



# **IN FOCUS**

*March 2023, Vol. 13, No. 3*

## **A stately internship**

Political  
Science student  
interned at  
the U.S. State  
Department  
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PUBLISHED THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH BY THE COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE.

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# The art of psychology: Student research explores the human mind

## What you need to know:

- Maggie Kennedy is double-majoring in psychology and art history. Her latest research examines the human mind as portrayed through art.
- The Isenheim Altarpiece, for example, shows insight into mental health and disease treatment during the Renaissance.

The **Isenheim Altarpiece** by Matthias Grünewald (1512-1516) is a triptych painting depicting the suffering and crucifixion of Christ, flanked by saints Sebastian and Anthony, in its closed position. When opened, the painting shows far more joyful images of Christ's birth, resurrection, and ascension to the heavens. It is considered Grunewald's masterpiece and is an important representative of religious and Renaissance art – and it could also be considered one of the first pieces used for art therapy.

“(It was shown) to patients who were being treated in a monastery by monks,” explained Maggie Kennedy. “The Antonine monks, I argue, are some of the first documented therapists in history. The altarpiece was available for their patients to look at, and represented hope. The Antonine monks used the symbolism of the work to reassure their patients that things were going to be okay.”

It may be one of the first documented uses of using art to treat psychological problems, but Kennedy says art

Maggie Kennedy explores the Milwaukee Art Museum. Photo courtesy of Maggie Kennedy.



throughout history has been a window into the human mind and its psychology. It's been the focus of her most recent research as a student working toward double majors in art history and psychology.

“I think psychology and art history are both really interdisciplinary by nature,” she said. “They are so vast that it's very easy to blend them with a lot of other things.”

Kennedy grew up primarily in Germantown, Wisconsin. When it came time for college, she wanted a big school, plenty of choices for classes, and research opportunities. She found all three at UW-Milwaukee, which is an R1-ranked research institution.

Kennedy initially majored in psychology. She had taken an AP Psychology course in high school and fell in love with the field after she and her schoolmates got to hold a human brain and spinal cord in class.

She was making strides in her psychology major at UWM when a scheduling error prompted her to take an art history course instead of a course for her major. “After four weeks, I discovered I really had a passion for art history,” Kennedy laughed.

What she didn't expect was how much her two majors seemed to overlap. Kennedy recalled analyzing the painter Francisco de Goya for a class and how his personal struggles with illness, blindness, and hearing loss led to some of his most striking artworks. Art history, she thought, represented a new way to analyze the mind.

So when one of her English classes asked students to complete a research project on a topic of their choosing, Kennedy already knew what she wanted to explore. The result was a **20-minute presentation** on how art through time has reflected the human condition in all of its forms.

She opened with two marble sculptures from ancient Greece, each showcasing the beginnings of how emotion is depicted in art. From there, Kennedy delved into post-Enlightenment romanticism, examining the conditions of an insane asylum in Francisco de Goya's *Madhouse* (1812-1819) and the faces of those with psychological disorders in Theodore Gericault's *Monomanies* series (1821-1824), among others. She also explored the horrors of battle with *War Pieta* by Max Ginsburg (2007) and ended with the Isenheim Altarpiece.

“My goal was to show the human experience as a whole,” Kennedy said of her research. “How do artistic depictions of the human experience and human emotion make us feel and think? What are the tie-ins to the cultures or time periods that they're from? What are the social norms and taboos of the time, and in turn, how do they shape experience and emotion?”



Maggie Kennedy is double majoring in art history and psychology. She combined her two areas of interest in a research project that explores the human mind through the lens of art. This video is also available at <https://youtu.be/OYBZVgfUy18>.

For instance, she said, the Isenheim Altarpiece is an important artwork not only for its religious significance, but also for its scientific accuracy. Originally painted for the Isenheim Monastery, the piece depicts many of its subjects with haloes of light around their heads. Kennedy said those orbs are meant to represent patients' hallucinogenic symptoms. These patients, cared for by the Antonine monks at the monastery, suffered from **St. Anthony's Fire**, a disease caused by ergot poisoning that led to hallucinations, gangrene, and a burning sensation in the extremities.

According to Kennedy, the Altarpiece shows that “people are starting to understand that this (disease) isn't just ‘crazy people seeing stuff.’ Even though it's a very religious piece ... they understand that St. Anthony's fire is a physical illness (versus a religious punishment),” Kennedy said. “This insight is important for acknowledging the history of both scientific and philosophical psychology.”

Understanding how art and psychology relate is important, she added. Studying psychology through an art lens helps scholars better understand the human mind and how people viewed emotion, trauma, disease, and more throughout history. Kennedy stresses that while she's not yet an expert in either psychology or art history, her studies have helped her uncover one more way to examine how humanity relates to one another.

Kennedy plans to graduate one year early in 2024 and is exploring options for graduate school. Until then, she'll be studying human psychology, one painting at a time.

**By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science**



# Car and writer: Journalism grad lands a job at storied auto magazine

## What you need to know:

- Jack Fitzgerald ('22, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) is an associate editor for *Car and Driver* Magazine.
- He got the job thanks in part to building his writing portfolio at UWM.
- Some of his articles include stories on the Kia Boyz and the Lightning Lap.

Jack Fitzgerald's grandfather was an engineer with Corvette Racing, and he passed his love of cars to his grandsons. Fitzgerald remembers picking up old editions of *Car and Driver* magazine and reading the articles on his grandfather's couch.

These days, Fitzgerald is the one [writing the articles](#).

Fitzgerald, who graduated from UWM in 2022, is a newly-minted associate editor at *Car and Driver*. The magazine has a long and storied history. Founded in 1955, *Car and Driver* was initially dedicated to sports cars, but it has since evolved to become among the foremost publications in the auto industry. Covering both news and product reviews, car companies often tout a favorable rating from *Car and Driver* as a selling point.

What's it like working for a magazine he grew up reading, and one that has such a dedicated following?

"It's fantastic," Fitzgerald said with a smile.

### The auto beat

Growing up, Fitzgerald knew that he loved cars and he loved writing.

"I consumed a lot of car media on YouTube. There was a subculture of 'Car YouTube' that came up as all of the subcultures on YouTube did," Fitzgerald recalled. "I was watching a YouTube video one day of somebody reviewing a car and I realized, oh, this is journalism."

