

NEWS RELEASE

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UW-Stout inspiring graduate Terri Stan: ‘My experience at Stout has changed me to become a better designer’

Appleton native is now program director at CVTC in Eau Claire

[Terri Stan's inspiring graduate Q&A](#)

[Additional inspiring graduate Q&As](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 6, 2023

Menomonie, Wis. – Terri Stan was a graphic designer at Shopko in Appleton when she decided to switch careers from corporate design work to teaching in higher education. She met her goals even before earning her [M.F.A. in design](#) from UW-Stout on Dec. 17.

Stan is the program director of the Associate of Arts in graphic design at Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire. But her road to her new career was long, literally – she put in countless hours and miles driving to and from Menomonie and Appleton to earn her degree.

“I never thought I would graduate with an M.F.A. in design, but I did, even though it will be exactly 30 years ago that I graduated from UW-Stout with B.F.A. in studio art. That accomplishment must say something about UW-Stout,” she said.

Stan's master's thesis on “Graphic Design Education and Neurodiversity” is based on her life experience and allows her to reach her students at CVTC, filling a void in the discourse of design pedagogy, said Program Director of design Erik Evensen.

What stands out about your Stout experience?

What stood out to me was my student colleagues in the [School of Art and Design](#). It was a great group to go through the program with; they were supportive.

I could lean on them, ask questions and get advice. They gave me different ways to think about design and helped make me a better person.

Erik Evensen was one of those people who seamlessly could provide the correct advice and was willing to talk. We talked about our experiences in the design industry, and he helped guide me in my position at CVTC.

Kim Loken is a demanding professor, but she makes you a better designer. She asked me to join her Introduction to 2D Digital Imaging class as a graduate assistant, which was an excellent experience to gain.

Julie Peterson accepted me into the graduate program. As my thesis adviser, she helped me become a better writer, organize my time, and was very supportive and encouraged me to finish.

What was it like to enroll in a hybrid program?

The challenge of earning my M.F.A. was living across the state and traveling to Stout once or twice a week to attend class. I'd leave work at 1 p.m. and arrive home around 1 a.m. But every time I walked on campus, it felt right; this is where I was supposed to be.

I committed myself to earning this degree. I would have liked to have been on campus more to be involved but living so far away at that time was hard. Then, unfortunately, my employer went out of business, and I was so excited to spend more time on campus. But then COVID hit.

How has your Stout education and experience changed you?

My experience at Stout, both as an undergraduate and graduate, has changed me to become a better designer, given me the ability to voice my thoughts and guided me into a job that for the first time I am proud of.

The courses provided gave me confidence and the opportunity to become a graduate assistant in a virtual classroom. I am proud of my thesis, design project, [research](#) and the friendships that will last beyond graduation.

UW-Stout is [Wisconsin's Polytechnic University](#), with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes. Learn more via the [FOCUS2030](#) strategic plan.

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Photos

Terri Stan receives her master's hood at commencement on Dec. 17.

Terri Stan and Chancellor Katherine Frank.