

## NEWS RELEASE

### Contacts

[Jerry Poling](#), Marketing Communications, 715-232-2384

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

[News Center](#)



## Career-building: UW-Stout honored by Momentum West for programs that help youth prepare for their futures

*Top Talent Initiative award recognizes special skill-building, discovery camps and events*

[Story Link](#)

### Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Menomonie, Wis. — With a 99% employment rate for bachelor's and master's degree graduates, University of Wisconsin-Stout is known for developing talent in multiple fields to support the economy of west-central Wisconsin and throughout the state.

The university also invests heavily in the talent pipeline before students get to college, with numerous special programs to help youth begin considering in-demand career fields via higher education. Those efforts for “potential future impact” have earned UW-Stout a Top Talent Initiative award from [Momentum West](#), which promotes economic development in the region.

The award was one of nine presented March 21 during Momentum West's annual meeting held at UW-Stout's Memorial Student Center. The recipients were “individuals and organizations that have made a significant impact over the past year,” said Executive Director Steve Jahn.

“The UW-Stout programs for middle and high school students build awareness of career paths for students in our region and beyond, create unique hands-on learning opportunities, enhance knowledge and communication with business and industry, promote our region and inevitably play a role in addressing the region's workforce needs,” Jahn said.

UW-Stout has the highest employment rate, 99%, and average starting salary for graduates, \$58,000, among higher education institutions in west central Wisconsin, according to a new [First Destination Report](#) report.

The university programs for youth that promote career discovery, skill development and higher education opportunities include:

- Summer STEAM camps for [high school](#) and [middle school](#) students, which include workshops in science, technology, engineering, art and design, and mathematics.
- [STEM Fest](#) for students in Upward Bound programs at high schools in northwestern Wisconsin.
- [DECA District 1](#) skills competition, held each January, for high school marketing and business students.
- [SkillsUSA](#), held each February, to promote technical and leadership skills.

- [Teach Day](#), held each spring and fall, for high school students interested in the teaching field.
- [Fostering Success](#), which provides an on-campus experience and tours for 13- to 17-year-olds in foster care who are interested in higher education, while supporting college students who were in foster care.

UW-Stout also offers career-specific tours and [Cadaver Lab experiences](#) for high school students.

The various programs draw about 2,000 middle and high school students to campus each year.

Many of the youth programs, including sports and recreation camps, are coordinated through [Educational Pathways and Outreach](#), and [Continuing Education and Conferences](#) at UW-Stout.

“These programs and UW-Stout's relationships with regional business and industry as a [polytechnic university](#) made it a great fit for the award,” Jahn said.

In 2023, Momentum West recognized UW-Stout's [Manufacturing Outreach Center](#) with a Regional Impact award. The MOC is one of two centers in Wisconsin affiliated with the National Institute of Standards and Technology/Manufacturing Extension Partnership — NIST/ MEP — national network. The centers deliver comprehensive, proven solutions to small and medium manufacturers through consulting, training and workforce development. Momentum West is based in Eau Claire.

*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**

Beth Hein, center, executive director of Educational Pathways and Outreach, and Chancellor Katherine Frank accept UW-Stout's Top Talent Initiative award from Momentum West's Steve Jahn.

A high school student competes in a SkillsUSA competition at UW-Stout, one of more than a half-dozen special programs that draw about 2,000 youths to campus annually.