So, Fitzgerald, who was attending UW-Milwaukee on a track scholarship, declared a major in journalism, advertising, and media studies. Then he set about building his auto-writing portfolio, with the support of his journalism instructors.

"I was lucky enough that my professors allowed me to pursue motorsports and cars, which was more enticing to me (than anything else)," Fitzgerald said. "I reached out to the PR representative at the Road America track up in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, and they invited me to come hang out for one of their performance driving schools for the day. I went and reported on that. I had a ton of fun learning, and it was my first taste of that kind of on-the-ground reporting."

Then, as graduation was approaching, Fitzgerald found the perfect job. An associate editor position was open at *Car and Driver*. He knew he couldn't leave things to chance. He put together his résumé and his writing samples and reached out on LinkedIn to two current



editors at the magazine to ask for advice.

To his delight, they responded. Fitzgerald sat down for a (virtual) meeting with the editors and listened as they advised him on what the job required and the steps he should take to get hired. He credits that meeting with getting his foot in the door.

The hiring process took several months, but the wait was worth it: Fitzgerald joined the magazine's staff in June.

### The write stuff

As an associate editor, Fitzgerald writes articles focusing on current trends and news in the auto industry. If Toyota releases pictures of a concept car that will hit the market in a couple of years, Fitzgerald will write an article about what consumers might eventually see in their garages. If there's new information about pricing, that's a story, he said. Occasionally there will be a story about a recall, or the specs on a new vehicle.

One story that hit close to home covered the [Kia Boyz](#), a band of young people who are notorious for exploiting security vulnerabilities in

Hyundais and Kias and taking the stolen vehicles for joyrides.

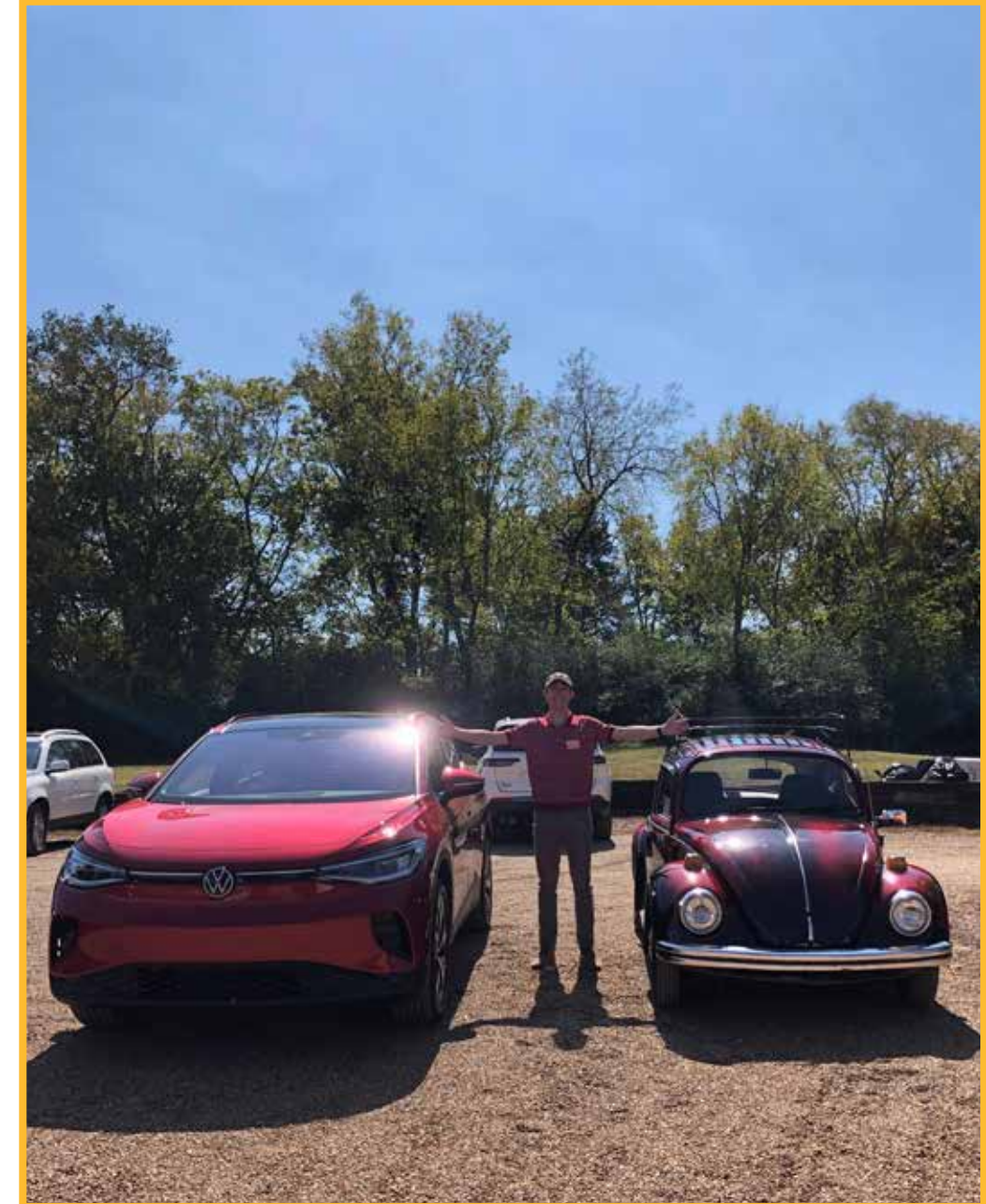
The trend started in Milwaukee as the Kia Boyz filmed their exploits and posted the videos to TikTok. Fitzgerald penned the article because of his ties to Milwaukee – though he originally wanted to take a more unconventional approach.

"The whole thing with the Kia Boyz was they were filming how you can steal a car in 20 seconds, which is immensely shocking to hear. I don't know how long stealing a car should take, but the fact they could do it so quickly is attention-grabbing," Fitzgerald said. "I thought it would be interesting for us to try and steal one of our own vehicles. (But), we decided we don't want to be another source of potentially teaching people to steal a car."

Another fun article gave Fitzgerald a run for his money – literally. Each year, *Car and Driver* tests performance cars on the [Lightning Lap](#) at Virginia International Raceway. In February, Fitzgerald channeled his days of cross-country at UWM, laced up his running shoes, and ran the course. You can read his spec sheet [here](#).

