

CRITERION FIVE

Engagement and Service

Dale Gallenberg, dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, addresses members of the Class of 1957. The alumni were back on campus in July 2007 as part of Alumni Weekend, an annual event designed to re-connect former students with their university.





There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.

— John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Engagement and Service

- *As called for by its mission, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.*

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls has a clear vision that guides its work with partners in the region:

We will be the learning nucleus of the St. Croix Valley. We will act in close collaboration with communities, institutions and private enterprise to create a dynamic economy, sustainable communities and environment, and an optimum quality of life.... We will link our students and our communities to global opportunities and collaborative relationships in the St. Croix Valley, in Wisconsin and beyond. We will be a life-long learning partner for all those who seek to discover their own potential and the richness and complexity of our multifaceted world.

The campus seeks to be more than a place; it seeks to be a vibrant presence in the lives of the people it serves.

This vision calls us to engage the people, organizations, and businesses in our region and in the world. We are dedicated to listen carefully to determine our partners' needs, and to use our talents, expertise, and resources to work together to enrich the health and vitality of the region.



INTRODUCTION

UW-River Falls operates in a dynamic environment. Surrounding counties are experiencing the fastest population growth in the state—a rate that places the region near the top in the nation. We recognize that the university is becoming more and more closely tied to the demographic, economic and societal forces shaping life in the St. Croix River Valley and the eastern edge of the St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area. This evolving environment presents numerous challenges and opportunities to engage and serve new and changing communities of learners. The region’s citizens and leaders look to the university as a facilitator for identifying and resolving environmental, economic and social issues, as well as a provider of educational resources to help address those issues.

UW-River Falls has embraced this role. Its mission, vision and core values declare the university’s commitment to reach out as leader and partner—to act, as our vision document states, “in close collaboration with communities, institutions and private enterprise to create a dynamic economy, sustainable

*In 1904, University of Wisconsin President Charles Van Hise declared that he would “never be content until the beneficent influence of the university reaches every family in the state.” Known as the **Wisconsin Idea**, that philosophy has been embraced by the UW System as “the boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the state.”*

communities, and an optimum quality of life.” We define our place in the region as one in which “we intentionally cultivate leadership through engagement and public service in the spirit of [the Wisconsin Idea](#).” The campus seeks to be more than a place; it seeks to be a vibrant presence in the lives of the people it serves.

The [College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences](#) (CAFES) provides leadership for the region, state and

beyond in agricultural education. With one of the top three undergraduate programs in dairy science in the country, CAFES has many close ties to the dairy industry, Wisconsin’s signature business, and all parts of the college deliver valued services to the agribusiness community. The agricultural education program attracts students from every part of the state, and produces a large percentage of the state’s teachers in that field. The faculty offers assistance to the food and animal production businesses, and the environmental sciences program leads sustainability efforts in the region.

The [College of Education and Professional Studies](#) (COEPS) plays a prominent role in training new teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, administrators, communicative disorders professionals, and social workers, and provides continuing education throughout the State of Wisconsin. Both COEPS and CAFES enjoy national reputations in the quality and reach of their educational and service programs.

Our relatively new [College of Business and Economics](#) (CBE) is a vital resource to business and industry, as well as to public/private economic development



corporations seeking expert assistance, student interns, and well-educated employees. Each year the [Small Business Development Center](#) assists scores of entrepreneurs and businesses.

The [College of Arts and Sciences](#) (CAS) contributes to the vitality of the region by providing consulting and educational expertise for fields like biotechnology, while also offering fine arts and performing arts that enhance the region's quality of life. It addresses issues of growth and change in partnership with the [Phipps Center for the Arts](#) in Hudson and in public presentations and discussions held at the [River Falls Public Library](#).

The [Outreach](#) office creates special programs to serve older adults, young people and working professionals. It recently partnered with the National Park Service in the creation of the [St. Croix River Institute](#), which works to understand and sustain the St. Croix River and river valley communities by connecting people with the St. Croix River through programs and classes.

This chapter provides a focused look at the way UW-River Falls:

1) communicates with its constituents to determine needs and fulfill expectations; 2) structures itself and builds capacity to meet demand; 3) responds to its constituents with effective programming; and 4) assesses the value of the services it provides.

CORE COMPONENT 5A

- The University of Wisconsin-River Falls learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

In 1997 a comprehensive survey of human resource professionals in the River Falls service area was conducted by UW System market research. The study was undertaken to identify educational needs and employer interest in educational opportunities for their employees. It identified more than 80 skills that employers felt were important for their managers. Those skills became the framework and program competencies for the UW-River Falls [master of management](#) degree program.

The master of management program provides an excellent example of how an academic program should be created—developed out of extensive analysis of the market and centered on the needs of the business community in western Wisconsin. With no state GPR support, the program extends the university's resources and faculty expertise in applied management and leadership to individuals and organizations across its service region. It strengthens the



region's workforce and provides employers with a competitive edge. The average age of program students is 37 and they have an average of nine years of business experience. These adult learners are well served by a program that is built around identified business needs.

By listening and responding, UW-River Falls honors its commitment to engage and serve its region. We immerse ourselves in the life of the community by sending students, faculty and staff out to make direct contacts. In turn, we invite learners, parents, alumni, educators, business people, government officials, community leaders, and residents to campus to take advantage of our facilities, our expertise, and our willingness to help them shape the future. Connecting to the people we serve is ingrained in the culture of the university. We continually seek input to improve programs and look for opportunities to partner with individuals or organizations. We conduct needs assessments to identify how the university can make a positive impact.

ADVISORY COUNCILS

UW-River Falls gathers input through a number of advisory councils. Several colleges and units have established these bodies to review and recommend programs and services. They draw on the expertise of representatives from alumni, employers, and specialists in the field to make sure our programs are current and relevant.

Chancellor's Advisory Council

The Chancellor's Advisory Council, formed in 2007-08, involves alumni and leaders from business, industry, government, education, and the nonprofit sector, who provide the chancellor and senior administration with advice on issues that affect the university community. The council, which meets at least twice each year, acts as a sounding board on institutional planning and proposed initiatives, and brings issues of concern to the attention of the chancellor.

Several of the colleges have benefited from well-structured and active advisory councils. Individual units and programs have also created advisory boards to guide curricular development and operational practices. Examples include:

Teacher Education

Teacher Education has a steering committee for its work with K-12 schools in our region. Superintendents or their designees meet with administrators and faculty from both CAS and COEPS to guide our work in complying with the state certification system, providing quality professional development that meets district and teacher needs, and making decisions about grant funding for these purposes. The committee offers input concerning our preparation of teachers and other professionals, many of whom have field experiences and student teaching or internship placements in these schools. Committee input led to the creation of a professional development program for recently hired teachers in the schools. Trained mentors from our K-12 partners conducted sessions for UWRF faculty assigned to mentor new faculty. The committee has received UW System grants to further this work.



College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

The CAFES advisory council is a group of 22 external stakeholders representing individual program areas within the college as well as at-large members. The council meets twice each year with college administration and faculty/staff to receive updates on personnel and activities, discuss current issues and opportunities, and assist in planning and evaluation. This group is currently assisting the college with strategic planning, fund development, needs prioritization, and program evaluation.

College of Business and Economics

CBE has two functioning advisory boards. The CBE alumni board and business advisory board have played critical roles in supporting the college's pursuit of AACSB accreditation. Members of both boards annually review the college's mission statement, serve on the strategic planning committee, and provide financial support for the CBE programs. The business advisory board was instrumental in developing and providing support for the CBE Executive-in-Residence series. This program brings a successful business professional to campus each semester to visit classes and make public presentations, sharing personal experiences and expertise with students, faculty, staff and community members. The board provides feedback on the master of management program and has made recommendations that have improved the courses and the structure of the degree program.

Social Work

A community advisory board provides a key link with social work professionals in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and the St. Croix Valley. Board input has resulted in: 1) the development of a course on substance use, abuse and addiction; 2) the addition of a computer literacy course requirement and its subsequent deletion when high schools began meeting this requirement; 3) new measurement processes for fieldwork courses; 4) the incorporation of global processes and spirituality content into the curriculum; and 5) an investigation into resource allocation for professional continuing education in social work. The advisory board has provided expert consultation to the program's accrediting agency as well.

Geography

Created in 2006-07, the geography program's advisory board has already made a substantial impact. It recommended refocusing the course matrix to concentrate on program strengths, resulting in the removal of 10 courses from the matrix. The board also suggested making the senior capstone course more challenging, so the course has been increased from two to three credits with the addition of a required poster presentation.

The university has used external consultants and external review teams to assess programs and units and make recommendations for improvement. In February 2006 a team [conducted a review](#) of Information Technology Services and by May 2006 a comprehensive [redesign of ITS](#) was launched. A cross-functional team composed of faculty, staff and students guided this effort, which identified strategic issues and yielded a series of tactical actions. In fall



2006, as part of the university's strategic planning process, these issues were formed into three initiatives—one focused on teaching, research and learning; one on technology infrastructure; and one on operational efficiency. Tasks were identified and progress on completing them is underway. The newly formed [Information and Instructional Technology Council \(IITC\)](#) will lead implementation of these objectives.



