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UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
 GREEN BAY

Conversations

News, views and all things UW-Green Bay, with Chancellor Thomas K. Harden

December 2010

Topic A:

Good people

Noteworthy:

Theatre, hoops
and diversity

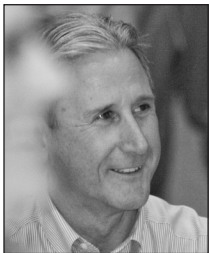
Your View:

The history of 'Eco U'



Share your thoughts with the Chancellor's Office via the contact form available at www.uwgb.edu/chancellor/contact

Greetings ... and a word about our most rewarding day



Greetings from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, where the last week of fall semester 2010 is filled with final exams and special excitement for nearly 400 graduating seniors.

We celebrate their achievement at mid-year Commencement Saturday afternoon (Dec. 18) at the Weidner Center. A highlight is the tradition of having a UW-Green Bay alumnus return as speaker. Neil Diboll, Class of '78, has a fascinating story.

Neil is both an entrepreneur and a true believer in the environmental movement. It was at UWGB he nurtured his passion for native plants, especially prairie species.

When he bought a small nursery in central Wisconsin, native landscaping was relatively uncommon. Neighbors called his place "the weed farm." A self-made salesman, Neil armed himself with color catalogs to prove grasses and wildflowers could rival non-native annuals. The message that low-maintenance prairie meadows could save time and money didn't hurt, either.

Today, Prairie Nursery ships products nationwide and counts among its landscape clients such high-profile names as the Blackwolf Run and Whistling Straits golf courses near Kohler, and the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago. A national magazine nicknamed Neil "The Prophet of the Prairie." He lectures worldwide on the economic and ecological benefits.

Who among our newest graduates will be just as influential, in their own fields?

I shake hundreds of hands at Commencement as our graduates cross the stage. I'll know many by name, but there will also be those I recognize but can't immediately place.

The thing I treasure most? Sprinkled throughout that long line of happy graduates will be plenty of future stars. Names that will be widely recognized in the future. By applying their creative problem-solving skills, by transforming their industries and agencies and communities for the better, they will have rewarded our efforts many times over.

That's why Commencement is a special day.

Thomas K. Harden
 Chancellor, UW-Green Bay

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Key topics: Good people and great friends, inside and out

Happy holidays from UW-Green Bay! My wife, Cathy, and I extend best wishes. In the Harden household, we're looking forward to visits from children and grandchildren. For the benefit of the Sun Belt branch of the family, especially the younger members, we hope the good sledding persists.

At UW-Green Bay, we'll have a celebratory get-together for our University family later next month, on Jan. 19. It's the annual mid-winter convocation of faculty and staff to open the second semester. We honor retirees receiving emeritus status and co-workers celebrating service anniversaries.

The snapshot above is from last January's gathering. This particular image is of faculty and staff marking 10-year anniversaries — we also acknowledge 20, 25, 30 and 35 years — but I believe you could choose just about any photo, any group from that day, to illustrate my larger point here, which is this: UW-Green Bay has quality people.

As I close my first full calendar year as chancellor, the outstanding impression I carry is of a group of faculty and staff notable for their competence, commitment and creativity. That's not idle talk. From a perspective gained through working at several other colleges and universities, I can honestly say that UW-Green Bay is special. You can be proud of your University.

Some faculty and staff are natives of the Green Bay area, Wisconsin or the Midwest. Others come from across the nation and around the world. They're well credentialed, well educated, and highly motivated to serve the community and our students. They're effective and cost conscious, too. They have become so adept at "doing more with less," I argue, that when the cycle turns and conditions allow for reinvestment, UW-Green Bay some day deserves first crack at "doing more with more." We've shown what we can do.

That's a message I have shared widely. With the general public. With Governor-elect Walker and other state officials. With members of our various citizen advisory groups who, in turn, spread the word on our behalf. (I thank those members of the Chancellor's Council of Trustees, for example, who took part in last Monday's meeting with local state legislators.) UW-Green Bay has quality people. Our students, alumni, faculty, staff and community supporters have accomplished amazing things, working together.

I know that, as 2010 draws to a close, Wisconsin's budget deficit is generating talk of freezes and cuts, along with headlines about the climate for state agencies and employees "growing chillier by the day." I'm realistic, but also optimistic.

We'll not only weather the chill. With good people and great friends, we're going to prosper. Thank you for your continuing interest in, and support of, UW-Green Bay. Happy holidays.

— Thomas K. Harden

Noteworthy:

High ratings for UW-Green Bay



The success of **Theatre**, **Phoenix basketball**, and **American Indian** students at UW-Green Bay drew well-deserved recognition this month.

I'll start with theatre. When **Cathy** and I saw the play **Almost, Maine** earlier this fall we thought it was one of the best student shows we had seen in some time. The staging was professional and the cast was terrific — they seemed to love the material (a quirky, contemporary **romantic comedy**). It was welcome news, then, to hear that visiting judges rate *Almost, Maine* one of the **half-dozen best productions** in our five-state region. That means a trip to the college theatre "play-offs" next month at Michigan State, our fifth performance at regionals in a decade. Congratulations to the students and Profs. **John Mariano** (director), **Mike Ingraham**, **Laura Riddle**, **Jeff Entwistle** and **Kaoime Malloy**. There's an encore benefit performance at 7:30 p.m. Monday, **Jan. 3**, in the **University Theatre**.

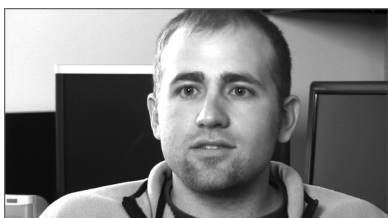
At 9-1 and No. 23 in the coaches' poll, the Phoenix women's basketball team is one of the nation's best. Let's cheer on the Phoenix at four straight games at the Kress Center over the holidays. Coaches **Matt Bollant**, **Mike Divilbiss**, **Amanda Leonhard** and **Sarah Bronk** deserve a big round of applause, too.

Our third positive ranking this month involves the magazine *Winds of Change*. UW-Green Bay made the list of **200 top schools** that are notably supportive of **Native students**. Criteria included solid graduation rates and a good American Indian community for support. Our major in First Nations Studies, and the work Profs. **Lisa Poupart** and **Tim Kaufman** have done in establishing a center to promote teaching of tribal history and culture, are points of pride. We have a solid base from which to move forward.

— T.K.H.

Views on 'Eco U' and sustainability

Anthony Rieth



"I think there's a great history here... We've got professors that have the experience of being part of the original (environmental) movement. Then we've got students who are part of the sustainable movement. From faculty to students, there's interest the whole way."

— Anthony Rieth, '10, master's student

Dan Madigan



"This University is putting it front and center and helping businesses understand the need to be environmentally sensitive... It's core to the University's principles. You can see it in the faculty and also the students coming out of here who are ready to go to work. They're job ready."

— Dan Madigan, president, FEEO International

H.J. "Bud" Harris



"In 1970, UWGB's whole mission was billed as an environmental institution... One of the things that then happened was that we changed people's ideas about the benefits of a restored Fox River and bay... That basic foundation has proved to be the wave of the future. This University is poised to be a leader again."

— H.J. "Bud" Harris, professor emeritus