There are challenges of course: As one of the newer editors, Fitzgerald is sometimes called upon to give up his weekends to meet a deadline, for example. But the perks far outweigh the hardships. Fitzgerald speaks highly of his colleagues and how much he's learned from them. He also gets to test drive new cars and even use them to commute – a nice change from his 2010 VW Golf.

But most of all, Fitzgerald said, he's excited to carry on the tradition of *Car and Driver*.



UWM journalism alum Jack Fitzgerald is an associate editor at *Car and Driver* magazine. Fitzgerald often gets to test drive new cars and check out innovative designs and classics in the auto industry as part of his work. Photo courtesy of Jack Fitzgerald.

"I know there are people who have been reading the magazine for 50 years, who have loved it for 50 years," he said. "I was hired around the same time as a few other people, and our new editor-in-chief wrote an introduction story. There were a lot of really kind comments from longtime fans saying, 'Hold the torch high.'"

**By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science**



# From the State Department to the UN: Pol Sci student makes a mark in her government internship

## What you need to know:

- Taylor Nelson, a political science major at UWM, had an internship at the U.S. State Department last autumn.
- She served in the Office of the Ambassador to the UN and worked on human rights issues and other duties.
- The State Department is looking to hire more people from diverse backgrounds, including those from state schools like UWM.

Before she left Washington, D.C., Taylor Nelson ran a few errands at the White House and then raised a glass of champagne with the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. It was all in a day's work for an intern in the heart of the nation's capital.

Nelson just returned from an internship with the [U.S. State Department](#), where she worked for the Office of the U.N. Ambassador, [Linda Thomas-Greenfield](#). Working in the section of government responsible for handling America's foreign policy has been a long-time dream – "I've been looking at the State Department's website for internships since I was 15," Nelson said.

Nelson, a political science major finishing up her final year at UWM, was recruited as part of the State Department's efforts to expand and diversify its pool of talent.

Nelson and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield developed a friendly rapport with each other over the weeks that Nelson worked in the office. They quickly bonded over the fact that they both went to school in Wisconsin.

(Thomas-Greenfield earned her Master's of Public Administration from UW-Madison in 1975.)

"She is the sweetest person I have ever met. I was worried that I was just the intern – no one cares about the intern. She remembered my name every time I saw her!" Nelson said with a laugh. "My last week, I had champagne with her. I was like, I want a job at the UN and she said, we would love to see you there."

## An intern in the capitol

The Office of the Ambassador to the UN is a busy place. Policy advisors, each tasked with overseeing a region of the world and the conflicts and issues that play out in them, regularly advise Thomas-Greenfield and the deputy ambassador to the UN about new developments and ongoing tensions.

As the intern in the office, Nelson was tasked with supplementing their work by drafting memos, working on human rights issues, assisting policy advisors regarding the war in Ukraine, and compiling lists detailing the proceedings of UN meetings. Nelson said her team did a fantastic job of giving her projects that were interesting and valuable to the team, the Department of State, and even the White House. There was never a dull day in the office, and her team quickly became like a family to her.



Nelson was also sent to the White House for an errand or two. One day, she was asked to deliver a hand-written birthday card to Thomas-Greenfield, signed by none other than Vice President Kamala Harris.

## The path to the State Department

For any student wanting to follow her in her footsteps, Nelson said that the time to apply to the State Department is now.

"They are really looking for people from state schools. Students at UWM have a fantastic chance to get in right now," she advised. "Just apply. Be honest too, because you have to do a security clearance. Just show you're passionate."

"Passionate" is a good word to describe Nelson. In 2018, before starting school at UWM, she studied abroad in Russia at Peter the Great Polytechnic University specifically to show that she could adapt to living in a foreign country.

"I was only there for six weeks, but it was a grand six weeks. I loved it," Nelson said. "I was in the Kremlin, so I was in the same place as Vladimir Putin. I said, I need to go there now because in a few years I won't be able to. I didn't know they were going to invade Ukraine, but looking back, there was a store on their main street that was anti-Ukraine. It said, 'Ukraine is Russia.'"



(Above) UWM political science major Taylor Nelson stands with U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield. Nelson worked in the ambassador's office during her internship at the U.S. Department of State. (Left) After her internship ended, Nelson visited her former colleagues at the United Nations building in New York City. Photos courtesy of Taylor Nelson.

That study abroad trip raised a few eyebrows when it came time to get her security clearance for the State Department internship, but the experience made her stand out. Nelson wants to continue to study abroad, with plans to travel to Brussels, Belgium, next summer.

UWM has done a lot to help pave the way. Nelson talks animatedly about her political science classes and credits her professors for their flexibility and support during her internship, since she was also taking classes online at the

same time she was in the capital: "They allowed me to *not* put their class first," she said.

Nelson will graduate this spring. After that, her plans become more nebulous: She is looking into potential jobs with the UN, but she might also start graduate school in Washington, D.C. to prepare herself for a career in government. One thing is for certain, though: Nelson plans to get back to working in the State Department as soon as she can – this time for a career.

**By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science**



# From outreach to research to teaching, UWM alum-turned-professor brings math to all

## What you need to know:

- Pamela E. Harris ('08, MS; '12, PhD Mathematical Sciences) joined the UWM math faculty in the fall.
- She is passionate about supporting underserved and minority students in mathematics.
- Her latest research highlights “games on graphs” that teach computer science and statistical concepts.

Pamela E. Harris has finally come home.

Harris attended UWM for graduate school, earning her PhD in mathematics in 2012. After a decade of teaching math at West Point and then at Williams College, she returned to Milwaukee and joined the UWM faculty this fall. Harris has made a name for herself in the mathematical world, both for her research and teaching and her commitment to making math accessible to everyone, especially underserved students and racial minorities. That is a mission close to her heart, because Harris is a Dreamer – she and her family moved from Mexico as undocumented immigrants when she was 12 years old.

Harris sat down to talk about her work, her principles, and her latest research – a book chapter that describes “games on graphs” that teach students the beginnings of mathematical research and some connections to computer science and data analysis.

## What is it about math that drew you?

I tell the story that I became an accidental mathematician. When I went to Milwaukee Area Technical College for my undergraduate work, I started in intermediate algebra and I worked my way up. Every end of term, one of the teachers would say, you should take the next math class. And I just did.

I think I followed what people thought I should do, because I didn't know what to do. My parents didn't graduate high school. We weren't having conversations about, how do you become a mathematician? The goal was to finish high school.