Tim Culver, left, vice president for retention services at Noel-Levitz, spent two days in discussions on campus in spring 2007. His recommendations are informing UWRF retention efforts and the work of the first-year experience program.

This self-study has previously detailed the use of a number of other consultants, including the external evaluation conducted for each of the academic program reviews, the campus presentations by authorities in the fields of general education and learning assessment, the involvement of external firms like Noel-Levitz to work with our enrollment services initiatives, and the consultants who worked with us in the areas of strategic planning. We are consistently analyzing our work and committed to learning ways that we might improve our operations to serve our many stakeholders.

FORUMS AND CONFERENCES

The university is an active participant in a variety of regional collaborations aimed at building stronger communities and resolving problems. These forums provide an important opportunity to gauge marketplace issues and solicit feedback on university initiatives.

The chancellor has hosted university/community luncheons on a periodic basis, allowing senior university administrators and governance leaders to meet with representatives of government, business, industry, nonprofit organizations and the media to explore areas of mutual interest. The luncheons open communication channels for sharing information about university programs and measuring community response. These conversations have focused on topics such as the use of technology, distance learning, and the development of biotechnology as an industry cluster in the St. Croix Valley. The community luncheons are part of a broader strategy to link the institution with leaders from both the public and private sectors.

UWRF led a series of 10 forums on regional economic development and regional collaboration to accommodate growth and change. The forums brought the university and community together to develop an in-depth understanding of the economic challenges facing Wisconsin and the St. Croix Valley. This regional analysis was carried to four [Wisconsin Economic Summits](#) held in Milwaukee from 2000-2003 in which leadership from throughout the state became acquainted with the opportunities and challenges of our dynamic



growth area. These forums produced results. The state funded the development of the Small Business Development Center on campus to assist businesses in our three primary counties of Pierce, Polk and St. Croix. Internally, we reallocated resources to create the Center for Economic Research to analyze trends and opportunities for business and industry.

Another tangible outcome of these regional and state forums was the creation of the [West Central Wisconsin Regional Development Coalition](#) (WCWRDC) comprised of nine counties in the St. Croix Valley and Chippewa Valley in west central Wisconsin. WCWRDC's purpose is to explore issues of growth and economic development. UWRF is an active partner in the [West Central Regional Education Consortium](#). The consortium includes UWRF, UW-Stout, UW-Eau Claire, Chippewa Valley Technical College, UW-Barron County, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and the regional Cooperative Educational Service Agencies ([CESA 10](#) and [CESA 11](#)). These consortia work together to host an annual [Synergy](#) conference that addresses such issues as broadband communication, employee health care financing, quality of life, and regional collaborations. The conference rotates among UW-River Falls, UW-Stout, UW-Eau Claire, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and UW-Barron County/Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. More than 250 leaders have attended from business, industry, government and education, including Gov. James Doyle, Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, cabinet secretaries, and several state legislators. The conference facilitates dialog with external collaborators like our sister UW institutions, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, Wisconsin Workforce Development, the Western Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the regional CESAs, and local governments.

UWRF led five regional leadership forums under Chancellor Lydecker to gauge the implications of growth and change in the St. Croix Valley. Attended by several hundred people, these forums were an extension of the monthly university/community luncheons and identified 110 distinct regional issues of common concern. Regional leaders broadly defined two issues: 1) the lack of communication among communities about common challenges and best practice solutions, and 2) a desire to accommodate growth and change while building community capacity and sustainability.

A specific outcome of these forums was UWRF's leadership in forming and incorporating the [Western Wisconsin Intergovernmental Collaborative](#) (WWIC). The WWIC is open to the chief elected officials and senior administrators of the 99 town, village, city and county governments in Pierce, St. Croix and Polk counties. Its purpose is to explore critical public policy issues of common interest and provide opportunities for collaboration.

PARTNERSHIPS

UWRF learns how to better serve its constituents through the establishment of partnerships, many initiated by faculty and staff who use these relationships to stay connected to the life of our region. These innovative collaborations



extend beyond the traditional academic or outreach programs. They link UWRF faculty, staff and students with teachers, leaders of business and industry, and economic development professionals. Some examples of these university-initiated collaborations include:

- The 2002 partnership between UWRF's Outreach and Graduate Studies and College of Education and Professional Studies with the UW System Market Research Office to survey elementary and secondary teachers in Wisconsin Cooperative Education Service Areas 10 and 11 as well as Dakota, Washington, and Ramsey counties in Minnesota. We sought to understand the needs of this region and to develop programs and delivery methods to address those needs. As a result, UWRF modified the way it communicates with this group about programs it offers, developed new offerings in areas of interest, and adjusted current offerings to meet expressed desires for new formats and locations. Specific changes include offering online classes, offering a master's program (shared inquiry communities) that meets on weekends in locations convenient to the participants, and offering grant-funded hybrid-delivered classes in a part of our region that has little access to professional development for teachers.
- UWRF continues an informal dialogue with the more than 20 chambers of commerce and visitors bureaus, business associations, and city or county economic development corporations in the region. Deans, faculty and staff members participate on several of the boards of directors, including the Pierce County Economic Development Corporation, the St. Croix County Economic Development Corporation, and the River Falls Economic Development Corporation, providing a valuable way to learn, share expertise, and respond to problems.
- Many area businesses are members of the [St. Croix Valley Regional Tourism Alliance](#), which UWRF helped form more than 14 years ago. This bi-state organization brings a cohesive marketing approach to the region's tourism industry. The university was recognized with an award of excellence from the Council for the Advancement of Support of Education for outstanding community relations in forming that collaborative. The UWRF public affairs office has helped the group win promotional grants from Explore Minnesota Tourism and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, which have increased the visibility of the region and the university. Award-winning alliance programs have been recognized by the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, the Wisconsin Synergy Economic Development Conference, and the National Communicators Awards. The tourism alliance, with UWRF's assistance, has generated other regional collaborations, such as [Inns of the Valley](#) (a lodging marketing collaboration in 12 communities), and the [St. Croix Scenic Coalition](#) (which is pursuing federal scenic byway designation for both the Wisconsin and Minnesota corridors).



- The recently created [St. Croix River Institute](#) is a collaborative effort between UWRF and the National Park Service. The institute seeks to build greater understanding of the river as a resource and strengthen stewardship efforts throughout its watershed. The institute offered several pilot classes in the summers of 2006 and 2007 and co-sponsored and hosted the eighth annual conference on “Protecting the St. Croix” in spring 2007. The institute recently received a planning grant of \$50,000 from the McKnight Foundation.
- UWRF has been invited to join the mitigation board, a joint project of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation, that has been formed to help manage change expected with the planned construction of a new bridge across the St. Croix River near Stillwater, Minn. The mitigation board is overseeing the disbursement of more than \$3.5 million in the three-county area to adjust to projected population growth in the region and the associated economic, environmental and societal challenges. The mitigation board has earmarked \$50,000 for workshops and training for land use issues and will be allocating the money to UWRF to provide training and hold educational forums for local leaders and administrators.

OUTREACH

The [Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies](#) (OGS) provides quality learning experiences to meet the needs of lifelong learners in the St. Croix Valley and beyond. Outreach programs are practical and accessible to nontraditional learners and designed to provide a climate in which these students can thrive.

In the past decade, demand for learning opportunities among nontraditional learners has grown, and OGS has responded to this need by developing and offering several new graduate degrees and certificates, as well as noncredit programs and events. In the past few years, Outreach has developed mechanisms for communicating and working with its varied constituents.

“This is not a cookie-cutter program. You can expand your passion and construct a program that directly relates to your goals.”

— Graduate student Stacy Valen on the Shared Inquiry Community program

OGS conducts regular needs assessments to keep its offerings current, including surveys, focus groups, advisory boards, and personal contacts. UWRF, in conjunction with other western Wisconsin institutions, recently received a UW-Extension [Edvantage Grant](#) to conduct surveys of businesses in west central Wisconsin and identify their educational needs. Market research drives Outreach’s programming decisions, and its events and programs are designed for audiences with varied interests in all age brackets.

The majority of Outreach programs have been for PK-12 educators, and we have made changes in recent years to meet the changing needs of that audience. Adjustments include offering degree, certification, and certificate



programs both online and off-campus, on weekends and in the evening. For example, a key feature of the [shared inquiry communities program](#) is that all class meetings are held on weekends, and student work can be completed online. The response to this new program has been very positive—44 students enrolled the first term it was offered and completed the program in 2007. Over 60 students are currently enrolled in three communities. The master of science in education programs, which allow learners to take several classes each summer, is convenient for teachers. Today, PK-12 educators can find several options for professional development at UWRF, including credit and noncredit classes on current topics of interest, in specific content areas and educational pedagogy, in various delivery formats, at multiple locations, and at times preferred by participants.

The PK16 Model Academy and ESEA grants received by COEPS since 2004 have become the forum for our collaboration with eight local school districts. Through them, we provide grant-funded professional development for teachers and administrators, both in the area of new teacher transitions, and in content and curriculum development. The grant steering committee meets bimonthly to give input both on grant-related activities and on our educator preparation and professional development programs. Focus groups of area administrators are used to identify topics for online professional development courses for administrators and teachers.

