



IN FOCUS

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A money coach meets the big (Milwaukee) Bucks

Economics professor is named Mentor of the Month at Fiserv Forum - Pg. 6

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New chemistry building hits milestone with topping off ceremony

A journey that [began a year ago](#) on a frozen January day reached a significant milestone on another frozen January day.

Faculty, staff, students and construction workers gathered on Thursday, Jan. 26, at the Lubar Entrepreneurship Center to enjoy hot drinks and watch as the highest beam was lifted into place atop the university's new chemistry building. The topping off ceremony marks a significant milestone for the building, which is scheduled to be completed in late 2023 or early 2024.

In building construction, a topping-off ceremony is typically held when the highest beam or its equivalent is placed on a structure. The tradition originated in ancient Scandinavia, and in keeping with that tradition a small fir tree was attached to the UWM beam. Participants also got the chance to sign the beam before it was raised into place.

'Truly foundational'

The new four-story, 163,400-square-foot building will support vital teaching and research in chemistry, Chancellor Mark Mone said at the ceremony. UWM has more than 5,000 students taking chemistry courses annually. It's not just scientists in white coats and goggles who study chemistry, he added. Fields such as forensics, nursing, medical technology, environmental science and teaching all rely on chemistry courses as part of student preparation. "This is truly foundational to so many fields at UWM," Mone said.

The new facilities will support learning for UWM chemistry students and students in fields ranging from freshwater sciences to engineering, said Kristen Murphy, professor and chair of chemistry and biochemistry.

"Teaching is a focus of what we do" and the new building will give the disciplines an environment that will better support that, Murphy said. But the facilities will also help prepare K-12 teachers and their students. The building's new outreach lab, for example, will provide an integrated space that can be used for multiple purposes to support learning for teachers and students studying to be teachers.

Important for industry

The chemicals industry is the fifth-largest manufacturing sector in Wisconsin, Mone said, and UWM graduates are vital to that industry.

Jim Harvey, senior vice president and chief science officer for NorthStar Medical Radioisotopes, talked about the importance of the talent pipeline to that growing company. NorthStar, which is located in Beloit, has hired doctoral



(Above) Chancellor Mark Mone and Jim Harvey, senior vice president and chief science officer for NorthStar Medical Radioisotopes, check out the beam about to be placed atop UWM's under-construction chemistry building. (UWM Photo/Troye Fox) (Below) A crane lifts the final beam into place on top of the new chemistry building. Tradition holds that a small fir tree is attached to the final beam. (UWM Photo/Marcelo Martinez)

and other UWM graduates who work to support the company's nuclear medicine business, producing radio pharmaceuticals. These are used in the diagnosis and treatment of many diseases, including cancer and heart conditions. These products and technologies will continue to be vital to health systems and patients into the future, he added.

The three doctoral students he hired from Professor Mark Dietz's lab, for example, have helped the company grow, he said.

"What we have found is that we can give these young people that we have hired major projects important to our company and they can hit the ground running," Harvey said. "This is the type of student we need; this is the type of graduate we need."

'Very remarkable'

UW System Regent Scott Beightol said he has had a unique opportunity to see the work UWM is doing. His wife attended UWM, and his daughter is a current student. So, he has a firsthand look at the work staff and faculty are doing, he said.



"This school is very remarkable," Beightol said. Many students come from working class backgrounds or are working while in school. They combine a strong work ethic and drive with a high-quality education. And UWM graduates tend to stay in Wisconsin, helping fill the state's talent pipeline and become productive citizens, he added.

By Kathy Quirk, University Relations

UWM adds minor in Korean studies to prep students for international careers

UWM has added a new minor in Korean studies to its offerings.

The university has long had a Korean program that offered language classes for interested students, but this school year marks the inception of a minor degree in Korean studies. UWM students in the Korean program have been waiting a long time to be able to declare such a minor, said Sooho Song, an associate professor and co-coordinator of the Korean language program.

“From the moment I joined teaching Korean language, the students have been asking to create ... the minor. At the time, they just took Korean language courses because they really liked it,” Song said.

She estimates that eight students have already declared a minor in Korean studies, with five who will graduate with their minor this spring. Even more students are interested in declaring next year, Song added.

Two students who have already declared minors include Olivia King and Jazmine Scott. Both became interested in learning Korean through Korean music and television.

“I’m truly excited to have Korean studies as a minor,” Scott said. Though she is majoring in Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latinx studies, she thinks having a Korean studies minor will turn into a major benefit. “Korean is not an easy language by any means, but having it as a minor shows dedication, a willingness to learn, and cultural diversity.



Sooho Song

Additionally it separates you from others as Korean is a very unique and niche language to learn,” Scott added.

The minor requires that students take six semesters of Korean language classes up into the 300-level, as well as six credits of additional coursework. That includes Korean 221, “Korean Culture and Society.” Students can also fulfill some of their credits by studying abroad and applying for a waiver.

