FAQ’s

What is the Million Dollar Match?
Through the generosity of five donors, the UWRF Foundation has been challenged to raise $1,000,000 to fund an endowment for UWRF’s signature scholarship program, Falcon Scholars. Your gift, no matter the size, will be matched dollar for dollar.

Why endowment?
Endowed funds exist to provide intended support forever. With a successful match challenge totaling $2,000,000, eighty annual Falcon Scholar awards will be funded in perpetuity.

How are Falcon Scholars selected?
Falcon Scholars are selected from the incoming student applicant pool. A competitive process including an on-campus interview helps determine the recipients. Those involved in the interview process include UWRF faculty, staff and alumni.

Can I name the scholarship?
Gifts of $25,000 or more, which can be pledged over several years, by a single donor will create a named Falcon Scholar award.

Can I designate a Falcon Scholars award for a specific major?
While every college and typically every major is represented among the Falcon Scholar recipients, the current selection and awarding process as approved by the university, UWRF Student Senate, and UW Board of Regents seeks to recruit incoming students based on merit regardless of intended academic discipline.

Why is Falcon Scholars so important to UW-River Falls?
Retention rates of Falcon Scholars from first to second year and first to third year are 10-15% higher than their peers. In addition, Falcon Scholars have shown a higher rate of participation in campus activities and organizations than other UWRF students.

Your Gift + Matching Gift = Twice the Impact

Rising to Distinction

Be the match!
Announcing the Falcon Scholars Endowment Million Dollar Match
A Million More Reasons to Support Falcon Scholars

UWRF’s signature scholarship program, Falcon Scholars, received a substantial boost when five donors joined forces to help create a new Falcon Scholars Endowment, offering a combined $1,000,000 in matching gifts. This generous match will allow the first $1,000,000 in new endowment gifts, of any size, to be matched 1:1.

What is a Falcon Scholar?

Falcon Scholars are selected from incoming freshmen through a competitive application and interview process. Each Falcon Scholar is guaranteed a $1,000 per year, four-year scholarship funded by donors that provided that academic standards are maintained. In their junior or senior year, each Falcon Scholar receives a $2,000 stipend, provided through student differential tuition, to be used for undergraduate research or study abroad. This combination of private and student support is unique to UWRF.

Want to know more about Falcon Scholars, the students, or how to participate in the Million Dollar Match? Visit www.uwrf.edu/FalconScholars.

One Falcon Scholars’ Experience

Amy Cornish, Eden Prairie, MN
Senior, Elementary Education and Spanish Education

The Falcon Scholars program allowed me to become instantly connected with a variety of opportunities for academic enrichment and study abroad opportunities from around the world. Also, the Falcon Scholars provided significant financial relief as well to help fund my study abroad opportunity.

As part of my Spanish education major, I spent a semester in Seville, a large medieval city in Southern Spain, living as a host that spoke only Spanish. The city streets were lined with orange trees and ancient buildings that were ten times the age of America. I saw the history I learned about in class. I visited Portugal and Morocco, Scotland, and Paris, traveled with friends to London, and spent a week on my own traveling through Norway. It was an adventure in which I gained language experience, confidence, and a new connection with dozens of foreign cultures.

Gang and Donnette Wheelock

The seed for giving back started at a Stratton Hall mailbox in 1880 when sophomore Donnette Diers found a receipt saying her tuition, dorm and food expenses for the following two quarters were paid in full. An anonymous donor had contacted UWRF to find out the exact amount Donnette owed, then paid her bill.

“What an amazing thing it was knowing someone believed so much in my future; they would help pay for my college,” Donnette remarked. Donnette and her husband Greg, also a student at the time, were both first-generation college students, paying for it with a combination of jobs, on-campus work study positions, scholarships, financial aid and student loans. The generosity of that anonymous donor so impacted the couple they gave back to UWRF as soon as they could after graduating.

Over the years, they have established a named endowed scholarship, supported the Falcon Center project, and were the first to answer the Albrecht Challenge for Falcon Scholars. As they look back on their time at UWRF and reflect on their success in life, they give much credit to their UWRF education and the professors who knew their students as well as their subjects, and were willing to provide individualized attention in small classes.

Knowing that many of today’s UW-River Falls students are still first-generation college students from lower- to middle-income families, Greg and Donnette are happy to assist other young people in succeeding. A few years ago, the Wheelocks discovered who the anonymous donors were. They sent them a thank you letter, informing them how their gift had grown exponentially over the years as the Wheelocks went on to support education and UWRF in particular.

“It is a privilege to share the results of our hard work and successful business by helping other get a good education.” Donnette said. Greg is happy to “pay it forward.” They challenge you to do the same!

Arlin and Marilyn Albrecht

Arlin and Marilyn Albrecht funded the first challenge when the Falcon Scholars program was inaugurated in 2012. Within months, more than 100 donors responded to the challenge to fully fund the first four years of the Falcon Scholars program.

Each year, Arlin and Marilyn attend the Falcon Scholars reception on Academic Day to meet these students.

“The quality of the students is simply amazing.” Arlin said. Marilyn, recipient of the first scholarship ever awarded by the UWRF Foundation in 1954, echoes the sentiment and adds, “I’m always touched by the gratitude shown by the students.”

Their second gift to Falcon Scholars to help create the Falcon Scholars Match is a reflection of their belief that an investment in a UW-River Falls education is a solid investment in the future.

Wayne Peterson Estate

Wayne Peterson lived on his family’s farm and was a regular contributor to the UWRF Foundation. He supported scholarships for many students from his local high school to attend UWRF and other UW campuses.

“Wayne had a real passion for the kids of Glenwood City and wanted them to succeed,” said his friend and financial advisor Joan Bartz.

When Wayne passed away in February 2016, he left a large portion of his estate to the UWRF Foundation. His estate representatives requested that the proceeds be used to continue to support UWRF students through Falcon Scholars. Bartz noted that “joining the Wheelocks and the Albrechts in creating the Million Dollar Match is exactly the kind of thing Wayne would have done. He always wanted to be part of something big and bold, but he never wanted to be in the limelight. How wonderful that his legacy will always exist at a university that he loved so much.”

Yes! I/w would want to support the Falcon Scholars Million Dollar Match.

Name(s) PLEASE PRINT
Address/City/State/Zip
E-mail Phone

We pledge a total of $ ______ to be paid as follows:

December 31 of each
2016 2017 2018
Amount
Multi-year pledges, paid in installments, must be completed by December 31, 2018.

Multi-year pledge: $ ________

Pledges must be made by December 31, 2018 to qualify for the challenge. Multi-year pledges, paid in installments, must be completed by December 31, 2018.

Thank you for your commitment!

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