

NEWS RELEASE

Contacts

[Abbey Goers](#), Marketing Communications, 715-232-2565

[Marketing Communications](#), 715-232-2381

[News Center](#)



UW-Stout inspiring graduate Grace Jones: ‘The hands-on labs and instruction were key to my achievement.’

Shawano native hired as millwork, casework engineer before graduation

[Grace Jones' inspiring graduate Q&A](#)

[Additional inspiring graduate Q&As](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 25, 2023

Menomonie, Wis. – As a woman going into STEM, Grace Jones knew there were going to be challenges when she began her degree at University of Wisconsin-Stout.

“It was not something I was afraid of, but I was stepping into the unknown,” she said.

Jones’ 5 ½ years earning her [bachelor’s in engineering technology](#) had its challenges, but on Dec. 17, she proudly crossed the commencement stage and had a job lined up upon graduation.

Jones, of Shawano, will begin her career as a millwork and casework engineer at F.C. Dadson, a manufacturer of custom store environments and fixtures for the retail industry, in Greenville.

How has Stout prepared you to work in your field?

Stout has done an amazing job preparing me for my future career in engineering. The resources and experiences I received here have been impactful in more than one way. It has led to two great internships – one as a product development intern with Plymouth Foam; and as a quality engineering intern with Presto Products Company. Both of which provided me with the work experience necessary for applying to full-time positions in my field.

The hands-on labs and instruction were also key to my achievement. If it was not for the skills I developed in the Wood Technics Laboratory and Kevin Dietsche’s instruction, I would not have

found I enjoyed working with wood. The passion I found for the processes and materials helped me acquire my job.

Professors like Monika Herrmann and Anne Schmitz demonstrated to me what success could look like. It is in tandem with professors like Kevin Dietsche and Tom Kaufmann that I can confidently say I can weld, cast, machine and design. I know I will be successful because I had amazing people coaching me.

What stands out about your Stout experience?

I have had the pleasure to learn from amazing professors. They were always there to encourage me while I was feeling unsure or questioning myself. They saw the potential in me that I sometimes could not. With their guidance through the difficult coursework and labs, I gained a plethora of new technical skills.

The [Career Conference](#) was key to me landing my first internship. It was through that experience I learned I had a love for the manufacturing setting.

I feel passionate about the people, processes and products being produced. This same passion I brought into my other opportunities and into my coursework.

How did your involvement at Stout impact your experience?

My time in the [Blue Devil Jazz Orchestra](#) and Jazz Project has brought me great friends, a sense of community and the experience of playing the instrument I love. Through the band, I have been blessed with the opportunity to go on tour, solo on multiple pieces and perform at commencement. It is with gratitude to Director Aaron Durst and my peers that I am the musician I am today. The UW-Stout Jazz Band has taken an active role in my college career, and I could not be more thankful.

I also spend time working with [MentorLink](#). I was given the opportunity to help incoming first-year students transition into college life. It was an amazing experience to be able to share my wisdom while also seeing them grow. I hope the impact the experience had on me was also beneficial to them.

How did you overcome the challenges you faced in earning your degree?

The biggest challenge I faced while earning my degree was getting through the math-based classes. Math does not come easy to me, and I knew that it was going to be difficult. I wasn't going to let it stop me though from pursuing my degree. So, I had to work extremely hard to pass the courses and even retake one. If it was not for the [Math TLC tutor lab](#), helpful professors and my determination, I probably wouldn't have been as successful.

How do you feel now that you've finished your degree?

My Stout experience has changed me for the better. It has improved my confidence and skillset and led me to meet some of the most important people in my life. I am most proud of all that I've accomplished. It has been through hard work, determination and encouragement that I made it.

I will always cherish the midnight breakfasts at Price Commons, walking through campus as the seasons change, conversing with friends and professors and hearing the Clock Tower bell chime. It is a great pleasure to be called a Blue Devil.

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.

###

Photos

Grace Jones celebrates her graduation in the Memorial Student Center on Dec. 17. Photo provided by Grace Jones.

Grace Jones with her decorated graduation cap. Photo provided by Grace Jones.