The minor couldn’t come at a better time. UWM has joined a growing number of universities across the United States that are establishing majors and minors in Korean.

“Already 54 universities in the United States have created a Korean minor. This is not only us,” Song said. “We have to make our students (able) to compete with them when they apply for jobs in international corporations.”

And there will be competition for those jobs, Song added. Korea is a growing global power with the world’s 10th-largest economy in terms of GDP. Its technology sector is growing with companies like Samsung and Hyundai leading the way.

“You can tell they need a lot of people who can work in international trade and business. Their businesses are growing,” Song said. And, she added, the U.S. State Department and security services will likely be looking to recruit graduates of Korean programs. “Critically, with the North Korean nuclear threat, we need people who really understand Korean culture and Korean society better,” she said.

Plus, King noted, having experience speaking any foreign language is attractive to prospective employers. “I think it will be helpful in my future career! I want to do something that has to do with languages, so I think them seeing that I can speak another will be helpful,” she said.

Many students like King and Scott have already been exposed to Korean culture as a matter of course. Song says a “Korean Wave” has begun spreading the country’s culture around the world through popular media. Americans and other people around the world are hungry for everything from the K-Pop genre of music, including the wildly successful band BTS, to Korean movies and television dramas. You may have watched the Korean show “Squid Game” on Netflix last year, or applauded when the Korean film “Parasite” won four Oscars at the 2020 Academy Awards, including for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Screenplay.

All of that popular media is driving interest in the country’s culture – and may lead to job opportunities within Korea’s entertainment industry.

“Even 10 years ago, who would imagine a movie produced by a Korean director in Korea would be able to get an Oscar, let alone ‘Best Picture?’” Song asked. “But it’s happening. I believe it will last for a while, and it will create more jobs and more opportunities for the students.”

Students who are interested in declaring a Korean studies minor can visit the program’s [website](#) for more information or speak with their advisor about the process. Some of Song’s former students are a bit miffed that they missed their opportunity to complete the minor, she said with a laugh.

Most importantly, UWM’s program will give students a competitive edge as they explore career options in international business, technology, entertainment, or government.

“Although they are not perfectly fluent in Korean, they understand Korean culture,” Song said of her students. “There have been foreign people who are employees in Korea for a while, but a lot of them didn’t understand Korea before they came. It created a conflict, sometimes. We definitely need people who have studied properly about Korea and understand Korea, love Korea, know a pretty good level of language and understand the nature of Korea.”

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

A quick look at Korea and Korean language

- Korean is the 11th-highest enrolled world language in U.S. higher education institutions.
- Korean is the 14th-most spoken language in the world. There are 79.3 million Korean-speakers.
- Korean is the 3rd-most spoken language among Asian languages in the U.S. after Chinese and Vietnamese.
- The United States has the highest population of Korean people living outside of Korea.
- The South Korean economy is the 10th largest in the world by GDP as of 2021.
- Major South Korean companies include Samsung, LG, Hyundai, and Kia.
- Korean movies have gained popularity in American cinema, including the films “Parasite” (2019), “Old Boy” (2003), and “Train to Busan” (2016).



Korea is shown in green on the globe.



Economics professor is Mentor of the Month, with a nod from the Milwaukee Bucks



If you caught the Bucks game on Jan. 6 (a disappointing 138-109 loss to the Charlotte Hornets), you might have seen a familiar face flash on the scoreboard in the third quarter.

During the game, UWM economics professor Rebecca Neumann was honored as the **Mentor of the Month**, a recognition powered by Milwaukee Bucks player Bobby Portis and **Mentor Greater Milwaukee**. The award is granted to people who have made a difference in the community by lending their time and talents in service of young people.

Neumann is a long-time volunteer with **SecureFutures**, an organization that promotes financial literacy among Milwaukee youth and students across Wisconsin. She has served as the organization's board chair and sits on its advisory council.

Neumann is also a mentor with SecureFutures' **Money Coach** program, which works with individual, underserved teens to teach them to manage their money by paying them money to manage.

"Some of these students have no money, and we're talking to them about financial literacy," Neumann explained. "Students in the Money Coach program actually get money for completing the program pieces. Writing down a budget, attending the mentoring sessions – they get cash for that paid into a bank account. ... The goal is to get them started and really budgeting so that they're starting to save and thinking about where spending occurs."

While she loves her volunteer work, the recognition for it was a surprise. When Neumann got the email telling her she'd been nominated and chosen for the Mentor of the Month, she thought it was spam.

"But I read it a couple of times and thought, I think this is actually real," she laughed.

Neumann, her family, representatives from Secure Futures, and a few of Neumann's mentees were invited to attend the Jan. 6 Bucks game and sit courtside before the game as the Bucks warmed up. As they watched the drills, none other than Bobby Portis approached the group and asked which one was his Mentor of the Month.

