

UW-Stevens Point highlights of 2016

Bernie Patterson, For USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

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As 2016 draws to a close, it's interesting to look back at how others see UW-Stevens Point. In the past year, we:

- Ranked in the Top 10 public regional universities in the Midwest in U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges 2017.
- Ranked No. 3 nationally in the Top 100 Best Value among 1,195 universities for 2017 by the nonprofit Educate-to-Career, based on increase employability and earnings of our graduates.
- Ranked second in the UW System for Best Bang for Your Buck, and in the top 13 percent in the Midwest by Washington Monthly 2016 rankings.
- Became the first university in Wisconsin to have 100 percent of electricity come from renewable sources.
- Were added to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Top 30 College and University list of largest green power users in the nation from the Green Power Partnership.
- Were named a Military Friendly School for the seventh consecutive year by Victory Media, publisher of G.I. Jobs®, STEM JobsSM and Military Spouse.
- Earned UW VETS certification, recognizing resources and response to student veteran needs.
- Won our fifth national NCAA Division III men's hockey championship.

I'm honored to share these points of pride because they are a reflection of our community as well as campus. The dedication and knowledge of our faculty and staff members and the energy and creativity of our students make these recognitions possible.

The highlights of 2016 go beyond state and national rankings. They reflect our close business and community partnerships to solve problems, meet regional needs and pursue our common goals. They include the following:

UW-Stevens Point received its largest donation ever this year. Sentry Insurance's \$4 million gift in March created a new major in data analytics and endowed two new faculty positions. We launched this program in fall to meet a growing need for data analysis in many business sectors.

We also launched the public phase of our first comprehensive capital campaign in April. More than half of our \$30 million goal has been donated or pledged by those who believe in this institution's ability to change lives.

The university's skyline is also changing with construction of the Chemistry Biology Building. Ground breaking was held in May for the \$75 million project, which is expected to be ready for the fall 2018 semester. It is the largest construction project in Stevens Point since 1989.

We graduated more students in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and health science fields than any other UW outside the research institutions of Madison and Milwaukee, UW System reported.

We have the highest percentage (75 percent) of undergraduate courses in UW System taught by faculty (not teaching assistants).

The grand opening of five new Academic and Career Advising Centers was celebrated in October, expanding how students chart their paths toward career success. With one in each of the colleges and the university's library, the centers provide a more responsive and accessible model for academic advising and help students graduate in a more timely manner, thus reducing student debt.

In the past year, 1,242 students logged 4,752 hours in volunteer time with various organizations in the community and on campus. Their time equals a dollar value of \$109,628.

These accomplishments and points of pride position us well for student success and community collaboration in 2017. As 2016 draws to a close, we toast our partnerships throughout north central Wisconsin. Your strong support has helped UW-Stevens Point rank No. 1 in our hearts and minds.

Bernie Patterson is the chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

<http://www.stevenspointjournal.com/story/life/2016/12/30/uw-stevens-point-highlights-2016/95978570/>