CORE COMPONENT 5B

- The University of Wisconsin-River Falls has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Harvey Stower, mayor of Amery, a small city of 2,500 about 40 miles north of River Falls, wanted some help. His community's redevelopment committee had identified 21 revitalization challenges that needed attention. However, he realized that expertise in planning and prioritization was required, so Stower turned to UW-River Falls in 2003. The university responded with cooperation from several sectors. College of Business and Economics dean Barbara Nemecek and professor Glenn Potts offered strategic planning help, facilitating discussions, prioritizing projects, and building stakeholder support groups. Professor Kelly Cain enlisted 10 students in his site planning and development course to create a plan for six redevelopment projects. Geography professors Charles Rader and John Heppen contributed their skills in mapping and geographic information systems. Amery's leaders were pleased with their set of workable plans... and a successful new partnership.



We connect and we reach out to provide assistance. We communicate through press releases, our Web site, advertising campaigns, and the publications and flyers that are distributed to the general public, alumni, and patrons who have been active participants in our activities. We embrace the philosophy of the century-old “[Wisconsin Idea](#),” that “the borders of the university are the borders of the state.” As a result, we regularly schedule activities at other locations in our service area so as to make them accessible to residents who are not on or near the campus.

We bring decision-makers to campus to demonstrate the vibrancy of campus life, to share concerns and needs, and to celebrate accomplishments. Wisconsin governors, state legislators, UW System regents, local elected officials, and community leaders are frequent guests. Through their visits, they become aware of the role UWRF plays in improving quality of life in the region.

STRUCTURING OUR EFFORTS

Several units and programs at UWRF create connections with the university’s external constituents. These units provide a structure for our interactions, and they demonstrate our capacity to serve.

University of Wisconsin-Extension

As part of the University of Wisconsin System, we have access to the support and resources of the statewide extension program. UW-Extension has four major units: Cooperative Extension; Continuing Education, Outreach and E-Learning; Broadcasting and Media Innovations; and the Division of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development. As part of that structure, some of the following UWRF offices and staff are aligned with and report to UW-Extension.

Cooperative Extension

The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences has eight faculty and one staff member with appointments in cooperative extension. They work with program priority areas in agriculture; agri-business; food science; land use planning; and community, natural resource, and economic development. Our cooperative extension efforts promote and ensure the continued health, growth and competitiveness of these sectors.

Outreach and Graduate Studies

The Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies actively collaborates with college deans and faculty to develop credit and non-credit programs of value to adult and continuing learners, senior citizens, young people, and other audiences. These programs are often implemented at the request of external collaborators, and users are surveyed and programs adjusted in response to recommendations. Under the direction of the director of graduate studies, the graduate council routinely reviews graduate programs and courses to ensure that they meet the needs and expectations of advanced learners.



Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Center for Economic Research (CER)

These units, housed in the College of Business and Economics, respond to needs of local businesses and organizations. The SBDC works with entrepreneurs and small business owners in this region, providing information, advising and training to meet their needs. The CER assists with research to support economic development in the region.

The Integrated Marketing Program

As part of its current strategic plan, “Living the Promise,” UWRF has embarked on an ambitious marketing effort, which will attempt to bring the university into closer relationships with its many constituencies. With a stronger commitment to upfront market research, more integrated and consistent messaging in its communications, and follow-up measurements of success, the university will be able to demonstrate more effectively its ability to respond to the needs and expectations of the people it serves.

Survey Research Center (SRC)

Since the mid-1990s the SRC has provided high-quality survey services to academics, nonprofit organizations, local units of government, and others. Currently the center, which is overseen by one faculty member and four academic staff, provides academically relevant, on-campus employment for about one dozen students. The SRC works with approximately 30 clients per year on a wide variety of survey topics. Recent examples include land use, poverty in western Wisconsin, business redevelopment, demand for YMCA services, housing on Native American reservations, labor issues, and transitions to college.

Program Reviews

In conjunction with the academic program reviews discussed in chapter three, we conduct surveys of each program’s alumni to measure satisfaction with the program and the quality of education that they received. The reviews provide another measure of our institutional engagement and service. Programs are adjusted and modified based on these reviews.

University Advancement

The Office of University Advancement includes both the UW-River Falls alumni association and the UW-River Falls Foundation. These distinct entities, served by the same staff, connect with and engage the alumni and friends of the university through personal contacts, periodic electronic mailings, and the distribution of university publications, including *Falcon Features*, a semi-annual feature magazine. The university advancement office sponsors a wide array of programs and events that advance the university’s strategic goals of promoting UWRF, developing engaged leaders, expanding global literacy, and securing financial resources. Many departments connect with former students through department newsletters and special events. These connections provide opportunities for feedback and for future partnerships.



COMMITMENT TO ENGAGEMENT

Engagement and service occur at all levels—administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni—all contributing to community engagement. Often UWRF students are the best ambassadors for the campus, applying their knowledge to community needs, sharing their time and energy in volunteer service, and increasing productivity through internships and field experiences.

Service-Learning

These opportunities have become more prevalent in the curricular offerings as faculty take advantage of opportunities to connect their classroom instruction with real world service experience.

One such endeavor is the [Falcon Tutors Program](#), an ongoing relationship with public schools in St. Paul, Minn., coordinated by an [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) staff person in conjunction with faculty in the College of Education and Professional Studies. Falcon Tutors are UWRF education students who help students at Arlington High School complete their secondary education. The project involves university students who are completing field placement requirements in three education courses. Since the spring of 2004, over 800 UWRF students have worked as Falcon Tutors, providing over 20,000 hours of tutoring and classroom help to students at Eastern Heights Elementary, Highwood Hills Elementary, Washington Technology Magnet Middle School, and Arlington High School. These schools are failing under the No Child Left Behind Act. The program provides real learning for our students and a very important service to the schools and students involved.

“I think the whole idea of helping kids who need it is a great way for college students to learn and get some much needed experience.”

— education major and Falcon Tutor Katie Zappa

Additional evidence of institutional intentionality in service-learning includes:

- In 2004 the [general education program](#) adopted a new interdisciplinary



A UW-River Falls Falcon Tutor helps these St. Paul youth with their English assignment.



model designed to create and foster student awareness of their role within the larger society. Students are required to meet goal five: “evaluate individual responsibility to self, society and the world.” The primary learning outcome for that goal states: “Students will make and defend judgments with respect to individual conduct and well being, citizenship, and stewardship of the environment.” In addition to an ethical citizenship class, all students are required to complete two [university requirements](#), dealing with American cultural diversity and global perspectives.

- Of the 41 undergraduate degree programs, 17 state explicitly that one of their goals is to develop citizens who will be involved with their communities after graduation.
- Nearly 100 institutional scholarships require or give preference to participation in some form of civic engagement.
- Several degree programs utilize a service-learning component:
 - The UWRF [honors program](#) offers a service-learning course each semester (Hon 371). Students are required to complete at least one credit of service-learning (45 hours of reflective service-learning) and can earn up to six credits of service-learning in the program.
 - Students in the [health and human performance exercise and sport science option](#) are required to complete a sophomore practicum (one credit) and senior practicum (four credits). Practicum sites include YMCAs, summer camps, fitness clubs, professional athletic teams, hospitals, community park and recreation departments, and nonprofit organizations.
 - The [Department of Communicative Disorders](#) provides services to clients in a variety of settings that provide valuable service-learning, practicum, and internship experiences for students in the program. These services include:
 - the [University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic](#), which serves over 50 clients per week, providing assessment and intervention services for people of all ages who experience a variety of communication disorders including autism, hearing disorders, stuttering, language disorders, traumatic brain injury and stroke
 - annual hearing screenings to over 1,000 elementary school children in the greater St. Croix Valley and hearing conservation programs to the employees of the UWRF facilities management department and City of River Falls utilities department
 - pediatric swallowing assessments through a partnership with the River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH) and its radiology department
 - support groups for community members who experience communication disorders. Support groups are offered for individuals who stutter, experience aphasia, or develop strong fears in public communication situations
- Our [Falcon Fellows program](#) was created in 2005 with support from the [Midwest Campus Compact](#) citizen-scholars fellowship program (M3C Fellows Program). The grant provides \$1,000 scholarships for up to 15 students who perform at least 300 hours of community service.

In our [2007 survey](#), 37 percent of UWRF faculty and staff reported the inclusion of a community-based project in their classes. However, in the 2006 NSSE



survey, 83 percent of first-year students at UWRF reported that they plan or have completed an experiential course either voluntarily or as required by their department. This is four percent higher than the UW System average. About 74 percent of seniors have performed or plan to participate in a service-learning activity. We will continue working to increase those numbers; however, the data support the conclusion that public service is an active part of our work with students.

In 2006-07 UWRF was awarded [VISTA](#) federal funding to retain a specialist who inventoried and explored expanding service-learning opportunities in neighboring communities.

Students have been actively engaged in service-learning with faculty in such regional projects as revitalizing the downtown of Osceola following a devastating flood; redevelopment of the downtown and [brownfield reclamation](#) in Amery; and the creation of a historic district as part of downtown revitalization in St. Croix Falls. Public history students have contributed to the work of the local historical society, and worked with the National Park Service to plan a new visitors center in Prescott.