"He gave me a handshake and a big hug, and then took a bunch of pictures with us. I got this jersey that says 'Mentor' with his number on it, and he signed that," Neumann said. "He's a very nice guy and just seems so sweet. (For him) this is all about mentoring and all about the kids."



Top: Milwaukee Bucks player Bobby Portis signs a jersey for UWM professor of economics Rebecca Neumann before a basketball game on Jan. 6. Neumann was honored by the Bucks as the "Mentor of the Month."

Bottom: Neumann (fourth from left) stands with her family, colleagues, mentees from the SecureFutures program, and Bobby Portis on the court of the Fiserv Forum. Right: Neumann was honored as the Mentor of the Month during the third quarter of the Milwaukee bucks game on Jan. 6. All photos courtesy of Rebecca Neumann.

In fact, Portis was the keynote speaker at the Mentor Greater Milwaukee symposium on Jan. 18, where he shared stories about the mentors impacted his life.

As the game began, Neumann and her group took their seats in the stands to enjoy some basketball. She returned to the court during the third quarter where she accepted her award. Almost immediately, she said, she began getting emails from students and alumni who had seen her picture on the scoreboard's enormous screen.

While it was exciting to be honored on the floor of the Fiserv Forum in front of thousands of Bucks fans, Neumann says that volunteering and mentorship are their own rewards.

"Volunteering is huge for me. I do a lot of it," she added. "(I like) the connection with students and folks I wouldn't otherwise necessarily connect with."

Volunteering has also made her a better college professor. "Having seen the progression of students and understanding more about what they are facing and where they're coming from has given me a lot more insight and ability to relate to them in a more empathetic way," Neumann said. Working with students in Milwaukee Public Schools has given her a better idea of the challenges that young people face in navigating school and finances.

Neumann also just finds satisfaction in giving back. Everyone can find something to love about volunteering, she added. Though she'd like to see more mentors working at Secure Futures, "I think, most importantly, find something that you like to do, and find new ways to do it," she advised.

If you do it well enough, you may just find yourself on the scoreboard screen at the Fiserv Forum.

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Communication alum wins Impact award by breaking bread with strangers

Emerald Mills has a question for you: Do you want to grab a bite to eat?

Mills is the founder of both [Diverse Dining](#) and [Turning Tables](#), initiatives aimed at bringing people together over food. Diverse Dining invites perfect strangers to share a meal with the goal of sparking conversation and connections between people who never would have had the opportunity to meet otherwise. Turning Tables is a restaurant and teaching kitchen that supports budding food entrepreneurs.

Mills, a 2004 UWM graduate who majored in communication, has been recognized for her efforts in various Milwaukee media outlets. This year, she was also recognized by the UWM Alumni Association, who chose her for an [Impact Award](#).

Mills sat down to talk about her work, diversity, and the power of food.

What was your reaction to hearing you got an alumni award?

I was really shocked! I've gotten a lot of recognition throughout the city for the work I've done, but for me ... having UWM recognize the work I was doing was very important and very touching. My college days were very challenging for me. It wasn't easy at all because I had so much happening around me. I wouldn't have predicted that I would be here. It was very much a full-circle moment for me, and I'm truly grateful that somebody at UWM was paying attention.

How did you land at UWM for college, and what drew you to your communication major?

For various reasons, I struggled with high school a lot. I didn't think I would be able to get into a 4-year university, but I really wanted to. I applied to UWM with the help of my advisors and I was able to get in, to my surprise.

My communications teacher at UWM was a great instructor. She would require, before we started, that we check in with ourselves – what we consider meditating now. It really helped us understand different styles of communication and challenges with communication. I thought, I want to do that.

Can you talk about your journey from a being new graduate to the founder of Diverse Dining?

I stayed in the public health field in different roles and positions for almost 20 years after I graduated. I went from a very small nonprofit community organization to a major hospital to another hospital, then to a health department. I was able to learn so much about the different sectors of the work and the different challenges in each of the different places I was going to.

By the time I was at my last position at Children's Hospital, I was getting frustrated. I felt that, as hard as I was working and hard as other people were working, the needle should have been moving faster to address health issues for minority populations. I thought, what is the barrier? If these resources are available, and these people are willing to work, what is happening that is causing these disparities to stay where they are?



What were the barriers to moving the needle?

I started to realize that Milwaukee has a lot of segregation. There are a lot of barriers to people relating to each other. I grew up in more of a smaller town where everybody knew each other. I wasn't hypersensitive or hyperaware of some of the things,

but after doing the work and knowing that my friends didn't want to go to certain places, I started to see how segregated and disconnected certain groups of people were from each other.

I began to ask myself the question, how does this affect or relate to the problem that I'm solving with my work? Is racism, is segregation, an underlying factor to the work that I'm doing? And if so, why am I not spending my time addressing that?

So you started putting in the time.

