

NEWS RELEASE

Contacts

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

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

[News Center](#)



UW-Stout inspiring graduate Rachel Croft: ‘The hands-on projects and client partnerships prepared me to work in the field.’

Graduating early, she’ll begin her career as a technical writer with Toro Company

[Rachel Croft’s inspiring graduate Q&A](#)

[Additional inspiring graduate Q&As](#)

Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Menomonie, Wis. – Rachel Croft completed the near-impossible – earning a bachelor’s degree in just five semesters, all while maintaining an honors status. “I made an effort to go all in and to get the most out of this experience,” she said.

Croft, of Scandia, Minn., graduated from University of Wisconsin-Stout on Dec. 17 with her [bachelor’s in professional communication and emerging media](#). She’ll begin her career as a technical writer with Toro Company in Bloomington, Minn.

“My education at UW-Stout has prepared me to enter the job field with a competitive edge and attain a full-time job in the industry,” she said.

How has Stout and your student involvement prepared you to work in your field?

My classes have given me a unique variety of education in several areas of my field. With this education and experience, I could choose what I wanted to pursue.

The hands-on projects and community and client partnerships in my courses have prepared me to work in the field, specifically in technical writing, where I use skills to analyze my audience, curate content for their needs and conduct user tests.

I was a student researcher, worked in the English and philosophy department and was a member of the Sports Information Media team as a sports photographer, where I attended several sporting events. These three roles allowed me to see the university from a different point of view and experience many new aspects of Stout. I learned new skills as a sports photographer, taught in fifth-grade classrooms as a student researcher and got to work alongside my professors as a student employee.

What stands out about your Stout experience?

I am incredibly impressed with each one of my professors at UW-Stout. I appreciate how my professors have pushed me to grow, taught me new skills and prepared me for the job field.

I value the hands-on projects, teamwork, collaborative client projects and research opportunities I have had at Stout. I value the class sizes at Stout and how I was able to experience the familiar faces of professors and peers in each class in my core program.

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

Over half of my time at UW-Stout has been spent living amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. I faced several challenges throughout the past few years, struggling with mental health, loss of loved ones and friendships, and, with my minor in Spanish, balancing work as a translator at COVID-19 vaccine clinics while attending a mix of online, hybrid and in-person classes.

I overcame these challenges by focusing on school-life balance, knowing that I could only do my best, and at the end of the day, that's all that counts. I learned there is no worth in stressing over situations that cannot be controlled. I spent a lot of time worrying whether I had chosen the right path, but at the end of the day, it's not that serious; I can always switch it up and pursue more knowledge and experience. Regardless, I consistently try to make the best of these moments.

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

My experience at UW-Stout has given me countless skills to manage life in and out of school. As I finish my degree, I am proud of my commitment and dedication to consistent learning and growth, my drive to complete work to the best of my ability. I am proud of the memories and myriad valuable relationships I have made along the way.

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

Rachel Croft crosses the stage at commencement on Dec. 17.

Rachel Croft celebrates at commencement.