Internships and Field Experiences

Internships blend a student's coursework and a real world work experience in a supervised setting. Businesses and organizations benefit from this program, as do UWRF faculty and students. Employers representing over 700 different companies [post positions with us](#) and/or recruit our students every year. Annually 350 to 450 students from multiple disciplines participate in internships in a wide range of settings. An additional 200 to 300 students annually participate in student teaching.

Agricultural education major Regina Schaefer interned as a 4-H youth summer agent for Pierce County Extension in 2002.

Internships and field experiences are housed and managed within each of the colleges. Practical work experiences have long been part of the UWRF curriculum as evidenced by course offerings in all departments. Each major or program on campus has one or more identified faculty internship coordinator(s) responsible for working directly with the students in placement, development of individualized learning objectives, approval of a special internship project, oversight during the internship,



and evaluation. The faculty coordinators generally work directly with companies and organizations to develop internship opportunities and to build strong, long-term collaborative relationships. The College of Agriculture, Food and



Environmental Sciences has a [college internship office](#) with a part-time director to provide support to its faculty coordinators. The College of Business and Economics has a lead staff adviser designated to [coordinate internships](#). In the College of Education and Professional Studies, the [field experience office](#) provides assistance with the placement for student teaching and coordinates field experiences for students and faculty in other education courses. Because of the range of disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences, field experiences and internships are managed at the departmental level. The colleges have made efforts to utilize internal resources to provide faculty support for professional experience supervision. [Career Services](#) provides additional [support services](#) to promote internships. The Professional Experience Advisory Team (PEAT), a coordinating campus leadership group, includes representatives from all of the colleges and Career Services. The team coordinates and responds to common issues across programs.

In the past ten years, 724 College of Business and Economics students provided over 100,000 hours of internship service to 365 regional organizations. Over the same period, 1,641 students in CAFES worked as interns, serving nearly 250,000 hours with 203 different companies. An additional 1,608 students in CAS devoted well over 200,000 hours in a wide range of settings. These internships have provided invaluable professional experience for our students and have also yielded benefits for the organizations that put the student work to good use.

Volunteerism

UWRF students have consistently demonstrated a willingness to serve others. For 10 years, Student Affairs has been organizing a [volunteer day](#), when students spend a Saturday working with one of several local agencies to

“We were flooded with ideas of how to help. We followed through on those that could be done realistically. We didn’t over commit and let people down. We focused on people-to-people connections, lasting partnerships that can grow and develop.”

— Blake Fry, then dean for student development and campus diversity, on UWRF’s response to Hurricane Katrina

connect with and give something back to the River Falls community. We have begun to offer service activity options in our [Weeks of Welcome \(WOW\)](#) orientation program, to encourage a commitment to volunteerism.

Student leaders reorganized the Leadership Development and Programming Board’s segregated university fee allocation committee structure to include a committee charged with [supporting student volunteer efforts](#) both financially and programmatically. In 2006 a [Community Involvement Fair](#) was launched to offer students opportunities to connect with nonprofit organizations.

A good example of a volunteer effort undertaken with support from all parts of the institution was the campus response to [Hurricane Katrina](#). Faculty, staff and students mobilized immediately to offer several forms of assistance, including “alternative break” trips with over 100 students, faculty and staff traveling to



Gulfport, Miss., to assist in the clean-up. During spring break 2006, mass communication students followed 40 students to the Gulf Coast to produce a documentary video about this effort. The video was presented at the AASCU's American Democracy Project's national conference, as evidence of our public service efforts. The videos and relief efforts were recognized with two awards: a Bronze Telly award in the recruitment category and a Communicator Award of Distinction.

Other volunteer ventures take place through the auspices of student organizations. While most of the more than 160 organizations have missions specific to academic, social, or recreational interests—rather than service—many of these groups also perform service in the region as part of their activities. We



The November 2007 blood drive on campus collected a record 329 units over two days. UWRF is ranked No. 2 among area colleges and universities in total units of blood collected, having collected 3,113 units over the past 28 blood drives.

have an active [Habitat for Humanity](#) chapter, and a large number of students participate in the [Big Brothers/Big Sisters](#) program. The Health, Physical Education and Recreation Club provides staffing support to physically challenged horseback riders through the local [Walk On therapeutic nonprofit riding](#) organization. The UWRF Accounting Society provides free tax preparation assistance each March for those in the River Falls area with low incomes. Sorority members visit local assisted living facilities to provide social interaction for residents, and the Honors Club has sponsored Senior Prom for area senior citizens. Students and staff in residence halls have invited local children to “Trick or Treat” in the halls for more than 25 years, and “penny wars” waged during homecoming week have raised thousands of dollars over the past 10 years for various local charities. The [Community Action Theatre \(CATTs\)](#) organizes an annual Christmas child program, packing gift-filled shoe boxes to send to children worldwide impacted by poverty, illness, war, famine and displacement. In 2007 CATTs packed 427 boxes for the program. Several organizations participate in the “Adopt a Highway” program to keep local roads clean. A large number of campus groups, including the chancellor’s council and several of the residence hall units, participate in the community’s [Relay for Life event](#), raising funds for cancer research.

In addition to their time and talents, students literally give of themselves to help others. UWRF has hosted 28 Red Cross blood drives that have collected a total of 3,113 units of blood. Blood donations have been steadily increasing, and the [November 2007 drive](#) yielded 329 units of blood, the most successful collection to date at UWRF.



Engagement with our Alumni

The [UW-River Falls alumni association](#) serves 36,221 alumni and 10,953 former students throughout the United States and the world. The alumni association sponsors programs that engage and promote the university to its alumni and friends. The activities of the association include:

- keeping our alumni informed through the university magazine, [Falcon Features](#), which is distributed to nearly 50,000 alumni and friends twice each year
- connecting with alumni electronically through online newsletters and special notices to more than 10,000 alumni
- hosting 32 events for alumni and friends with 1,562 attendees during the 2006-07 fiscal year
- working with [Career Services](#) to offer a career-networking [mentor program](#), and with the [public affairs office](#) to develop the [Falcon Action Network](#)
- collaborating with the university's [Global Connections](#) office to sponsor various alumni activities for our international alumni in Taiwan, Mexico, Japan, Pakistan, India, China, the United Kingdom, and other European countries
- sponsoring the distinguished alumnus award that recognizes the accomplishments of our alumni and the outstanding service award, which recognizes the exemplary contributions of individuals and organizations outside the university
- coordinating the distinguished alumnus day program to provide an opportunity for our outstanding graduates to share their expertise and knowledge with our students, faculty, staff, and members of the community

The alumni association works closely with the colleges and departments, identifying and developing engaged alumni leaders to serve on their advisory and alumni boards, locating guest speakers, and assisting in special events planning. The alumni association has completed two alumni directory projects during the past decade and plans to produce a directory in 2008. The alumni association is planning to survey our alumni to help develop and determine strategies to better serve them as we strive to enhance those lifelong connections and relationships to the university.

EMPOWERING ADVOCATES

We believe building support for our mission increases our capacity to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. To that end, UWRF has initiated numerous advocacy networks, which help shape public policy and attract additional resources. These include:

The Regent “Buddy” Program

Each year the UW System Board of Regents assigns two regents to “partner” with a campus and learn more about that university’s unique attributes. They visit the campus, attend events, meet students, become aware of our programs and strengths, and participate in wide-ranging discussions. During the fall 2006 commencement, Regent Mark Bradley, then vice president of the board, addressed the graduates and their families on the importance of investing in the UW System. In spring 2007 three different regents visited campus for day-long information sessions. A total of six Regents have worked



UW System Regent Charles Pruitt gestures during an on-campus information session with faculty, staff and students in spring 2007. The entire board held its monthly meeting on campus in October 2007.

in this capacity with UWRF over the past three years, greatly increasing our connections with the board, and helping members of the board become aware of our work with students and the region.

In October 2007 the entire UW System [Board of Regents held their meeting on the River Falls campus](#), which allowed them to gain a better understanding of UWRF, our campus education initiatives, and our service to the St. Croix Valley.

The Falcon Action Network (FAN)

Interaction with elected state officials is critical to ensuring that UWRF receives adequate resources. To assist in these efforts, we launched the Falcon Action Network in 2006. The program invites alumni, friends, students, faculty and staff to advocate for UWRF in Madison, as well as with our federal delegation. FAN members have testified at legislative hearings and they regularly communicate with legislators to advance our budget, capital improvement projects, and other enabling legislation.

UW Days

During budget deliberations held each biennial legislature session, our campus participates in “UW Days” at the state Capitol. This event is a joint effort of the [University of Wisconsin System](#) administration and [UW Colleges](#) and [Extension](#). Delegations of community leaders, alumni and other advocates for the UW System attend intensive meetings with legislators in their Madison offices to pursue legislative support for our biennial budget initiatives.