I started to get involved at the very beginning of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. I got certified as a trainer and started doing some work within my company. But I still felt like there was something missing. People still weren't saying, Emerald, let's go out for lunch together! Or, let's get our kids together! I didn't feel like I was building authentic relationships with people. If anything, it was creating more of a disconnect because I felt there was a hyperawareness of a problem that nobody really had a solution for.

I started to think, how do I do this thing and make it more effective? I

thought about ways that people were naturally coming together. Where are they hanging out, and where are good examples of what I think we need to see more of in the city? One of the things that caught my eye, is that I felt that people would cross whatever barriers, locations, whatever it may be, for food. People would go eat here, go to this neighborhood for food, if it was a place they wanted to go.

I said, what if I can tie my training, education, and work with restaurants and food? I had a pretty diverse network of people as far as my friends at that time, so I invited them for a birthday party. I put together some questions for them, I found a Vietnamese restaurant in the city, I spoke with the owner, got some history about her background, did some research, and created some activities, and got people together at her restaurant. From there, I started hosting monthly dinners, open to the community every month.

What was the moment you looked around said, this should be a business?

Within the first three months, I started getting an overwhelming response from the people attending the sessions. They asked if I would do these presentations at their jobs. I started doing them, but I had a limited capacity. I decided after a year to do it full-time.

Just recently you started your other food-based initiative, Turning Tables. How has the new venture been going?

Really good! We're starting our first cohort for food-based entrepreneurs next month. We've been in this space since April and opened fully in August. Starting in February, we'll have evening hours only to be able to do our program during the day. It's going really well overall.

What do you hope to accomplish via Diverse Dining and Turning Tables?

The mission is to use food to build a more equitable world for us to live in. More specifically, there are alarming statistics around race and racism, segregation, housing, every area. Within the food entrepreneurship arena in Wisconsin, we rank the lowest for minority food-based entrepreneurs who have their own establishments. With Turning Tables, we are providing a community service by helping them directly and specifically start their businesses with the support and knowledge that they need.

At Diverse Dining, we're helping people get past the initial barrier that they are sometimes thrown by, which is the way we look on the outside. Because of the amount of segregation that exists in Milwaukee, it's difficult to build authentic relationships with each other without something in the way or some kind of hierarchy. This helps with that.

How do you promote that connection at Diverse Dining?

You can't sit by anybody that you know when you come in. We give people ground rules about telling stories from their own perspective and not third person. When we have conversations, it really does create an open communication environment and people leave more connected.

What's the role of food in bringing people together? We hear so often the importance of 'breaking bread' with others.

Food automatically helps people lower their defenses. It's almost like two different people come to the table if there's food or if there is no food. I think it's a natural barrier-breaker in and of itself.

The other thing is that there are so many stories from so many people tie back to food. Some cultures weren't even allowed to come into the state unless they had a restaurant. There is so much of peoples' stories you can get if you understand their 'food story.' You're curious and you're open because you're eating the food or you like the food, and now you're learning and you're understanding something that you never would have understood had you not figured it out that way.

You said that you started Diverse Dining because you didn't see the 'needle moving' to address the underlying concerns of racism and segregation when you worked in public health. Do you think this has moved that needle?

I know that it has. It's still a small trickle. It's something that has to be embraced by a lot of people, but it has moved the needle.

I also said that I wanted to create a world that I didn't see, as far as my immediate circle and my neighborhood, and I have that now. I have Brazilian friends; I have Mexican friends. I have Black friends, I have white friends. And I'm talking about *friends*, not just people I know. By me sharing my world and other people sharing their worlds, we are creating something different. You have different compassion for people that you love and that you know personally than you do for people you don't really associate with it. I think that's where it starts. I also know and believe that this work is a long commitment. It's a long-haul project.

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

How Southern tourism has rewritten American slavery history

A hundred years ago, the city of Charleston, S.C., came up with a plan to revive its economy, which had been sagging since Reconstruction. Tapping into its antebellum past to charm visitors was a simple idea, but the city's elite not only left out the uncomfortable parts of the city's long slave history, they took it a step further: They rewrote the city's public memory.

While it happened in many Southern cities, Charleston was a particularly striking example of how lucrative and enduring the strategy was, said Shevaun Watson, an associate professor of English at UWM. More than 7 million tourists visit the small downtown area annually, generating \$8 billion a year by 2018.

Watson is writing a book about the ways that collective memory was formed – and defiled – in the city as it seized a romanticized version of its past to sell to tourists. The intersection of public memory and the notion of cultural heritage has always intrigued Watson, who specializes in rhetoric – how language is used to construct meaning.

While the intent in Charleston was never to show history accurately, Watson wondered what the broad effect of this revisionist history has had since it is sold through tourism to millions of people each year.

The quaint Old South version of Charleston that the city created and marketed was white-washed and it was done using racist tropes that promoted misinformation. Another result was that tourism helped the elite bypass public deliberation about the city's historic architecture and its downtown neighborhoods through historic district zoning ordinances.