## You like math, though, right?

Oh, I do! I love math. But I wasn't envisioning that one could be a mathematician. I didn't understand that that was a possibility for a job. But I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. From an early age, that was something that I was passionate about.

**You lived your childhood as the daughter of undocumented immigrants and you yourself were undocumented. How did that impact you growing up?**

You don't talk about it. You have this horrible amount of shame over something you can't control, and you can't ask for help because you don't know who is safe to talk to about this, or who might decide to call immigration on you and get your whole family deported. It was very isolating, especially during high school. Everybody starts asking, “What college did you apply to? Where did you get in? What scholarship did you get?” And I was silent. I couldn't apply anywhere. I didn't know where I was going to go or what I was going to do.

It's still terrifying. There are still parts of family who are progressing through the immigration system, and it's still hard to talk about it because they're still in danger.

## How does it work, trying to apply for college and being undocumented?

It doesn't. DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) didn't exist when I was still in high school. There was no way to apply for college with the exception of applying as an international student. But I had an ITIN, an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, that also has nine digits. When I went to MATC and applied there, I put my ITIN number (in place of a social security number). I thought, well, that's an identification number for me from the IRS.

At that time, there wasn't the robust check that exists nowadays, and I got in. But at the point that I became a green card holder, I had to go to the registrar and ask them to merge my records. I remember the registrar at the time said, “I'll have to talk to the lawyers. People don't have two social security numbers. You might have committed identity theft. We don't know who you are.”



Pamela Harris is a UWM alum who joined the UWM Mathematical Sciences Department in the fall of 2022 as a faculty member.

I thought, this could not be how I get my entire family deported, and all because I wanted to transfer to Marquette University and needed to get my records to match with my social security number. A week later, I got a letter in the mail saying, “We merged your records.” I'm very lucky. I was president of the student government, I had started an LGBTQ+ organization at MATC, and I was known on campus for all the work that I was doing. I don't know how much of my visibility on campus played a role in my family not getting deported.

**You graduated with your PhD in mathematics from UWM in 2012, spent 10 years at West Point and at Williams College, and then you ended up back here at your alma mater. What's it like to come home?**

It is amazing. My face hurts from smiling every time I drive here. I'm happy to be somewhere where, finally, the mission of the institution aligns with my values in

a way that, for a long time, it hadn't. To see students who are working so hard to improve the quality of their life and that of generations of their family – it feels so good to be here.

**You are a huge advocate for mathematical accessibility and you even have a podcast. What do you do to put math in reach for everyone?**

One of the things that I cofounded a few years ago was an organization for Latinx and Hispanic American students in math, [Lathisms](#). The goal was to bring visibility to the contributions of Latinxs in mathematics. I think part of that was motivated by the fact that, for a long time, I didn't see people who had my same heritage and history and background. I and my cofounders wanted to dispel this myth that Latinx folks don't do math. We finally have a scholarship, and we had a book out with stories of Latinxs and Hispanics in math.

I also work to make mathematics accessible because it is something that I value. I think I have honed in on being able to explain a problem very simply. I love the field of combinatorics, because all I do is count. Being able to bring students very early on into those problems has been so fruitful. They have ended up publishing research math articles on all of these topics. For me, that fits with who I am and the access mission of UWM.

**In December, you had a book chapter published on “Games on Graphs: Cop and Robber, Hungry Spiders, and Broadcast Domination.” What are some of these games?**

[Continued on Page 10](#)



Imagine you have a graph, which is just a set of dots and some lines connecting the dots. The dots are called vertices and the lines are called edges. Now I give you some pebbles and say, you can put a pebble on a vertex. Once the pebble is on a vertex, we call that vertex “covered,” but we’re also going to say that anything connected to that vertex is also covered. What is the smallest number of pebbles that you can put on the vertices of the graph so that the entire graph is covered?

Say you have four vertices and they’re connected as a square. If you put one pebble on any of the vertices, it covers itself and the two adjacent, but you’ll be missing that last vertex. So, you need two pebbles to cover the graph.

But what if the graph is much more complicated and bigger? These problems are bread-and-butter to graph theory. These are called “domination problems.” There are a lot of generalizations of this problem for which the answer is not known. Proving that you have the smallest number of pebbles that you need is very difficult. If I say you need 10 pebbles, then you need to check that there is no way that I could arrange nine pebbles to dominate the graph. Those problems get really difficult really fast, but in the small scale, they’re very nice for students to do some work and get some constructions to determine the number of pebbles needed.

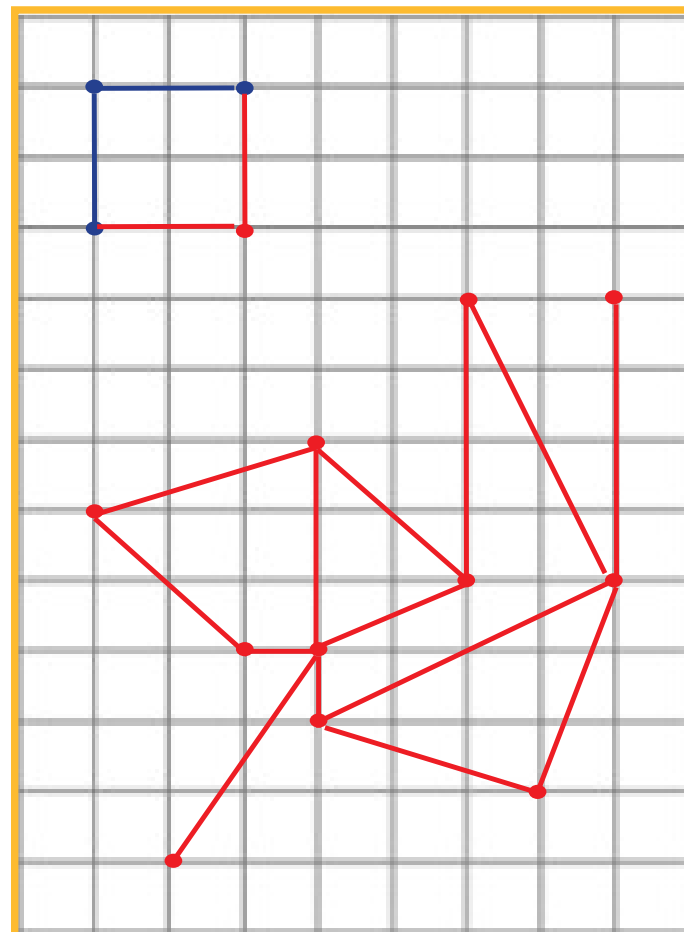
## How does gamification add to education?

