



University Relations
1700 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
Phone: (608) 263-5512

Web: wisconsin.edu
Facebook: facebook.com/uwsystem
Twitter: twitter.com/uwsystem

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Contact: universityrelations@uwsa.edu or 608-263-1700

New Website Connects Wisconsin Employers to UW Student Talent

UW System creating talent pathways to fill statewide workforce needs

The UW System announces the launch of its **Career Connect** website that connects Wisconsin employers with students for internships, job shadowing, and potential careers. **Career Connect** was created in-house to help students get experience in their chosen field, while employers have the opportunity to capitalize on the talent at UW institutions.

“This is a win-win-win for employers, our students and Wisconsin,” says UW System President Ray Cross. “We can efficiently and effectively connect employers with resources their organizations need while our students get valuable career experience. We know internships often turn into job offers. A meaningful job experience can lead to more graduates staying in Wisconsin to raise their families, becoming an integral part of our workforce and economy.”

As a growing number of today’s workforce reach retirement age, that demographic shift will create a significant demand for the educated, innovative workforce of tomorrow. **Career Connect** is a talent development initiative highlighted in the UW System’s **2020FWD** strategic framework that will help provide UW System juniors and seniors at least one professional experience during their college career. It is one of many initiatives in **2020FWD** designed to address future workforce demands as voiced by business and community leaders in UW System’s listening sessions across the state in the past year.

The **Career Connect** portal conveniently directs employers to UW institution resources and students in their area to fill internships, mentorships, short-term projects, apprenticeships and more. The website includes:

- Services available for employers to connect with students at UW campuses
- A tool that allows employers to search what majors exist at each campus
- Direct links to each institution’s career services websites and contact information for staff
- Links to employment data for each campus, as well as UW accountability data
- Calendar of Events for employers, including job fairs across the UW System

Career Connect was developed in-house with input from UW institutions and a variety of statewide partners: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA), Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC), Wisconsin Society for Human Resource Management (WI SHRM), and Wisconsin Technology Council (WTC).

Here is what the **Career Connect** partners have to say:

- **Ray Allen, DWD Secretary:** “The Department of Workforce Development collaborates with the UW System and other education and training partners to expand the number of students who enter the workforce with hands-on experience. With tens of thousands of job openings every day on JobCenterofWisconsin.com, Wisconsin’s free online public labor exchange, our state needs as many tools as possible to help employers find skilled talent and help students secure good-paying jobs after graduation. To this end, Career Connect will be an important resource both for employers and UW students.”
- **Brian Douda, WEDA Executive Director:** “It is critical to Wisconsin’s economic development organizations to align the talent pool with the needs of our local communities. This portal will play a key role in supporting those efforts.”

- **Mark Hogan, WEDC Secretary and CEO:** “As the state’s lead economic development agency, one of our missions is to help companies statewide attract and retain young talent. What makes *Career Connect* an ideal tool for those retention and attraction efforts is that it will target UW students already familiar with Wisconsin and increase their awareness of the many career opportunities that exist here.”
- **Kurt Bauer, WMC President:** “To help keep Wisconsin competitive, we must continue to attract and retain talent to our state. When we connect businesses with UW students in their communities, we’re developing the workforce of tomorrow and the next generation of entrepreneurs.”
- **Katie Walk, WI SHRM Council President:** “WI SHRM is proud to support this important workforce development initiative. We look forward to witnessing the connections made between students and employers, ultimately resulting in growing and retaining our future talent.”
- **Tom Still, WTC President:** “As I travel around Wisconsin, I hear from employers who say they need talent to fill open jobs. They would also appreciate a ‘front door’ to UW System campuses to better connect them with possible interns, graduates, and other opportunities to collaborate. *Career Connect* offers just such a portal.”

“As more employers become aware of our broad and deep talent pipeline, the number of available internships will multiply, providing additional opportunities for UW students. We are creating talent pathways to fill statewide workforce needs,” says Cross.

Connect with a UW System institution to find the talent you are looking for at wisconsin.edu/career-connect. See [President Ray Cross talk about the Career Connect](#) website.

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