In this conversation, Watson talks more about the co-evolution of “heritage tourism” and historical preservation in Charleston – and how her field of rhetoric figures into it.

How is heritage different from history?

I think it's really interesting how heritage is tied to identity claims in a way that history isn't. In fact, I would define heritage as history that is made to be visited. So it's the making of it to me, as a rhetoric scholar, that's the interesting part. Heritage isn't as connected to all of those historical archival details. It's a less complicated representation to visit.

I've always been really interested in studying history through a rhetorical lens considering the way that histories can be very different and the way they are told can be very persuasive.

What are some of the ways Charleston portrayed itself to attract visitors?

A mainstay of its travel boosterism were images of Southern aristocracy. The South was, to some, the last stronghold of a unified American upper class. It offered outsiders the opportunities to touch patrician splendor, a fantasy for tourists that remains incredibly strong today.

Visitor comfort was commodified through racist stereotypes of the formerly enslaved. African Americans were turned into attractions themselves, being made to appear non-threatening, hardworking and happy. All of these images deeply shaped how outsiders perceive the South. For many tourists, this is the most they will hear about Charleston's history.

What are other negative effects of this flawed storytelling?

The development of tourism in Charleston played a role in the unequal distribution of land, property and memory for African Americans living there.

Of course, no mention was made of the deep traditions, vibrant communities and myriad achievements of enslaved and free Blacks. Elite white cultural producers have ignored the city's ethnic and racial diversity and erased the most violent realities of its slave-owning past and Jim Crow present.

Tourism also normalized racial segregation while making African Americans “safe” for consumerist consumption. The proliferation of demeaning, sentimentalized stereotypes, often in caricatured forms, magnified a sense of racial inferiority.

There hasn't been an equal distribution of the wealth gained: Black and brown people did – and still do – the majority of physical labor and at very low wages to create the seamless spaces of comfort for tourists.

How was historic preservation used to reshape Charleston's neighborhoods – both Black and white?

The 1931 Zoning Ordinance explicitly ties the general welfare of the city to the preservation of its historic places by creating a special zone – the country's first historic district.

In 1960, the last African American property owners left an area that had long been a predominantly Black, middle- and working-class neighborhood called Ansonborough. They moved because, if they hadn't, they would have come under the protective covenants of the historic district and the ordinances of the Board of Architectural Review. And they could not afford the restrictions and upkeep.



Shevaun Watson, an associate professor of English at UWM, is writing a book about how Charleston, S.C., created a romanticized version of its past to sell to tourists. (UWM Photo/Elora Hennessey)

In this way, the city radically altered the racial makeup of the neighborhoods near downtown. Once two-thirds Black, the Charleston peninsula became more than three-quarters white.

Now exceptionally wealthy, Ansonborough isn't just any story of gentrification. The economic mechanics behind it served as a model for similar kinds of neighborhood revitalization in hundreds of American communities thereafter.

Most of the property on the peninsula now is owned privately. Why is that important?

Because the city's Board of Architectural Review with its broad powers, hundreds of homes fall under some historic designation and so private homeowners, not the historical societies, become implicated in historic preservation and all of its problematic effects.

Conveniently, using houses to memorialize a romanticized version of the slave South requires no allocation of public funds and no public deliberation about who or what should be remembered of Charleston's history. Instead, preservationists repurposed whole parts of existing built environments for their own memorial ends.

Because of the zoning model Charleston created, private spaces of white elites became the public spaces of Charleston's collective memory and “official” heritage.

By Laura Otto, University Relations



In the Media and Around the Community

While incumbency played a great part in the re-election of Sen. Ron Johnson and the defeat of his opponent Mandela Barnes, **Kathy Dolan** and **Paru Shah (both Political Science)** told [Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service](#) that the candidates' races may have been a factor as well.

Dolan also noted that women tend to run for office less often than men, though they win at much the same rates, in a [Wisconsin Examiner](#) article.

The [Wisconsin Examiner](#) cited data from the **Center for Economic Development** in an article exploring the relationship between minimum wage and childhood poverty.



Despite a large push across multiple industries to organize labor unions over the past few years, **John Heywood (Economics)** said that employers are pushing back against unionization on [NPR's Marketplace](#) show. Heywood also spoke to [Wisconsin](#)

[Public Radio](#) about Wisconsin's declining union membership rates.

Margo Anderson (emerita History) told [CBS 58 News](#) about the process of Milwaukee's challenge to the 2020 U.S. Census, claiming its residence were undercounted.

The historic D.C. Everest House in Wausau, Wisconsin, went on the market in January. The [Wausau Daily Herald](#) researched the house's architect using the **History Department's** Encyclopedia of Milwaukee.

Charles Paradis (Geosciences) was an invited speaker who presented as part of a series of YouTube livestreams for Wisconsin's [Salt Awareness Week](#), sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wisconsin Salt Wise.

