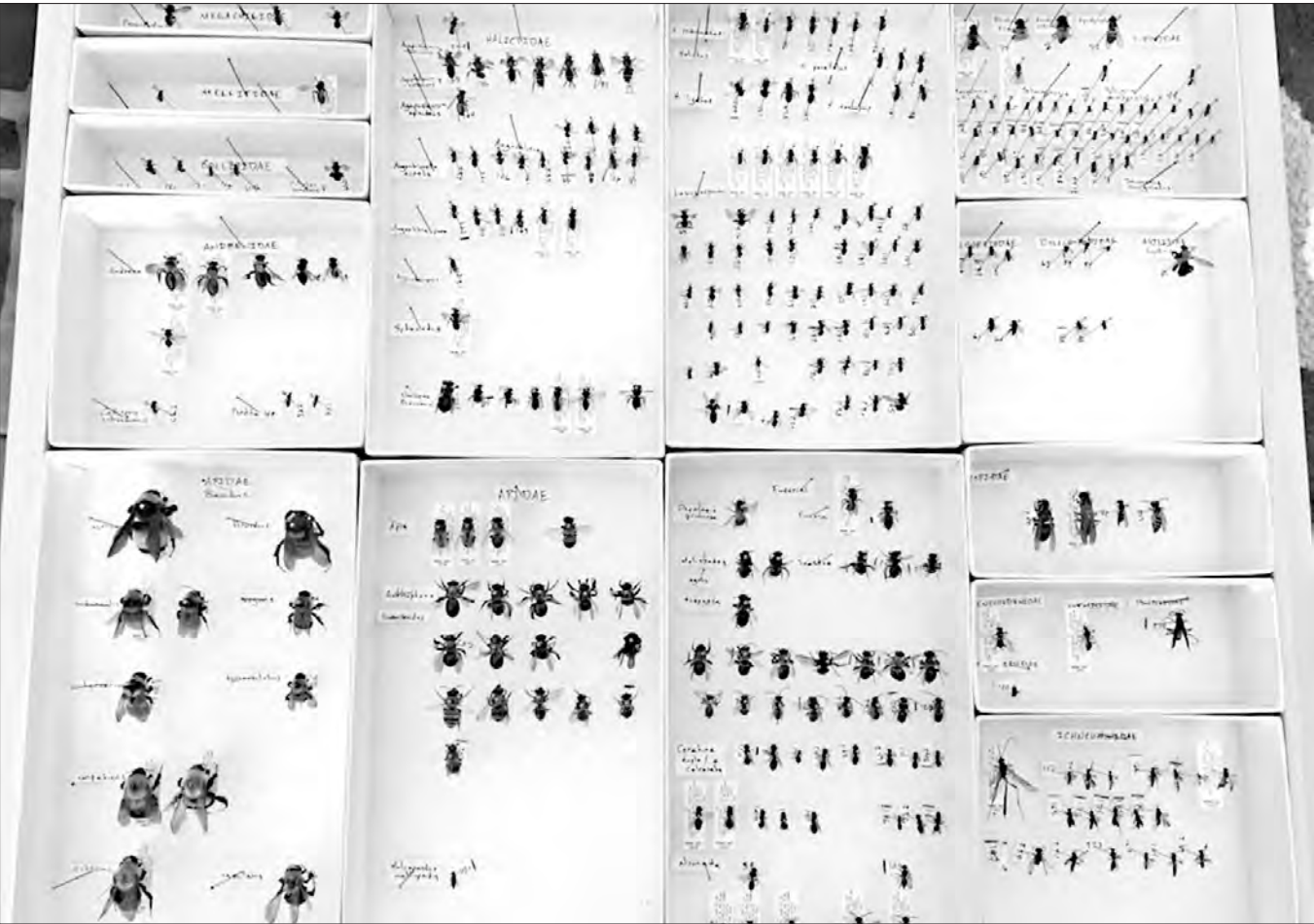


Photo courtesy of Nathan Grosse

Nathan Grosse caught a total of 257 different specimens and almost 70 different species of pollinators.

use directly affected the varying richness and diversity at the sites, saying he wish he would’ve visited fewer sites more times if he had the chance.

“The biggest investment of time was identifying the specimens,” Grosse said. “Some of (them) were only a few mm long, so most of the time spent on this was looking through a microscope to look at the small details.”

Grosse was the first to publish a list on the pollinators in the region, and will look to continue his work when he interns at the Carpenter Nature Center in Hastings and Hudson this summer. He will be doing an insect survey at both of their locations, which he hopes can increase his findings.

Grosse added that the research project significantly helped him learn how to present and convey the results of his findings. He’s already presented at three different locations and will try to summarize his research in Green Bay and Madison later this month.

“I got second place in the quick-pitch competition for my three minute pitch on why bees are important,” Grosse said. “I usually start by asking how much you think about food and how much do you think about bees, because 30 to 40 percent of global food production is by pollinating insects.”

Other students in CAFES will also be presenting in Green Bay, including Lucas Heimmermann, an animal science major with a meat animal emphasis. Instead of the hands-on research that Grosse participated in, Heimmermann focused more on analyzing data to solve a problem concerning the livestock industry.

“It’s part of continuing research that (Dr. Kurt Vogel) has been doing on the Food Safety and Inspection Service,” Heimmermann said. “We go through the letters of enforcement action on humane handling, and we look at the species involved and the reasoning behind the action.”

He found that a large proportion of the enforcement actions in 2017 included improper stunning of the animal. This occurs when an animal is being prepared to be slaughtered, because the goal is to have the animal feel as little pain as pos-

sible. Failures can occur when people don’t effectively use the captive bolt gun in one shot, and may take two or three shots to stun the animal.

“It’s an animal welfare issue,” Heimmermann said. “It’s our duty to provide these animals with proper animal welfare, and it’s something as a society that we’ve deemed is important. Our job as animal owners and users is to eliminate animal suffering as much as possible. One stun makes it easy, while extra stuns make it extremely stressful on the animal.”

Heimmermann concluded that more training is needed for these meat plant workers and farmers on the proper stunning methods. This work is part of ongoing research that Dr. Vogel has done in past years to determine what the industry needs to improve upon.

“It’s allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the material we’ve gone through in his class,” Heimmermann said. “It’s put what I’ve learned and I can apply ... it to the real life problems that we have.”

To aid the important process of taking research and putting into a digestible report, the URSCA office offers a series of poster-making workshops that specialize in the design and content for the student’s presentation. If students want to learn how to write a research proposal, find a mentor or put a research budget together, they have tools on the URSCA website.

“It is demanding,” Schneider-Rebozo said. “It’s what the student learns from writing the grant and doing the research and learning the project management to enable them to stay with it and keep going. Those skills together are what lead to the outstanding outcomes: retention, increased employability and success in graduate school.”

She said that she has heard from many of the students who have given research after they’ve finished at UWRF. In almost every case, the students had their URSCA presentation and research experience brought up in the formal interview process, and they believed it was what tipped the scales in their favor in a competitive job market.

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