United St. Croix Valley Days

UWRF has rallied regional support for the university. In 2005 the three-county region (Pierce, St. Croix, and Polk) launched a [United St. Croix Valley Days](#) regional lobbying effort to affect public policy by interacting with Wisconsin’s governor, his administration, and the legislature. UWRF participated in the



leadership of the process to identify economic development issues; to formulate strategies and tactics to advance those issues to the governor and the state's legislative leadership; and to maintain momentum on critical topics. With the assistance of UWRF, the region has been quite successful in advancing its agenda of state policy initiatives to expand broadband technology into rural areas and achieve support for economic development projects in border counties, to allow them to compete more effectively with neighboring states. The organization has lobbied for additional state resources for baccalaureate completion programs, student retention, teacher education training, and our transfer information system with Wisconsin technical colleges.



Third District Congressman Ron Kind was on campus in October 2006 promoting energy conservation. UWRF hosts a number of public policy forums throughout the year with elected officials.

Town Hall Meetings

National public policy discussions occur on campus when we host the "Town Hall" meetings of U.S. Senator Russ Feingold and U.S. Rep. Ron Kind of the Third Congressional District. These frequent meetings enable us to serve as a setting for St. Croix Valley residents to voice their concerns on federal issues. They also afford UW-River Falls administrators, students, faculty and staff the opportunity to address such critical concerns as Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, and other components of federal programs that affect our ability to provide accessible education and outreach services. Since 2005 UWRF representatives have made regular visits to Washington, D.C., to advocate for directed funding to meet the needs of our external communities, including the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development and bio-security initiatives to train small business operators in meat processing, dairy science, and fruit and vegetable processing.

RESOURCES

UWRF has devoted substantial resources to support effective engagement and service programs. Human and financial resources were allocated to create the Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies, the Center for Economic Research, and the Small Business Development Center. The Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies was created in 2001-02 to coordinate the outreach activities that had been occurring across campus. From its start with a half-time director and a portion of an administrative assistant, the office now employs a full-time director and nearly a dozen people (10.84 FTE). Much of the growth in that office can be traced to funding from the Title III grant and the program revenue produced by many successful programs.

We provide staffing and funding to cooperative extension, the Agriculture Resource Center, alumni relations, university advancement, career services,



and public affairs to support our work with external partners in the region. The following table indicates the level of the university’s commitment in personnel and funding to support our outreach efforts.

2006-07 Budget				
Office	GPR	Other Funding Sources	Total Budget	FTE
Outreach and Graduate Studies	\$ 1,691,289	\$ 65,505	\$ 1,756,794	10.84
Center for Economic Research	–	3,000	3,000	0
Small Business Development Center	40,080	14,112	54,192	1.22
St. Croix Economic Development	7,616	–	7,616	0.20
Cooperative Extension	254,032	35,072	289,104	4.22
Agriculture Resource Center	167,766	80,000	247,766	1.83
Office of University Advancement and Alumni Relations	210,568	209,903	420,471	8.00
Career Services	214,602	175,503	390,105	6.00
Public Affairs	179,450	4,235	183,685	2.50
Total	\$ 2,765,403	\$ 587,330	\$ 3,352,733	34.81

Figure 5-1

Funding Support for Outreach Efforts

In addition to the above and just as significant, the time and human resources from all parts of the campus connected to the projects cited in this chapter demonstrate our commitment and investment in service.

We have received grants that have supported our engagement and service activities. COEPS grant-writing has obtained \$300,000 to support professional development for teachers and PK-12 connections. Jennifer Borup, social work, has written a series of grants to create the [Western Wisconsin Partnership for Children and Families](#) that provides training and support for social workers in western Wisconsin. Her most recent grant was for \$521,500.

A Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers to use Technology (PT3) grant of \$572,000 from the U.S. Department of Education began in 1999. Out of that program, UWRF developed the VIVA program (Vital Issues in Virtual Assemblies) to expand the program to other UW System teacher education units. This was supported by another U.S. Department of Education grant of \$1,500,000 for 2001-04. The VIVA and PT3 grant funds supported the development of the [Technology Leadership Cadre](#) and our teacher education and school counseling electronic portfolios for certification.

Our cooperative extension faculty have received a total of \$2,013,766 in grants from 175 funded proposals since 2000, to provide substantial support for our



activities. The part-time appointment of a staff member to support the grant writing initiatives has proven to be one of the keys to securing grants. Grants have supported student involvement in 47 different projects that employed 117 students at a payroll of \$234,500.

UW-RIVER FALLS FOUNDATION

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Foundation, founded 60 years ago, is an institutionally related nonprofit organization that serves the university. The foundation board of directors includes alumni, donors, and community leaders as well as the ex-officio representatives from the university. The foundation's board has started to identify and recruit new members who will serve in leadership capacities during a comprehensive campaign. The board has moved toward a governance model that addresses the issues of growth, donors' expectations, investment and budget management, federal/state regulations for nonprofit organizations, and an emerging campaign.

In 2007 the university and the UWRF Foundation started planning and implementing the institution's first comprehensive campaign. Campaign priorities align with the university strategic plan and will include support for the new health and human performance facility, other facility and technology projects, scholarships, academic programs, unrestricted funding for the highest priorities, endowments, and documented planned gifts. The campaign dollar goals and timetable will be finalized after a campaign feasibility study is conducted. The alumni association will play a vital role in the university's comprehensive campaign, engaging and developing relationships with alumni constituency and gathering a wide-array of information about them.

In anticipation of a campaign, the foundation enhanced the annual giving program five years ago and started to build a major gift program three years ago. The value of the foundation's endowment on June 30, 2007, was \$11,382,873, which is a \$5.6 million increase since 2003. The foundation's charitable contributions have averaged \$1.5 million over the last four fiscal years. Average endowment contributions over the last four fiscal years are approximately \$600,000 and unrestricted contributions have averaged approximately \$250,000 a year.

The average number of donors during the last four fiscal years is approximately 6,000 and includes alumni, friends, parents, faculty, staff, foundations, corporations, and organizations. The alumni participation rate in 2006-07 was 12.1 percent.

In 2006-07 the UW-River Falls Foundation awarded \$460,174 in 545 scholarships and funded \$466,351 for facilities and programs. Unrestricted contributions supported the operations of the foundation as well as 45 grants totaling \$162,000 for the university's magazine, online newsletter, faculty research, equipment, undergraduate research, and leadership recognition.



CORE COMPONENT 5C

- The University of Wisconsin-River Falls demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

In 2000, regional dairy farmers came to UWRF with a problem. Large dairy operations had difficulty finding reliable labor, and they had begun to connect with a labor pool of non-English speaking migrant workers. The farmers were happy to have a dependable workforce and the workers were happy to have year-round employment and homes. However, the worker's lack of fluency in English was creating problems in the workplace, as well as when these new residents attempted to navigate the world of business, shopping, banking, and life in rural Wisconsin. Upon investigation, we discovered that approximately 15 percent of the milk produced in Wisconsin was handled by non-English speaking workers. In 2001 we

launched the Dairy Workers English as a Second Language Program (ESL) and the following year broadened it to cover workplace ESL training more generally. Program activities included a tutor training course and tutor field experience, in which trained tutors were placed in workplaces to help non-English speaking/limited English proficiency (NES/LEP) workers begin the process of learning English. A total of 31 tutors have been trained.

A one-day conference, "Changing Workplaces, Changing Communities: Easing the Transition to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

Workplaces" was held in River Falls in 2003. The ESL program was also offered on the state-wide distance learning network. The dairy workers program met its goals and is no longer offered; however, it provides another clear example of our response to an expressed need. Students in our TESOL program continue to provide a wide range of services to non-English speaking people in the region.



UWRF student Cathy Woodworth teaches English to Ricardo, an immigrant farm worker, as part of the Workplace ESL program launched in 2001. The UWRF TESOL program reaches across the region and around the world to overcome language barriers.

This section focuses on UWRF's responsiveness—the programs, services, collaborations, and agreements that have been established to serve people and benefit our stakeholders. The offerings take many forms—educational programming, economic development assistance, research application, and expert advice.



WORKING WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS

The university has been active in building relationships with diverse audiences, including young people, senior citizens and communities of color. Several programs involving communities of color have been described previously: the Milwaukee [Vincent High School program](#), the [Falcon Tutors](#) program, and the [Explore](#) program. Our [Senior Outreach Studies \(SOS\)](#) program addresses the interests of senior citizens. We also offer [Discover U](#), an enrichment program for youth. Additional examples of effective engagement of diverse audiences include:

“Picturing America: Cinematic Representations of America’s Ethnic Diversity”

Hosted by the UWRF English department, this National Endowment for the Humanities summer institute for secondary teachers was offered in 1996, 2000, and 2001. For five weeks each summer, 25 secondary teachers from across the country screened films, analyzed and interpreted them, and discussed each film’s literary, historical, cultural, and social significance in helping us understand America’s relationships to and representations of ethnic minorities. Participants read widely on history, literature, social and cultural issues, and film history of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos/as, and Native Americans and screened documentaries, and mainstream Hollywood films as well as independent films created by ethnic film makers. Four of the film scholars who lectured at the 2001 institute submitted essays to be included in a book that was edited by UWRF professors Carole Gerster and Laura Zlogar. *Teaching Ethnic Diversity with Film: Essays and Resources for Educators in History, Social Studies, Literature, and Film Studies* was published by McFarland Publishers in 2006.