Green Trading Co. is a business focused on providing sustainable, environmentally-friendly home and beauty supplies. [TMJ4 News](#) featured the retailer, which is owned by **Sasha Stone ('15, BA Sociology)**.

Kay Wells (Art History) delivered a lecture on the late artist Ruth Grotenrath, whose artwork is currently on display at [The Warehouse Art Gallery](#) in Milwaukee.

Why are people so drawn to the true crime genre? Because people like puzzles and are fascinated by evil, **Stacey Nye (Psychology)** posited on [CBS 58 News](#) and on [WUWM Radio](#).

Jeffrey Sommers (Global Studies and African and African Diaspora Studies) penned an opinion piece predicting the future of interest rate hikes and inflation, which was published in the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#). Sommers was also invited to discuss inflation on the radio program "Matt Flynn Direct" on WAUK radio on Jan. 25.

Scott Adams (Economics) speculated on [CBS 58 News](#) that Amazon's new prescription drug subscription service will mean that people are spending less money out of pocket for their medicine.

The [Wisconsin Examiner](#) cited a study by UWM's **Center for Economic Development** showing the disparities between white and Black families' median household income.

Elana Levine (English) discussed the impact of the show "Laverne and Shirley" on [CBS 58 News](#) following the death of actress Cindy Williams, who played the show's titular character Shirley Feeney.

The holidays are over, but if you need tips on how to handle the stress next year, **Marcellus Merritt (Psychology)** passed on his knowledge on [WUWM Radio](#).

[CBS 58 News](#) highlighted the **Planetarium's** upcoming shows discussing the Northern Lights.



People in Print

Josepha C. Lanters (emerita English). (2023). Double Cross (1986) by Thomas Kilroy. In Shaun Richards (Ed.), *Fifty Key Irish Plays* (ed. Shaun Richards). London: Routledge, pp. 126-29.



Alumni Accomplishments

Michael Bugalski ('13, BA Economics and Political Science) joined [County Bank](#) in Moberly, Missouri, as its assistant vice president. He was previously the president of the Moberly Area Economic Development Corporation.

Warren Gerds ('67, BS Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) is leaving for new adventures after decades of being a celebrated critic, editor, and journalist, most recently at the [WFRV television station](#) in Green Bay, Wisconsin. WFRV aired a long conversation with Gerds to mark his departure from the station.

Sujata Saha ('17, PhD Economics) achieved tenure at [Wabash College](#) in Indiana, where she is now an associate professor of economics. Her research focuses on international finance and trade and open economy macroeconomics.

Angela Pittman Taylor ('02, MA Communication) was promoted to Director of Corporate Communications at [Baird](#), an international wealth management, asset management, investment banking/capital markets, and private equity firm. She was previously the deputy director of corporate communications and has received several awards for her advocacy and work over her decades of working at Baird.

Stephanie (Brien) Jones ('07, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) announced a career change into teaching after serving as the editor of the [Lake Geneva Regional News](#).



Laurels and Accolades

Sarah Riforgiate (Communication) was given the Outstanding Teaching Award (Tenured Instructor) by the National Communication Association's Organizational Communication Division as a part of its 2022 Mentoring, Teaching, Service, and Research Awards. Riforgiate was recognized for the ways in which she demonstrates how to address a variety of student needs, her leadership in pedagogy, and how she has conducted workshops and published scholarship around her pedagogy. It was noted that her assignments are thoughtful, and she even reminds students to balance out their comments on discussion board posts to make sure all students receive quality feedback.

Graduate student **Darian Dixon (Geosciences)**, who returned to UWM for his doctoral studies after earning his Bachelor's in 2015, was profiled as a "rising star" in astronomy by [Astronomy Magazine](#). Dixon previously worked at NASA and operated one of the cameras on the [Mars Curiosity Rover](#).

Tony Giron ('19 Master of Urban Planning), **PhD candidate Xiaohan Gu (Urban Studies)**, and Robert Schneider (Professor, Urban Planning) received the 2023 Best Paper Award from the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Committee on Pedestrians for their paper, "[Socioeconomic Characteristics of Drivers versus Pedestrians in Pedestrian Crashes](#)." They presented the paper to an audience of approximately 100 people at the TRB Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

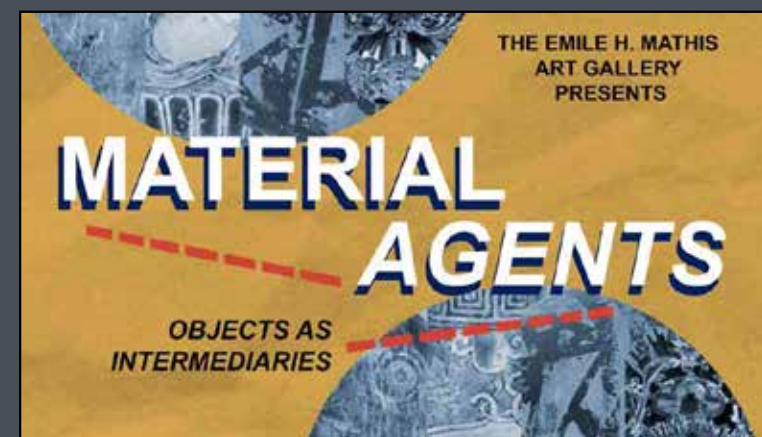
Exhibition at Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery

The "Material Agents-Objects as Intermediaries" exhibition explores the social action of artworks, artifacts, and material and visual culture from the UWM Art Collection and is co-curated by students and faculty from the "Intro to Art Museum Studies II" class. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Where: Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery, UWM Mitchell Hall Room 154

When: Now - March 31; Mon-Thurs 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

More Information: Visit the Art Gallery's [website](#).





Upcoming Events

Recurring February Events

The French Table. 1-2 p.m. Curtin 766. Practice **French conversational** skills. All levels welcome. Occurs many Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Planetarium Show: Under African Skies. 7-8 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Tickets are \$5-6.

Feb. 8 - Ermitte Saint Jacques discusses astrological traditions from Senegal. <https://bit.ly/3jvRRGo>.

Feb. 15 - Mrina Eliseus Mtenga presents astrological traditions from Tanzania. <https://bit.ly/3DEDhTM>.

Feb. 22 - Mohamed Maache discusses astrological traditions from Algeria. <https://bit.ly/3jvRRGo>.

Planetarium Show: Northern Lights. 7-8 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Enjoy the sights and learn the science behind the northern lights. Tickets are \$5-6. Every Friday thru Feb. 24. Register at <https://bit.ly/3HVFSEZ>.

Festival of Films in French - See page 16

Science Bag - See page 15

Material Agents-Objects as Intermediaries - See page 13

February 8

Il Circolo Italiano. 4:30-5:30 p.m. Curtin 766. Learn about study abroad opportunities to Rome.

Planetarium Show: Stars, Stories, & Rhythms of Africa. 6-8 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Celebrate Black History Month with music, dancing, storytelling, and stargazing. FREE. Click [here](#) for more information.

February 10

The Modern Translation Industry Today. 10-11:30 a.m. Curtin 104. UWM alumni Peter Argondizzo, Kimberly Miller, Kati Latta, and Audrey Barker from Argo Translation talk about careers in the **translation industry**.

Philosophy Colloquium: Debating the Dobbs case. 3-5 p.m. Curtin 175. Anne M. Coughlin, University of Virginia Law School, **presents**.

Creative Writing Graduate Student-Faculty Reading Series: United We Read. 7-8:30 p.m. Sugar Maple, 441 E. Lincoln Ave., Milwaukee. With Sean Enfield, Kathryn David Gargano, Brandon Henry, and Brenda Cardenas.

February 14

Planetarium Show: Cupid's Constellations. 7-8 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Listen to tales of love written in the stars, like the story of Andromeda and Perseus. Tickets are \$5-6. Register at <https://bit.ly/3HAlmyU>.

February 15

Global Studies seminar: Making a Splash-Women Cartoonists in France. 2-3:30 p.m. Lubar Entrepreneurship Center. [Cynthia Laborde](#), University of Texas at Arlington.

HARPY (Honors Association for Research and Presentation) Movie Night. 7-9 p.m. Honors House 195. All UWM students are invited to watch "Atonement." FREE.

February 18

Enseigner (avec) les bandes dessinées en français/ Teaching (with) Graphic Novels and Comics in French. 1-4 p.m. Lubar Entrepreneurship Center. Cynthia Laborde, University of Texas at Arlington, leads a workshop for French teachers at all levels K-16. FREE. Register [here](#).

February 22

Nourishing Trust: Trust in Context. 1-2:30 p.m. **Online.** A conversation about the histories that inform food and land justice efforts today with Laura Manthe (Oneida Nation), Adrienne Petty (William & Mary College), and Jayson Porter (Brown University). FREE and open to the public.

February 24

Asia in Conversation: Making Objects Speak-Material Culture in Asian History and Art History. 2-3:30 p.m. **Online.** Hilary K. Snow, UWM, will be in conversation with Morgan Pitelka, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Chelsea Foxwell, University of Chicago.

(Re)imagining Black Futures in the age of Wakanda. 3-5 p.m. Union Fireside Lounge. A discussion on the impact of Marvel's Black Panther franchise on representations of Black history, culture, and identity in the media. This event is FREE but **registration** is required.

March 1

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2023: Virtual Conversation with the Professionals. 3-4 p.m. **Online.** Panel discussion with Stacey Nye, UWM; Kelly Wahlen, UWM; Sara Gonzalez, Rogers Behavioral Health; and Ann Schmidt, UWM.

Darwin Day is Feb. 11!