For me gamification means we get to be playful with mathematics. I think this makes math accessible. I just literally gave you a research problem in mathematics that people can get PhDs in by finding the solutions to the problem, and it took us just a few minutes. In this short time, you understand the question. That’s really it; we all have this innate desire to play, and mathematics is one way that we can do that. We don’t often think about mathematics that way.

## What do these games teach and why is it important to have this kind of knowledge?

I think a lot of it is building a sheer love and curiosity for research mathematics, but there are also applications. Sometimes people want to figure out how you move data across some network. In the internet, you want to move from webpage to webpage by clicking on links.

In one of the games we describe, (coauthor) Eric Insko found a cellphone game where we think of the graph as a spider’s web. In this game, you’re trying to make sure a spider doesn’t eat a little fly on the graph, so you want to



In the “Broadcast Domination” game, imagine that the red points are vertices on a graph and the red lines are edges. Imagine that you can place a pebble on any of the vertices (represented by the blue points and lines), and that vertex and the ones immediately connected to it are “covered.” What is the least amount of pebbles you would need to “cover” the graph? For a square, shown top left, the number is two. The answer becomes more complicated as the graphs grow bigger and more complex. Graphic created by Sarah Vickery.

remove some of the edges of the graph to disconnect the web in such a way that the spider can’t travel to the fly along the edges of the web. (The analog is that) if you delete a webpage, now you might have lost the only way to get to another webpage. There are computer science applications that show up in this work. These games on graphs lead naturally to students building some intuition that they can carry on when they go to do higher level mathematics, computer science, and statistics courses.

## Is there anything that you want people to know about you?

I do research, I do outreach, I teach, and I commit time to initiatives focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. In people’s minds, they might imagine my work fitting into separate buckets. That’s not at all how I see my

# Awards given to aid collaborative research to address poverty in Milwaukee

UWM has joined with Marquette University and the Johnson Controls Foundation to fund three interdisciplinary research projects through the “President’s and Chancellor’s Challenge: A Crosstown Collaboration to Address Poverty.”

Research teams comprise faculty, staff and students from both institutions along with community partner organizations on joint work that represents critical areas in the efforts to stem the rise of poverty. Projects are receiving up to \$75,000 for 18 months.

The winning projects, announced this month, are:

## Changing the Story: The Story Fellow Program

Stories that emerge from Milwaukee neighborhoods experiencing poverty tend to focus on crime, not resilience or tales of everyday life. This program will build partnerships between students and community organizations across Milwaukee, enabling a wide range of storytelling from disadvantaged neighborhoods.



Anne Basting

Team: **Anne Basting (English)** and Ben Trager (Center for Community-Based Learning, Leadership, and Research) from UWM; Sarah Wadsworth and Andrew Kim from Marquette.

Organizations: The Gathering, Milwaukee Turners, Story MKE, East Side Senior Services, Milwaukee Academy of Sciences, Islands of Brilliance, Beckum Little League/Park, Milwaukee Parks Foundation, Jewish Family Services.

work. For me, they are all completely intertwined. When I think about research and research opportunities, I think about making problems accessible that are still going to lead to original research, and I also think about who I work with and who needs access and opportunities.

All of those pieces go together. That’s what I love the most about being a mathematics professor and the place where I thrive: A place where I can be my full, authentic self *and*

## Expanding Access to Telemental Health Services for Young Adults in Poverty

This pilot project is addressing mental health and access to health care for the most socially vulnerable populations in Milwaukee. The three focus areas will include coordinated community engagement, telehealth and working with the young adult population.



Hobart Davies

Team: **W. Hobart Davies (Psychology)** from UWM; Lee Za Ong, Stacey Lerret and Julie Bonner from Marquette.

Organizations: Milwaukee Health Department, City on a Hill, and Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics.

## Healing Adversity and Trauma through Conversation and Hope (HATCH)

This initiative integrates three models of social support or mental health care into Wisconsin Works (W2) and prison reentry services: community-building workshops; peer-led circles of support; and trauma screening and treatment referral. The aim is to support economic self-sufficiency by marrying basic need services (such as employment and housing) with services that address social connection and mental health services.

Team: Dimitri Topitzes (Helen Bader School of Social Welfare) and graduate student Najee Ahmad from UWM, and Ed de St. Aubin from Marquette.

Organizations: Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, Wisconsin Community Services, America Works, Progressive Community Health Centers, Mann Behavioral Services.

get to do math *and* get to think about how to make math accessible *and* where everyone feels included and can experience mathematical joy. That is the place in math that I call home.

**By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science**



# UWM students explore issues with former U.S. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan

## What you need to know:

- Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Paul Ryan delivered the UWM Distinguished Lecture in February
- Students, including several from Letters & Science, were able to meet and speak with Ryan
- Ryan spoke about U.S. economic policies, bipartisanship, and political civility

With the national and global economies going through digital transformations, the U.S. policies on free trade matter more than ever, said UWM student Reid Pezewski.

“The main thing I’m interested in is how economic policies will change with the advent of much stronger technology, like artificial intelligence,” said Pezewski, a graduating senior majoring in economics, finance and computer science. “And Paul Ryan really had some interesting positions during his career with regard to economics.”

And Pezewski was excited to hear the former U.S. speaker of the House and former congressman from Wisconsin talk about this and other topics in person on Feb. 23 at the UWM Student Union.

### Students meet Ryan before lecture

Ryan spoke to a gathering of about 25 students as part of the Meals with Meaning series hosted by UWM Student Involvement. The intimate gathering happened just before Ryan delivered the UWM Distinguished Lecture, co-hosted with the Tommy G. Thompson Center on Public Leadership.

At the Meals with Meaning student event, Michelle Putz, UWM Alumni Association board president and owner of PTZ Consulting, moderated the discussion between students and Ryan.

Many students attending were interested in Ryan’s stance on economic issues while he served in Congress. Ryan told the group he had intended to have a career as an economist rather than a long tenure in politics. The students varied in their political preferences and majors, but about a third were studying economics.



UWM student Reid Pezewski talks with former Speaker of the U.S. House Paul Ryan. (UWM Photo/Troy Fox)

“He seems rather frustrated with the way policy is going on free trade, especially within his own party,” said Averell Charlton Diesch, a junior who also attended the student talk.