Global Kids Program

In 2006-07, 45 area elementary children participated in the Global Kids program. Through the use of games, songs and other hands-on activities, children from River Falls, Ellsworth, Prescott and Hudson spent eight weeks in the fall and eight weeks in winter studying German, Chinese and Spanish language and culture.

Wyman Series

Each year the Wyman Performing Arts Series sponsors eight to 10 events funded by [student segregated fees](#). Prior to 2002 there was a separate series of diversity performances called “Bridges Across Our Community” that was combined with the Wyman Series to provide a wider array of performances and lend a higher profile to our diversity events. Thousands of community members, as well as classes from the local public schools, have joined our campus community in celebrating diversity through these performances, concerts, lectures and exhibits.

Unity in the Community

Held on campus each April, the day-long celebration includes speakers, interactive music and dance performances, art exhibits, and ethnic food. In 2006 it grew to include the River Falls community with shared exhibits in



The annual Unity in the Community celebration includes multicultural music and dance performances both on campus and at the city's Veterans Park.

the public schools and a culminating celebration in Veterans Park in the heart of the city.

Shelter From the Storm

UW-River Falls is home to a growing number of students who have come to this country as refugees. A collaborative venture between the admissions office and the journalism department, developed with support from a UWRF race and ethnicity grant, engages the campus in a dialogue about the unique challenges and journeys of its refugee students.

WORKING WITH OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Strong partnerships have been formed between UW-River Falls and other educational entities to give students options and achieve unique outcomes. Examples include:

Inter-Institutional Cooperative Agreements

In 2007 UWRF took steps to solidify our collaborative relationships on education, research and community assistance in partnership with UW-Eau Claire, UW-Stout and Chippewa Valley Technical College. This included signing the "Educational Partnership for Regional Development" document to institutionalize these relationships to serve the combined St. Croix Valley and Chippewa Valley region along the "I-94 Technology Zone." Through this collaboration, UWRF participates in the [Regional Business Assistance Resource](#) (ReBAR), a searchable database of faculty business and consulting expertise launched in 2007. ReBAR is a commitment by the region's public higher educational systems to help strengthen the economic vitality of west-central Wisconsin by offering a mechanism for access to the outreach capabilities of each institution. In January 2008 UWRF will host the second annual [Integrated Solutions Symposium](#) of these campuses to explore potential research partnerships between the institutions.



Chippewa Valley Technical College

In 2006 UWRF was the recipient of a Title III U.S. Department of Education grant in partnership with the Chippewa Valley Technical College to deliver courses through alternative delivery methodologies. The \$2.5 million, five-year grant, “[Stronger Together: An Educational Partnership for the Changing Economy](#),” is supporting the development of cooperative bachelor’s degree programs.

Wisconsin/Minnesota Tuition Reciprocity

In operation since 1965—making it one of the oldest in the nation—the reciprocity agreement between Wisconsin and Minnesota allows residents of each state to pay their home-state tuition rate when attending a university in the other state. As a border campus, UWRF has historically enrolled a large percentage of Minnesota students (typically more than 40 percent). UWRF currently has over 2,800 Minnesota reciprocity students—the highest percentage in the UW System, and only UW-Madison enrolls a larger number of these students.

Youth Options Program

Since 1993 UWRF has enrolled more than 900 Wisconsin high school students who earn college credit through the Youth Options Program, either in on-campus courses or via off-campus, interactive TV courses. This is the fourth highest number of YOP students among the 13 UW System baccalaureate degree-granting campuses. Students enrolled on campus represent 20 high schools, while the instructional television courses account for an additional 18 high schools. UWRF also accepts credits earned by Minnesota high school students through that state’s similar Post Secondary Education Options program.

Transfer Agreements

[Transfer articulation agreements](#) have been established with a number of technical colleges and community colleges. Each of our undergraduate colleges (CBE, CAFES, COEPS, CAS) has been involved in this effort. Collaborative degree programs with other universities include [pre-engineering](#) dual degree programs with the University of Minnesota and UW-Madison, and [early childhood education/special education](#) programs with UW-Eau Claire. COEPS has an articulated program with Century College, a Minnesota two-year public institution, that brings diverse students into our secondary teacher education programs. The college is planning a hybrid [early childhood](#) program that will allow technical college early childhood graduates to complete a B.S. and Wisconsin certification as early childhood teachers. Course selection guides are posted to our Web site to assist transfers from the UW Colleges, selected Wisconsin technical colleges and UW System campuses, and many of the Minnesota community and technical colleges. The [UW Transfer Information System](#) is another tool available to assist students planning for transfer.

Principal Licensure Program

UWRF began offering this program in 2000 as a partnership with the University of St. Thomas, a private university in St. Paul, Minn. The impetus was a request



from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for administrative training programs in education. The partnership continued until 2006 when UWRF began offering the entire program. More than 50 candidates have enrolled since inception.

Library Partners

In 2007 the Chalmer Davee Library at UWRF partnered with 25 northwestern Wisconsin school districts to provide their students with a UWRF library card and the ability to borrow Davee Library materials at no cost. As part of the agreement, Davee Library staff provides free instruction for these district librarians, media specialists and high school teachers, so that they can introduce their students to research methods at the university level.

UW Learning Innovations

Outreach and Graduate Studies has collaborated with this UW System office to develop online distance-learning programs for agricultural education offerings, a service-learning certificate, community education certificate, and wildlife recreation and nature tourism certificate. Learning Innovations provides training and consulting in the course development process and educational support services once the programs begin.

Departmental and Student Partnerships

Several student groups provide educational programming to area schools. One example is the “[Chem Demons](#)” organization, which sponsors three annual demonstrations on science and safety to area students and parents. More than 400 attend these three events. The [Student Geography Organization](#) each year selects an area school playground and paints a large world, United States, or Wisconsin map on the asphalt to encourage greater geographic knowledge.

Our academic departments sponsor events for area students, teachers and schools. The [music department](#) sponsors a large number of clinics and events, and the [theatre program](#) regularly presents a school matinee of one of their productions. The [art department](#) holds an annual art day for high school students and sponsors an annual juried show in Gallery 101 that spotlights the work of high school student artists. CAFES sponsors a large number of special events that attract students from across the state and region. The departments of animal and food science, biology, chemistry, computer science and information systems, mathematics, physics, plant and earth science, and psychology all work together to sponsor an annual [Science Day](#) in October for high school students and teachers. Faculty and students from each of the departments make multiple presentations that high school students can elect to attend.

Outreach Educational Partnership Programs

Among our many educational efforts coordinated by outreach, UWRF:

- manages the [Pigeon Lake Field Station](#), which serves as a summer learning and teaching venue for numerous UW System campuses
- is an active member of the [Northern Lights Network](#), a distance learning delivery group collaborating with 26 regional K-12 districts, CESA 11,



- UW-Barron County, and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College partnered with the [National Youth Leadership Council](#) to offer the “Certificate of Excellent Practice in Service-Learning” program
- manages [Dalkeith House](#) in Edinburgh, Scotland, a residential international study experience for students from several institutions. The [Wisconsin In Scotland \(WIS\)](#) partnership, originally created with four other western Wisconsin universities is being expanded to include other universities.
- partners with [Wisconsin’s Cooperative Educational Service Agencies](#) through [CESA 10](#) and [CESA 11](#) partnerships. For the past several years UWRF has also partnered with [UW-Stout](#) and [UW-Eau Claire](#) to offer participants the option of receiving credit from any of our institutions for summer teacher academies coordinated by CESAs 10 and 11

UWRF is a member of the [West Central Wisconsin Regional Education Consortium](#), which seeks to determine how educational institutions at all levels can contribute to economic development of the nine-county region. UW-River Falls also participates in the [St. Croix Valley Reading Council](#), the Chippewa and St. Croix Valley PK-16 Education Council, the [National Community Education Association](#), and the [PK-16 Model Academy](#).

WORKING WITH OTHER PARTNERS

UWRF works with numerous partners to advance the common good and address mutual concerns, to achieve social justice, or to realize economic benefits. Examples include:

The Western Wisconsin Partnership for Children and Families

This group of human/social service administrators, UWRF faculty/staff, and state personnel within the [Wisconsin Division of Children and Family Services](#) works to improve the quality of services provided to children and families served by child welfare staff in county human/social service agencies in a 24-county region of western Wisconsin. The vehicle used is a comprehensive, competency-based training program. Training includes local agency directors/leaders and child welfare supervisors as well as caseworkers. The counties, DCFS, and the university have contributed financially to a pool of dollars that are then matched by federal Title IV-E monies.

Regional Economic Development Organizations

We have close ties with the regional development corporations in our region. The [Pierce County Economic Development Corporation \(PCEDC\)](#) is housed in the [Regional Development Institute \(RDI\)](#); and the director of the [St. Croix Valley EDC](#) has served on advisory boards and search committees for the university. University staff members have served on the boards of both economic development corporations. Barbara Nemecek, dean of the College of Business and Economics, is currently chairing the Pierce County EDC board.

Additionally in 2007, UWRF is working with other regional campuses in providing leadership to develop a seven-county economic development corporation serving the St. Croix and Chippewa Valleys. With completion



expected in 2008, this multi-region EDC will merge the efforts of numerous county EDCs into a single organization. This will allow the region to be represented on Gov. Jim Doyle's statewide business council, and become eligible for additional marketing and development grants.