Join the UWM Geosciences Department for a day of fun and learning in Charles Darwin's honor! This event is free and open to guests of all ages.

Visit the Greene Geological Museum, hear talks by UWM scientists, enjoy coloring and crafts, and take in a free planetarium show!

What: Darwin Day

When: Saturday, Feb. 11, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Where: Lapham Hall 168

Full Schedule of Events available [here](#).



Passings

Cassy Doolittle ('19, BA Psychology) passed away in December while on a rock-climbing trip in Patagonia. Doolittle, 25, had just completed a solo of the Comesaña-Fonrouge in Argentina. She was caught by a fast-moving storm on her descent and passed away due to exposure.

Cassy discovered a passion for climbing at Adventure Rock Gym in Milwaukee. She was an avid climber, traveling around the United States and internationally looking for new heights to summit. On the way, she built a close community of friends. Doolittle was working toward a doctoral degree in neuroscience at the University of Las Vegas.

Friends and family raised money to cover funeral costs, and far exceeded their goal. Cassy's family has announced that they will use the extra funds to support other adventurers on their journeys. A remembrance piece in honor of Cassy was published on [Climbing.com](#).

Professor **David Backes (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies)**, who retired in 2015, passed away on Dec. 23 at the age of 65. For nearly three decades, David was a fixture at UWM, teaching courses in mass media, news reporting, religion and culture, and the course that came to define his career as an educator— "Nature and Culture in the Information Age."



David Backes

Students and colleagues alike came to love David for his quiet wisdom, his kindness to and empathy for all who came through his doors, and his love of the natural world.

David achieved acclaim as the biographer of environmentalist Sigurd F. Olson, who devoted his life to protecting Minnesota's Northwoods and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. David published six books related to Olson and the Northwoods, with Olson's biography (*A Wilderness Within*) receiving national attention and awards.

David's obituary is available [online](#).

Science Bag returns! Genes and Environment: Adapting to Changing Conditions

When environmental conditions change, animals must also change, in order to live. In this program, we will explore some truly unique ways that animals use to adapt to environmental extremes to enhance survival. We also look at molecular processes used by some animals which allow them to adapt to both short- and long-term environmental changes.

This edition of Science Bag is presented by Dr. Michael Carvan, the Shaw Professor in the UWM School of Freshwater Science.

Science Bag is a fun, FREE, family-friendly show that delves into a unique aspect of science.

- Friday, Feb. 10 at 6 PM
- Friday, Feb. 17 at 2 PM
- Sunday, Feb. 19 at 3 PM



For more information about Science Bag and to view the schedule of upcoming shows, visit uwm.edu/science-bag.

Festival of Films in French

February 17-26

Join the UWM community for the annual Festival of Films in French! Expand your horizons and enjoy a movie as the UWM French program, in conjunction with our generous sponsors, presents a range of films tackling social issues like race, war, and reproduction.

Some showings include special events like talk backs following the film. For a synopsis of each film, please visit the Festival of Films in French [website](#).

All films are free and in French with subtitles. All films will be shown in the UWM Union Cinema and are supported by our generous sponsors:

Dr. Richard Stone • Kitty Morse • The Quebec Government Office in Chicago • The Alliance Française of Milwaukee • SWAAF (Southeast Wisconsin Academic Alliance in French) • The Milwaukee French Immersion School

Schedule

Friday, February 17

7 PM – *L'événement* (Happening)
9 PM – *Annie colère* (Angry Annie)

Saturday, February 18

4:30 PM – *Indes galantes* (Gallant Indies)
7 PM – *Simone, le voyage du siècle* (Simone: Woman of the Century)

Sunday, February 19

2:30 PM – *Les secrets de mon père* (My Father's Secrets)
4:30 PM – *Saint Omer*
7 PM – *Une histoire d'amour et de désir* (A Tale of Love and Desire)

Monday, February 20

7 PM – *Fighting for Respect: African American Soldiers in WWI*
8 PM – *La permission* (The Story of a Three Day Pass)

Tuesday, February 21

7 PM – *La mort du soleil* (The Death of the Sun)

Wednesday, February 22

7 PM – *Aza Kivy – Étoile du matin* (Aza Kivy – Morning Star)

Thursday, February 23

7 PM – *Illusions perdues* (Lost Illusions)

Friday, February 24

7 PM – *Arlette!*
9:30 PM – *Un pays qui se tient sage* (The Monopoly of Violence)

Saturday, February 25

4:30 PM – *Les années super 8* (The Super 8 Years)
6 PM – *Frantz Fanon, trajectoire d'un révolté* (Frantz Fanon, the Incensed Rebel)
7:30 PM – *Saint Omer*

Sunday, February 26

2:30 PM – *Interdit aux chiens et aux Italiens* (No Dogs or Italians Allowed)
4:30 PM – *Simone, le voyage du siècle* (Simone: Woman of the Century)