Like Ryan did in college, Charlton Diesch is majoring in both economics and political science and said that two are interconnected, especially on trade policy issues.

The overall U.S. economy benefits from free trade, Charlton Diesch said, but there’s collateral damage to consider. “Some jobs will likely be lost in sectors where the U.S. doesn’t have the competitive advantage,” he said. “Economists have proposed many solutions to this, but they tend to be politically iffy (with voters).”

### Bipartisanship a priority

Sophomore Kate Jakubowski said she grew up interested in politics from a young age, even though she’s currently a double major in music performance and history. In the last year, she said, she had the chance to meet the Wisconsin

Gov. Tony Evers and senators Tammy Baldwin and Cory Booker.

Ryan’s remarks at the event were not what she had expected.

“The thing that stuck with me the most that he really emphasized bipartisanship, and that’s something I feel like is missing in these days in Congress,” Jakubowski said. “And so I really appreciate his willingness to talk about that and to say that he has worked with people across the aisle.”

“Although I lean liberal on the political spectrum, I think it’s really important to hear voices from all spectrums,” she said. “Hearing different opinions is really important, especially in my generation because of our confirmation bias.”

### Marketplace of ideas

Charlton Diesch also emphasized the important of the marketplace of ideas when it comes to political negotiation.

“You heard Ryan say, ‘When I think I’m right, I’m probably right.’ But then he still wants to hear the other side, because that could strengthen his idea,” Charlton Diesch said. “The discourse could lead to learning something that could be added so that it evolves into a great idea.”

Pezewski left the event with interest in reading Ryan’s new free e-book in which Ryan uses data and AI to determine the effectiveness



Paul Ryan and Charlie Sykes discuss Ryan’s tenure as speaker of the House. (UWM Photo/Troy Fox)

of economic policies. Using facts to identify policies that work, what Ryan called “persuasion politics,” is more compelling than relying on ideology to drive political negotiations.

“I really liked it when he mentioned that,” Pezewski said. “It seems that everything has become more emotionally charged and it’s a negative when it comes to being able to make rational decisions. I know that you can’t take emotion out of everything, but I’m worried that we’re losing a healthy balance.”

### Over 300 for lecture

Following the student meeting, Ryan also greeted Milwaukee leaders and UWM faculty in the Fireside Lounge before speaking to a crowd of just over 300 gathered for the Distinguished Lecture, moderated by political commentator Charlie Sykes.

In his discussion with Sykes, Ryan touched on a need to find and address the root causes of tuition inflation in higher education and also prioritize STEM disciplines. “UWM does pretty well in STEM,” he said. “I love the School of Freshwater Sciences here. I’ve toured it several times.”

Other sponsors of the Distinguished Lecture event included UW-Milwaukee, UWM Student Involvement, the UWM Alumni Association and the university’s political science and economics departments.

### By Laura Otto, University Relations





## In the Media and Around the Community

Milwaukee is facing a crisis among its emergency medical services. **David Desphande ('22, BS Biological Sciences)** penned an opinion piece for the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) warning of the dangers of the city's "bandaid" approach to the problem.

To celebrate Black History month, the **Planetarium** hosted several shows themed, "Under African Skies." [WISN 12 News](#) highlighted its programming.



Check out these books by Black authors that everyone should have on their shelves, according to **Derek Handley (English)**. He gave his recommendations on [TMJ4 News](#) and on [WUWM Radio](#). Handley also spoke to the [Anadolu Agency](#) about the legacy of Malcolm X on the anniversary of the civil rights leader's assassination. Finally, **Handley's** research on racially-restrictive housing covenants, with **Anne Bonds (Geography)**, was featured in a [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) article exploring how some municipalities are repudiating their past housing restrictions. **Bonds** is quoted in the article.

The **Sam and Helen Stahl Center for Jewish Studies** offers a certificate in Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies. The [Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle](#) highlighted the certificate program and spoke with **Rachel Baum** and **Joel Berkowitz (Jewish Studies)**.

After several interest rate hikes over the past months to combat inflation, **Jeffrey Sommers (Global Studies and African and African Diaspora Studies)** called on the Fed to stop raising rates in an opinion piece published in the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#). He discussed the article on WXRW Radio on Feb. 25.

[TMJ4 News](#) dubbed the **Manfred Olson Planetarium** a "hidden gem" in Milwaukee and spoke to director **Jean Creighton (Planetarium)** about what the facility has to offer. Creighton also spoke on [Fox 6 News](#) about the arresting sight of Jupiter and Venus in the night sky.

Machine learning is critical to innovation and invention, **Carol Hirschmugl (Physics)** told [BioForward Wisconsin](#) in an article about the 2023 Wisconsin AI Summit.

**Marc Tasman (Journalism, Advertising and Media Studies)** explained on [TMJ4 News](#) and [WUWM Radio](#) how to find the most success with the algorithm on dating websites.

**Ashkon Rezvani Naraghi ('16, PhD Urban Studies)** passed away in 2021 when he was caught in an avalanche while rock climbing. [WUWM Radio](#) spoke with his mentor, **Jennifer Jordan (Sociology)**, who worked to publish his thesis posthumously.

Teaching faculty member **Charles Allen (Chemistry and Biochemistry)** can count on one hand the number of fellow Black pilots he knows. He told [TMJ4 News](#) he hopes to change that number with his aviation outreach program, New Beginnings Aviation Ministry.

**Pamela Harris (Mathematical Sciences)** spoke at [Centre College](#) about her experiences as a "Dreamer" and attending college as an undocumented immigrant to the U.S.

The [National Catholic Register](#) spoke with **Liam Callanan (English)** about how his faith informs his writing and novels.

The *Milwaukee Record* published a retrospective on the Milwaukee-based hip-hop group Black Elephant, which recorded music in the early 2000s. The band included **Derrick Harriell ('12, PhD English)** and **Dameon Ellzey ('20, MS Urban Studies)** and was managed by **Geraud Blanks ('14, BA Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies; '16, MA Media Studies)**.

[Spectrum News](#) talked with student **Sinyetta Hill (Political Science)** about her attendance of the U.S. Supreme Court's hearing on President Biden's student loan forgiveness plan.

**Jennifer Haas (Anthropology)** spoke to [WUWM Radio](#) about UWM's Cultural Resource Management program's efforts to identify remains buried in 1800s pauper cemeteries on the grounds of the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center.