We work closely with the [River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau](#). UWRP is a member of the chamber and regularly hosts the annual banquet. Several staff members have held leadership positions on the chamber's board of directors, and the director of the chamber served on the steering committee for this self-study. Outreach is working with the chamber to offer professional development programs such as "Exceptional Customer Service—It's Not a Goofy Idea" and "Dealing With Difficult People."

Exploring Humanitarian Law

Since 2002 the UWRP social work department has partnered with the [American Red Cross](#) and [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) on the development and implementation of the "Exploring Humanitarian Law" project. An effort to increase understanding of the humanitarian and human rights protections of the Geneva Conventions, this project focuses on children and youth world wide. UWRP faculty work with K-12 teachers to align curricular materials and methods to American educational venues and implement modern methods of pedagogy for world-wide audiences.

"As we began to look at the material, the group became absorbed in it. It has become a passion for us. This material is critical to what we're trying to accomplish with our students. We want them to have a global awareness and a sense of humanity."

— Mark Stoesz, 1995 UWRP graduate and social studies teacher at Ellsworth High School, on the "Exploring Humanitarian Law" curricular materials

Watchable Wildlife, Inc.

This partnership seeks to develop and offer credit and noncredit programs of mutual interest to federal and state wildlife agencies, UWRP students, and other qualified learners on a global level. The educational program developed by UWRP touches on natural resource conservation and management, wildlife tourism development and management, and site development and management. Watchable Wildlife, Inc. is an organization created by seven federal agencies and is headquartered on the [St. Croix National Scenic Riverway](#). Our work with Watchable Wildlife, Inc. led to the development of the [wildlife recreation and nature tourism certificate program](#). Introduced in 2003, this graduate certificate program enables community leaders and those in the hospitality and tourism industry to provide environmental tourism opportunities that promote economic development with a minimal human footprint.

COMMUNICATING AND REACHING OUT

In addition to working with partner organizations, the university is using a number of different approaches and strategies to connect with and serve the community and the region.



Community Classroom

The [College of Arts and Sciences](#) and Outreach co-sponsor a series of public lectures with the [River Falls Public Library](#). The community classroom series of presentations by UWRF arts and sciences faculty is designed to help people understand issues of interest to contemporary society. The free presentations allow faculty to share their research and knowledge with the general public, bringing the experiences of the university into the community. Six to seven presentations are made each academic year in the public library. Recent topics have included: “Tissue Engineering & Stem Cell Biology,” “The Science, Economics (and Myth?) of Corn Ethanol,” and “What Does Saturday Morning TV Teach Our Kids?”

Exploring U

In 2005 Outreach and Graduate Studies funded a survey of adults in nearby Hudson, Wis., which is the fastest-growing community in St. Croix County. The data suggested that there was a “reasonably strong market for educational programming in Hudson,” although we also learned that residents were unfamiliar with the full range of programs available through UWRF. In response, Outreach and Graduate Studies developed “Exploring U,” a set of free presentations on interesting topics of growth and change in an “effort to bring awareness of the university’s resources to families and others in the Hudson area.” In 2006 a similar survey was conducted of residents in the rapidly growing Troy Township, adjacent to River Falls.

Sustainable Development Workshops

Since 2004 UWRF has hosted workshops for community leaders and their public land planning partners to develop, promote, and implement unique gateway community development initiatives. Local teams explored the impact of public and private land management decisions on community growth and development, developed techniques for mapping the assets of and relationships between St. Croix River gateway communities, and identified tools for preserving community character and measuring the impacts of growth and development in gateway communities.

BizNews

This monthly electronic newsletter was created for area business and industry by UWRF’s College of Business and Economics, Outreach and Graduate Studies, Career Counseling Services, and Office of Public Affairs. The newsletter describes scheduled educational workshops and certificate programs, Small Business Development Center consulting services, economic research activities, major institutional initiatives, and upcoming events. Recipients have a feedback mechanism to request information about programs or to suggest topics of interest to them.

Student Media

The [Student Voice](#), a student-run weekly newspaper, covers community news and local sports. It is distributed to downtown businesses and solicits advertising from throughout the region. The campus radio station, [WRFW-FM](#), produces “Let’s Talk,” a 60-minute weekly public affairs program that focuses



on issues of interest to the university community and residents of River Falls. WRFW covers university and local high school football games and other sporting events, providing a venue for students, parents, and other fans to hear the games. In addition to student-produced programming, the station airs “The Ideas Network” of [Wisconsin Public Radio](#) as a service to the regional audience. UWRF students produce two weekly television programs—NewsCenterU, a television news program, and [Focus on U](#), an interview/magazine program—and occasional special broadcasts that are carried on campus and local access cable outlets.

Annual Health and Wellness Fair

Sponsored by [Student Health Services](#) with cooperation from the [Department of Health and Human Performance](#), the fair attracts around 700 community members, students, faculty and staff each year for wellness testing and screening. Several busloads of public school students attend the health fair. Resources are shared and awareness offered on issues of personal health. The health fair includes representatives from a wide variety of area health organizations who participate in the program.

Specialized Programming

UWRF has offered numerous customized workshops and courses for niche audiences. Examples of such specialized courses have included: wildfire suppression, dairy cattle hoof trimming, landscape design, meat processing, and artisan cheese making. A horse science institute spanned 26 sessions covering horse management and training, riding instruction, colt training, and youth horsemanship among other topics. Depending on the audience and the nature of credit offered, these courses have been offered by outreach or by one of the colleges.



As part of an experiential learning class, UWRF food science students produce Cobblestone Red, a combination of the university's white cheddar curd artisan cheese and Chateau Rouge, a full-bodied sweet burgundy produced by Chateau St. Croix. The local winery is partnering with UWRF to grow Wisconsin's share in the specialty and artisan cheese market.



CORE COMPONENT 5D

- Internal and external constituencies value the services that the University of Wisconsin-River Falls provides.

Since 1991 the Kansas City Chiefs NFL team has been holding its [summer training camps](#) at UW-River Falls. Seventeen years is a long period that witnesses the value both sides place on the relationship. The Chiefs keep returning in part because of the Wisconsin weather and the opportunities to practice with a nearby professional team; however, the organization notes that our exceptional staff, quality facilities, and welcoming community bring them back year after year. In return, the relationship has led to more than 100 internships for UWRF students, more than 150,000 visitors to campus, and an estimated \$35 million impact to the service area. The importance of the UWRF–KCC relationship was a significant factor in gaining approval for the construction of the \$2.5 million Hunt-Knowles addition in 2005, which added 12,300 square feet of locker room, training room and office space to the athletic complex.

UWRF pays close attention to what its numerous constituents say and do after they attend an educational or service offering from the university. We want them to have a positive experience. “Continuous improvement,” one of our [core values](#), states that “we strive for excellence through decisions based on information and analysis.” That value prompts us to assess the responses to our services, and to use the feedback to adjust and improve our offerings. These program assessments are obtained through a variety of formal and informal methods, using everything from comprehensive evaluation forms to follow-up surveys to post-program focus groups to the recording of unsolicited anecdotal feedback.

This section reports on the value associated with the university’s endeavors, grouping results under satisfaction assessment, participation numbers, and facility usage headings.

SATISFACTION ASSESSMENTS

One measure of satisfaction is the willingness of service recipients to endorse UWRF to new constituents.

The Western Wisconsin Intergovernmental Collaborative and mayors of several communities endorsed UWRF’s pursuit of the directed federal funding to create UWRF’s new [St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development](#) as the entity to expand these community support activities.

Our Career Services office regularly surveys satisfaction levels of employers who participate in our career fairs, hold interviews on campus, recruit student



interns, and/or hire our graduates. Responses have been almost uniformly positive. The office has had success in bringing recruiters back to campus for career fairs and in joining the online “[Hire a Falcon](#)” service, which connects employers to qualified job applicants. Employers place high value on our students as prospective employees.

Each year career services conducts [post-graduation surveys](#) of our alumni. The hiring data are broken out by college and field of study for both undergraduate and graduate students. Responses consistently indicate that over 90 percent of our graduates have found employment or are continuing their education. In many professions UWRF graduates are heavily recruited.

In 2004 the College of Business and Economics completed an [employer survey](#) to gauge satisfaction levels of employers with UWRF alumni and interns. Results indicated that employers, on average, found UWRF graduates to be prepared in all of the following areas: computer skills, research skills, written communication, oral communication, leadership, teamwork, and awareness of ethical issues.

UWRF’s Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies places great value on being connected to its constituents. For almost every offering, a staff member is available on site to solicit feedback from participants. Learner surveys are part of the formal program review process that follows all credit programs. For noncredit offerings, evaluation forms are collected from participants and are used to revise programs where necessary. As an example of this, the planning committee for the annual Synergy conference meets after each conference to review the evaluations and other feedback and adjust the economic development conference for the succeeding year.

External Stakeholder’s Survey

The most recent, and most direct, reflection of the value that our external constituents place on the services that we provide can be found in the survey of external constituents that was conducted by the [Survey Research Center](#) (SRC) in the fall of 2007. SRC sent out 505 mail questionnaires to people that had worked with the university in recent years. For all services received from UWRF faculty and staff (consulting/research, training/education, facilitation, and links with students), at least 98 percent of all respondents reported that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” Samples of the comments made by these respondents include:

“Our organization has worked with several colleges and their intern programs. We have been most impressed with the organization and process of the UWRF intern program and their students. We have been provided with excellent interns, very impressive!”

