

NEWS RELEASE

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UW-Stout inspiring graduate Devin Dumke: ‘The experiential learning has given me the skills I need to succeed.’

Florence native begins career as software engineer before graduation

[Devin Dumke's inspiring graduate Q&A](#)

[Additional inspiring graduate Q&As](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Menomonie, Wis. – Through many challenges and award-winning successes, Devin Dumke feels his UW-Stout education and experience have changed him. Dumke was named the [Outstanding Student Leader of the Year](#) in May 2022 and awarded the Samuel E. Wood Medallion, UW-Stout’s highest nonacademic honor.

“Both inside and beyond the classroom, my experiences at UW-Stout improved my leadership skills and taught me how to accomplish my goals,” he said.

Dumke, of Florence, graduated on Dec. 17 in [computer and electrical engineering](#) and has already begun his career as an embedded software engineer for Rice Lake Weighing Systems in Rice Lake.

“I enjoy both the work I do and the people I work with,” he said and plans to one day enter graduate school to gain a wholly new college experience.

How has Stout prepared you to work in your field?

I would not be able to succeed in my current position without the experience I had in the computer and electrical engineering program. The experiential learning I received at UW-Stout has given me both the technical skills and soft skills I need to succeed in my field.

The faculty and staff are wonderful, and the hands-on lab experiences helped familiarize me with the work I now do every day. The learning experiences I had outside the classroom have also prepared me for my career goals, as it taught me how to be an effective communicator, how to work with others toward a shared goal and how to be a compassionate and responsible member of society.

What stands out about your Stout experience?

One of the things I wish I learned earlier in my time at Stout is how wonderful and kind our faculty are. They are understanding people who value student success, and I wish more students would recognize that and be willing to share with them.

Another thing that stands out to me is how great our [Career Services](#) staff are. My career counselor really supported my success and because I worked with the Career Services office, I started my career before graduation. They are incredible and deliver so much value to students who utilize them.

How did your involvement at Stout impact your experience?

My most influential work I did at UW-Stout was to serve as president of our student government, the [Stout Student Association](#), from April 2020 to April 2022. I always felt a deep connection to student activism, and I was proud to lead the organization through a very challenging two years.

I worked closely with so many different people across campus, and it was through my success and my failures I learned many of the core skills that I will carry with me into my future career.

I also served as a live-in staff member for [University Housing](#) for 4 1/2 years, and throughout my time I mentored more than 200 first-year students and connected with so many of my co-workers. I am so happy that I chose to be an involved student during my time at Stout because it has led to many wonderful friendships and memories, and it made my college experience truly special.

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

The pandemic and the various changes in my life during the spring 2020 semester really challenged me both academically and socially. Prior to that, I felt I had the perfect balance between academics and extracurriculars, and I was looking forward to co-op and internship opportunities for the summer. In addition, I had made plans to seek a leadership position in our student government, which would require a large portion of my time.

With the pandemic, my co-op plans evaporated, and while I received the exciting opportunity to serve as [SSA president](#), the pandemic resulted in more hours of work and planning than I anticipated. I overcame my challenges through the support of my friends and family and many long nights of work, and while going through the experience was stressful, I feel I am a better person today because of it.

What are you most proud of as you finish your degree?

As I reflect on my Stout experience, I feel most proud of the positive impact I had on my peers and future students. I had a very difficult first-year experience, and when I became a University Housing staff member during my sophomore year I really strived to help first-year students who, like myself, struggled to adjust to college. My student government work was where I had the most impact, where I was a strong advocate for students and worked with others to accomplish our initiatives and goals.

I've formed life-lasting friendships and connections with many of the wonderful people I've met during my time in school, and because of the opportunities I was given at UW-Stout I feel excited for my future.

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

Devin Dumke celebrates at commencement on Dec. 17.

Devin Dumke with his Leadership Award.