**Political Science alum Gordon Gidlund ('77)** and self-proclaimed amateur historian, discussed Shakespearean influences during the Civil War in a presentation titled "Bloody Battles & a Country in Crisis" at the Mission Valley Library in San Diego.



## Alumni Accomplishments

**Joseph Barrera ('17, PhD Mathematical Sciences)** received tenure and a promotion to the rank of associate professor in February. Barrera is a faculty member in the Mathematics and Computer Science Department at Converse University in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

**Steven LoDuca ('86, MS Geosciences)** was honored with the Outstanding Educator Award from the Michigan chapter of the American Institute of Professional Geologists February. LoDuca is a professor at Eastern Michigan University where he teaches paleontology, sedimentology and stratigraphy. LoDuca was nominated for the award by a former student.

**Calandra Revering ('98, BA Sociology)** was recognized for her efforts to mentor other young lawyers in a profile by [Minnesota Lawyer](#). Revering, a Black criminal defense attorney in a field with few Black lawyers, spoke about her life and her approach to law.

**Nicole Bender ('07, BA English)** was promoted to senior business analyst at Acuity Insurance, based in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Bender began at Acuity in 2012.



Derrick Harriell

**Derrick Harriell ('12, PhD English)** was named the new director of the African American Studies program at the [University of Mississippi](#), where he is an associate professor of African American Studies and English. He hopes to hire more staff, attract more students, and raise the program's profile during his tenure.

**Shannon Van Roo ('15, BA Political Science)** was promoted to Manager - Regulatory Affairs at Acuity Insurance in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. She began at the company in 2015 as a regulatory analyst.

**Marisa Camacho ('18, BA Comparative Ethnic Studies)**, a current graduate in UWM's Sustainable Peacebuilding program, will see the opening of her art gallery, La Gente, in March. Co-founded with Camacho's sister, the gallery will feature art exhibitions and serve as a "content studio lab" for its member artists. The gallery was featured in the [Shepherd Express](#).



Steven LoDuca

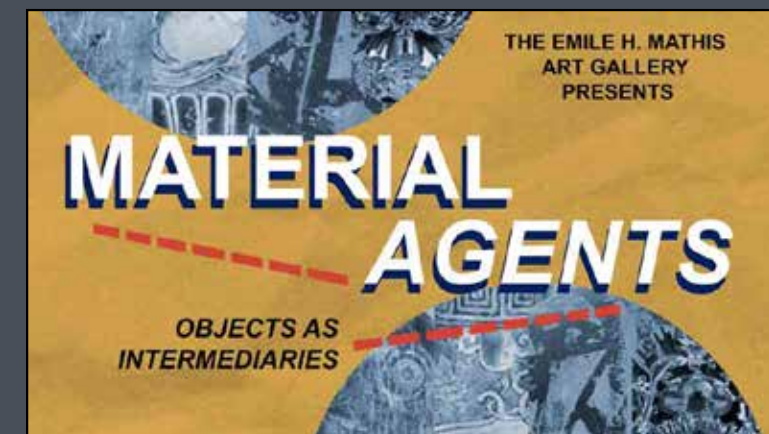
## Exhibition at Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery

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 March Events

**The French Table.** 1-2 p.m. Curtin 766. Practice [French conversational skills](#). All levels welcome. Occurs many Wednesdays and Thursdays. Check our online calendar.

**Art Exhibition: Body Bound.** Now-April 1. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Thursday. Emile H. Mathis Art Gallery (Mitchell Hall). Art History graduate student Rachel Allison's thesis exhibition explores the tradition of using bodily material as the basis for bookmaking. Free and open to the public.

**Art History Exhibition: Material Agents-Objects as Intermediaries** - see page 15

**Science Bag** - see page 17

## March 9

**Mafia Literature – a discussion of “Tina, Mafia Soldier”:** 6:30-8 p.m. Boswell Book Company, 2559 N. Downer Ave., Milwaukee. Robin Pickering-Iazzi discusses her translation of “Tina, Mafia Soldier” by Maria Rose Cutrufelli. [Registration required](#). This event is FREE and open to the public.

**Planetarium Show: Space Night.** 7-8:30 p.m. [Manfred Olson Planetarium](#). Enjoy indoor stargazing, space trivia, and refreshments. Stargazing shows are at 7 and 8 p.m. Trivia starts at 7:30 p.m. This event is FREE and open to the public. Not recommended for children under 4.

## March 10

**After Dobbs: A Roundtable Discussion.** Noon-1 p.m. Fourth floor Library Conference Center. A Roundtable discussion on the effects of the Dobbs Supreme Court Decision, with UWM and UW-System professionals and experts.

## March 15

**Il Circolo Italiano – Screening of the Italian film “Stella” (2009).** 4:30-6 p.m. Curtin 766. No knowledge of Italian is required.

## March 16

**Clean Energy and Clean Water Internships Kickoff.** 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Union Ballroom. Learn about \$20/hour paid internships for students in STEM and other majors, available through the College of Engineering & Applied Science. Recruiting companies include WE Energies, GE Healthcare, Generac, and more. Drop-ins welcome; [registration](#) is required for complimentary breakfast or lunch.

MARCH 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## March 17

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

## March 24 and 31

**Planetarium Show: Spring Stars.** 7-8 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Explore spring constellations in the night sky and hear their stories, such as the feats of Hercules and the tale of Leo. Tickets are \$6 general admission/\$5 for UWM students. Not recommended for children under 4. Buy tickets at the show.

## March 30

**Women’s & Gender Studies Lunch and Learn: Women’s Roles in Language Revitalization.** 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Curtin 535B. Presented by Margaret Noodin and Cailín Nic an tSionnaigh (Fulbright FLTA & Irish Language Instructor, Center for Celtic Studies).

**Nourishing Trust: Trust in Theory.** 1-2:30 p.m. [Online](#). A conversation about the philosophies behind equitable food production systems built on trust. Featuring Elizabeth Gabriel (Groundswell Center), Cherie Rivers (UNC Chapel Hill), and Martice Scales (Full Circle Healing Farms). FREE and open to the public.

**The Cross of Christ, European Colonialism, and the Evangelization of the Enslaved.** 4-5:30 p.m. Mitchell 195. Demetrius Williams (Religious Studies and Global Studies) presents.