“It has been a very good and beneficial relationship. Working with UW staff has been excellent. They truly value and appreciate our organization. They are very respectful and accommodating.”



“Interactions with university partners have all been very beneficial for my organization providing community access to university intellectual resources, student experiences and sharing university programs/speakers. Student organizations have been most helpful in presenting children’s programming here and in sharing some of their experiences (international travel, disaster relief, etc) with the community through us.”

Working with the Community							
Services Provided			Level of Satisfaction				
	# of responses	Yes	# of responses	VS	S	D	VD
Consulting/research	150	52%	79	73%	25%	0%	1%
Training/education	140	60%	85	81%	19%	0%	0%
Facilitation	132	38%	54	81%	19%	0%	0%
Link with students	163	69%	112	72%	26%	1%	1%
Other (comments)	66	42%	39	69%	26%	3%	3%

UWRF External Stakeholders Survey. Fall 2007.

Figure 5-2

Service and Satisfaction

KEY

- VS = very satisfied
- S = satisfied
- D = dissatisfied
- VD = very dissatisfied

In addition to their evaluation of the quality of our work, we asked our external partners about the value they placed on their interactions with UWRF. In that regard, it was gratifying to note that 95 percent of the survey respondents said that UW-River Falls is “important” or “very important” to their organization, and 99 percent said the university is “important” or “very important” to the region. Again, respondents had positive things to say about our work:

“UWRF is a tremendous asset to the St. Croix Valley region. I am enthused by the direction the faculty and administration are taking to connect with the community and to lead through example on sustainable futures.”

“Professional and collegial. UWRF provides real outreach to its community.”

Figure 5-3

Value of UW-River Falls

Overall Importance of UW-River Falls					
	number of responses	very important	important	unimportant	very unimportant
To me / to my organization	198	52%	43%	5%	0%
To the region generally	195	61%	39%	1%	0%

UWRF External Stakeholders Survey. Fall 2007.



PARTICIPATION NUMBERS

The campus provides a large number of events that are open to members of the community. Attendance rates are high in university-sponsored programs. Several examples are highlighted below to demonstrate the number of people impacted by our work.

Cooperative Extension

Extension faculty work closely with 70 different local and state agencies, county extension agents, professional agriculture organizations, farmers, and others to provide programming in agriculture, food and natural resources. But the impact of UWRF cooperative extension activities has reached far beyond the local level. Since 2000 an estimated 32,600 individuals have participated in presentations and workshops conducted by our extension specialists. Over that period, 676 presentations or workshops were conducted within Wisconsin, 93 nationally and 58 internationally. Collaborations with 26 other universities throughout the United States and overseas continue to bring strength to our cooperative extension programs and broaden their impact. Programming efforts, frequently in collaboration with [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) initiatives, have reached individuals in 30 different countries including India, Pakistan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Serbia and Montenegro, Uzbekistan, Ireland, Sweden and Australia.

Cultural and Athletic Offerings

Each year tens of thousands of visitors come to campus for athletics, fine arts, performing arts, exhibits, concerts, lectures, forums, camps and conferences. Over 33,000 attend Falcon athletic events annually. Nearly 3,700 attend theatre events, 9,500 visit the art shows in Gallery 101, and the total attendance at the 100+ music concerts per year is nearly 18,000. The [events attendance site](#) lists several of our recurring events along with annual participation levels.

In the summer months, we present a summer concert series at the [Melvin Wall Amphitheater](#). With the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River as a backdrop, musicians play to fans of all ages. The culminating event almost every year is a performance by the [Kids from Wisconsin](#), the state-wide performing group showcasing musical talents of the youth of our state. Over the past decade, attendance has averaged around 3,500 for the six performances each year.

The [St. Croix Valley Summer Theatre](#) has been presenting semi-professional theatre on campus to members of the community and region for 41 years to an average summer audience of over 5,700 people. In addition to a core company of actors, many members of the community are involved both on and off-stage with the productions. Our summer community band and summer community choir also involve large numbers of people from the region as both performers and audience members. The Kansas City Chiefs draw thousands more people to campus each summer, including 1,500 to 3,000 for the annual family fun night, which features entertainment, autograph signing, prizes, and fireworks in addition to a football scrimmage.



FACILITY USAGE

The public has access to our many and varied facilities. Community members take advantage of the campus' recreational and meeting space, its park-like grounds, and its residential and food services.

The [Knowles Center](#) provides recreational opportunities including tennis, volleyball, basketball, use of the track, and rock climbing for community members during the academic year.

[Hunt Arena](#) hosted the local youth hockey program for many years until the opening of the local community rink in 2005. Hunt continues to be the home for local figure skaters with the Hunt Arena Skating School.

The [physics department](#) operates two special instructional and research facilities that also are utilized to provide special service to the community. The [UWRF planetarium](#) in the Agricultural Science building projects the night sky onto a 20-foot dome. Physics faculty members make public presentations to school and public groups, serving approximately 600 people annually. The department also manages an observatory in Centennial Science Hall, hosting observing sessions once per month, with additional sessions for special campus events. Approximately 1,000 people annually attend these shows and the accompanying educational talks.

Before 2007, [Rodli Commons](#) and [Hagestad Hall](#) have been the sites for many community events, both public and private, from high school proms to the annual Chamber of Commerce banquet to wedding and anniversary celebrations. Conferences lured national and international guests to campus. Opened in January 2007, the new [University Center](#) offers state of the art technology and venues for conferences or receptions in the ballroom, concerts or dances in the entertainment complex, or speakers or film presentations in the theater. Several external groups, like the Chamber of Commerce and the tourism alliance have already held events there. In October 2007 the UW System Board of Regents held a meeting in the new facility. Preliminary records indicate that use of the new University Center has resulted in a 20 percent increase in the number of people and events coming to campus.

In terms of attendance, participation, active partnerships, and levels of satisfaction, we believe that we have clearly demonstrated that our constituents value our work.



EVALUATION

As UW-River Falls evaluates its current position and looks to the future, the university can point to the following strengths and challenges in engagement and service.

STRENGTHS

- A culture of engagement is exhibited through the actions of the university. Mission and vision documents, which spell out this commitment, guide our attitudes and responses. As our service area undergoes dynamic demographic, social and economic change, the university has been and continues to be in the forefront of analyzing and responding to that change. We have initiated discussion, clarified issues, and led successful collaborations among our partner constituents to address problems and meet needs.
- We are involved with a wide range of partnerships and consortiums that benefit our many stakeholders in the region.
- In recognition of our outreach efforts, UWRF was one of 492 institutions across the country named to the 2006 President's [Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll](#) sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- Through its outreach efforts and extension services, UWRF has delivered high quality programs to education professionals, and agriculture/food sector organizations, youth, adults, and business professionals.
- UWRF will be able to improve and extend its impact on its rapidly growing service region through the creation of the [St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development](#). The institute will help coordinate the increasing number of requests for assistance with respect to environmentally-sound growth plans, climate-conscious practices, and socially viable public policies. The institute has the potential to increase opportunities for service-learning and civic engagement activities by students and faculty.
- UWRF has been proactive in marshalling support among fiscal and policy decision-makers. The university continues to expand the extent and quality of contacts it makes with UW System Regents, Wisconsin legislators, state executive branch officials, and federal agencies. [Falcon Action Network](#), the first advocacy network created by a comprehensive campus in the UW System, has already demonstrated its effectiveness in support of a new health and human performance facility now slated for construction.



- Surveys of our partners indicate that our work is highly valued for the quality of the service and the importance of our work for the individual organizations and the region.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Again, one of our most significant challenges is that our resources, both financial and human, are limited. We have been quite successful in working with partners to obtain grants and external funding, but we will need to continue to develop more stable sources of support for our many activities and possibilities.
- Increased growth and dynamic change in UWRF's service area will place increasing demands on UWRF to provide quality educational resources and informed assistance to more businesses and individuals in new places. Such demand will stretch the human and fiscal resources of the university that are already strained. We will need to develop decision-making processes that establish clear priorities.
- The rapid changes in this region can create environmental, economic and social pressures. We will need to listen carefully and work collaboratively to build partnerships and find commonalities in the face of competing ideas and demands. University processes are notoriously slow. We will need to develop practices that allow for more rapid response to these changing conditions.
- Many of our external partnerships have been formed through personal connections. This can help to build close and personal relationships with those individuals and organizations. However, some of our constituents have indicated that they were unsure of procedures or offices that they should contact when they have a question or problem to solve. We need to develop and publicize a clear point of contact for external inquiries.



SUMMARY

As described in chapter five, UWRF has a history and institutional culture of being deeply engaged with its external audiences. Over the next decade, we will continue to be the primary regional resource to address rapid demographic changes and shifting patterns of land use. It will be incumbent on us to continue to work in partnership with our external constituents as we implement the components of our institutional strategic planning and continue to fulfill our vision as “the learning nucleus of the St. Croix Valley.”