## April 1

**Planetarium Show: Astronomical Wonders.** 2-3 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. This matinee program explores some favorite topics and current events in astronomy, including lunar exploration. Tickets are \$6 general admission/\$5 for UWM students. Not recommended for children under 4. Buy tickets at the show.



# Passings

## William “Bill”

**Horstman** passed away on Feb. 17 at the age of 79. He came to UW-Milwaukee in 1963 as a graduate student and never left! He earned his Master’s in Comparative Literature in 1975; served as the Assistant Dean for Administrative Affairs in the College of Letters and Science until his retirement in 2007; and in retirement, has been a speechwriter for Chancellors Lovell and Santiago.



Bill had a great love for the outdoors and local sports teams, with a special focus on the Braves (as a child) and then the Brewers. After his career, he was able to concentrate on his other passions, including creative writing, stand-up comedy, and traveling.

Bill will be missed by all those he touched throughout his life. The family will greet friends on Saturday, March 11 from 12 – 3 p.m. at Feerick Funeral Home in Shorewood.

Bill’s obituary is available [online](#).



# Laurels and Accolades

The Center for 21st Century Studies’ most recently edited volume, [The Long 2020](#), was published by University of Minnesota Press in 2023. The volume includes 25 chapters, including one written by **Cary Costello (Sociology)**, and was edited by former C21 Director **Richard Grusin (English)** and former C21 Deputy Director Maureen Ryan.

**Gina Seegers-Szablewski (Geosciences)** was the main author of the 12th edition of the classic textbook, *Environmental Geology*. Her contributions to this textbook are significant and begin with the [cover photo](#), which she took herself. Seegers-Szablewski is also a UWM alumna (’96, MS Geosciences) in addition to being a teaching faculty member.



Gina Seegers-Szablewski

**Jeffrey Sommers (Global Studies and African and African Diaspora Studies)** was awarded a U.S. State Department Fulbright for the spring term 2024. Sommers will spend the term in Romania.

# Science Bag - Buzzing Bees and Shooting Stars: Pollination in the Prairie

Using high resolution, slow motion video, this multimedia extravaganza will show how bees ensure the survival of “shooting star,” a beautiful plant native to wet prairies of southeastern Wisconsin. In particular, this plant requires bees to vibrate their bodies at very high rates (frequencies), causing the flower to explosively release its pollen onto their bodies!

This edition of Science Bag is presented by Dr. Jeffrey Karron, Professor of Biological Sciences.

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

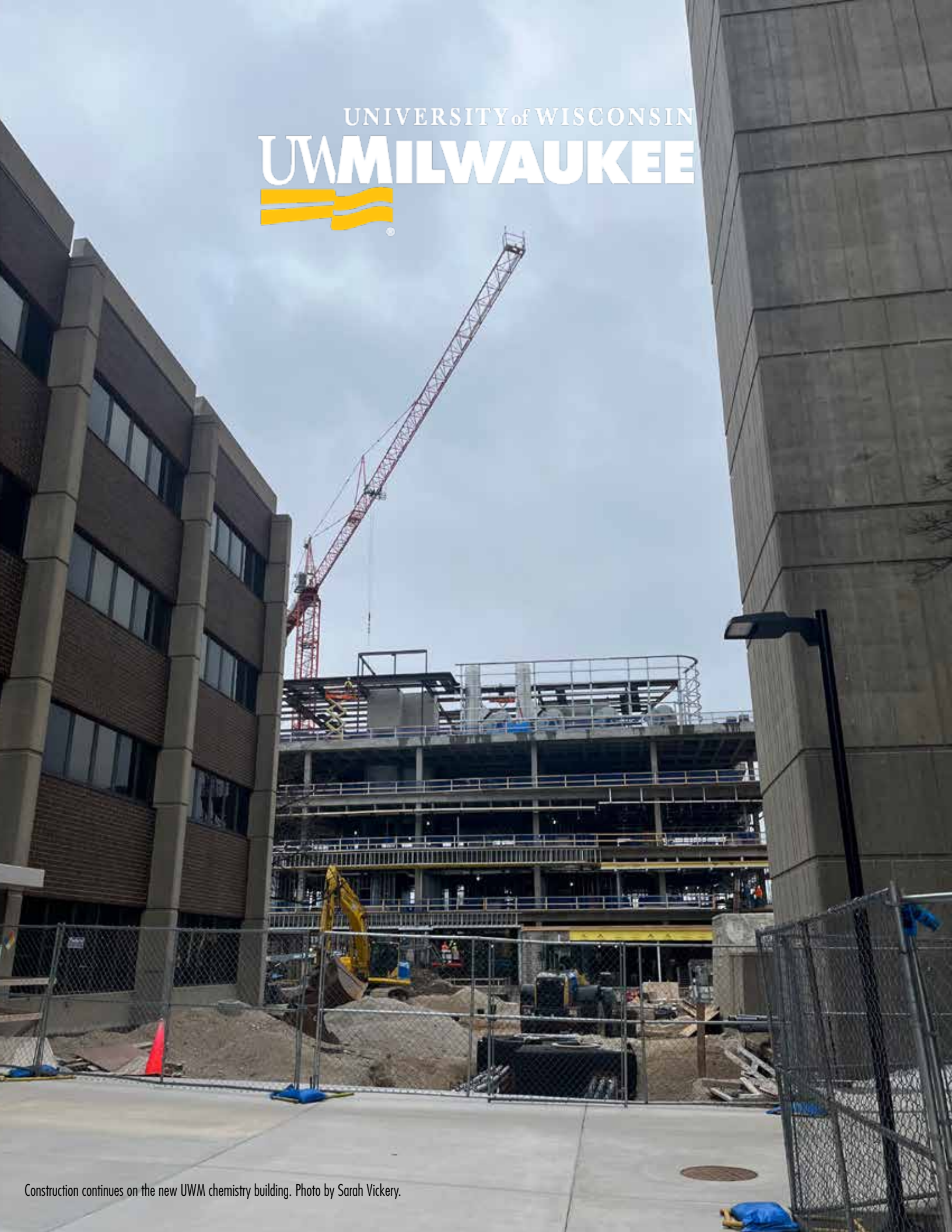
- Friday, March 3 at 6 PM
- Friday, March 10 at 2 PM
- Sunday, March 12 at 3 PM



For more information about Science Bag and to view the schedule of upcoming shows, visit [uwm.edu/science-bag](http://uwm.edu/science-bag).



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Construction continues on the new UWM chemistry building. Photo by Sarah Vickery.