



# League Letter

Volume LX, Number 3, January 2026 [www.univleague.wisc.edu](http://www.univleague.wisc.edu) Editor: Gisell Sirianni Asst. Editor: Roma Lenehan

## UNIVERSITY LEAGUE 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT *Supporting Scholarships, Service, Education and Friendship*



Dean Eric Wilcots with 2025-26 University League Scholarship Recipients, College of Letters & Science

*“The students we celebrate bring talent, curiosity, and an incredible sense of possibility to everything they do. Their journeys are shaped by the care and encouragement of families who support them and by the generosity of the donors who believe in their potential. Each scholarship awarded reflects a shared commitment to opportunity, discovery, and a future built on knowledge, creativity, and compassion.”*

*Dean Eric Wilcots*

 **COMING SOON TO YOUR MAILBOX!**  
**Look for your Benefit “LETTER” & DONATION CARD**  
 **Arriving in your mail the first week of FEBRUARY!**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

When I last wrote I commented on it looking like Fall but Summer really trying to hang on. As Mother Nature would have it, Winter came in with a vengeance last week. I still hope you are doing well.

I'm writing this before the Candlelight Concert and Dinner as well as most of the holiday season. To that end, I hope you attended the Maple Bluff event and had a good time. I also hope your holidays were what you wanted them to be with festivities, families and friends.

I was part of an interesting discussion with a relatively new member a few weeks ago. She said she felt so welcomed and comfortable, glad for her decision to join. She also marveled at our vast variety of Interest Groups. Her words described our University League as a "Living Senior Center!" A unique way to look at it.

Moving into our Quasquicentennial year, 125 Years Supporting Scholarships, Service, Education and Friendship, I hope all of you continue to stay involved in our great organization. Join a new Interest Group and meet some new people.

Have a pleasant, healthy and prosperous 2026!

***John Shanda***  
***President 2025-2026***

## GREAT DANE READERS

We did it! The Great Dane Readers program is off to a great start for the 2025-2026 school year. Despite much uncertainty concerning funding for Head Start sites earlier this year, volunteer readers are once again visiting their classrooms, reading to the preschoolers, and distributing books!

We have placed 34 readers in 29 classes including 24 Head Start classes (in Madison, Sun Prairie, Stoughton, and Monroe), two classes at Animal Crackers in Madison, two classes at the Madison College Early Learning Campus, and one class at the BLW Center (Bridge Lake Point Waunona Neighborhood Center).

We have welcomed eight new volunteer readers to our program. For the first time in nine years, two of our readers are students of the University of Wisconsin—Madison!

We also welcomed Rotarian Kathy Siebert as a volunteer this year. She attended a reading at the South Madison Head Start last May to present a check to Great Dane Readers from the South Madison Rotary Foundation. Kathy was so impressed with our program that she asked to be included as a reader if a class were to become available. She is now reading in one of the Madison College classes.



University League

**GREAT DANE READERS**

By the end of the year, we will have donated sets of eight books each to 458 students and their 29 classrooms. (Each classroom library also receives a copy of every title.) That is a total of 3896 books! – books about otters, friendship, pumpkins and the alphabet.

If you were a donor during this past year, thank you for your support! Our program would be unable to continue without the generosity of our many contributors. Thank you for helping us get off to a great start.

If you are one of our 34 readers, thank you for sharing your time and your enthusiasm for reading. You have helped our program live up to its name, University League Great Dane Readers!

If you have any questions about our program or would like more information, please contact: Mary Warfield (608) 273-9809 or [mbwarfield@gmail.com](mailto:mbwarfield@gmail.com).

## **SUPPORTING THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AND THE WISCONSIN IDEA**

**Phil Asbury, Executive Director of The Office of  
Student Financial Aid University of Wisconsin – Madison**

Phil Asbury wrote a letter to The University League thanking our members for their generous donations and highlighting the significant need for the financial support of University of Wisconsin—Madison students.

*“I write to you as new and returning Badgers return to campus this fall, and we welcome our brilliant students from all corners of Wisconsin, the nation, and the globe – a vibrant campus community.*

*This past year has been profoundly challenging for universities across the U.S., but now we remain steadfast in our commitment to recruiting and enrolling the most talented students who demonstrate academic excellence and great promise. We strive to build student bodies that will give back to communities and serve the public good.*



*Your support has been a true recognition of our students’ ongoing pursuit of excellence and the Wisconsin idea... Thank you for continuing to see our Badgers through difficult times, facilitate their dreams, and expand their experiences and opportunities.”*

Phil Asbury  
Division of Enrollment Management  
University of Wisconsin—Madison

## 2025-2026 UNIVERSITY LEAGUE GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Each year, The University League holds a Scholarship Benefit in February and March to raise money for our General Scholarship Fund (GSF). Any donations made to the GSF at other times throughout the year are added to the Benefit donations. In July, the total General Scholarship Funds are distributed to 12 schools and colleges within the University of Wisconsin—Madison, as listed on page 17 of the University League Yearbook. Scholarships are then awarded to students by the different schools and colleges at various times throughout the 2025-2026 academic year.

In this issue of the *League Letter*, we are featuring some of the recipients who have received 2025-2026 University League General Scholarships to date. In their “Impact Statements” students consistently echo their appreciation, emphasizing the importance of financial support that enables them to attend the University of Wisconsin—Madison, empowers them to achieve academic excellence, and motivates them to make a difference by giving back to their community and society in general. Their achievements are impressive and their desire to succeed and do good are beyond admirable!

The greatest reward for our generous University League donors is knowing that every donation is valued and is a real investment in the future.

### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Judy Stang, Katie Dickrell, Peggy Wiederholt, Kiley Von Bernthal  
University of Wisconsin—Madison, School of Pharmacy Scholarship Reception

**KATIE DICKRELL – MAKING A DIFFERENCE**  
PHARMACOLOGY-TOXICOLOGY, MICROBIOLOGY - RESEARCH

*“My goal is to work in research, developing new drugs and therapies that make a meaningful difference in people’s lives.”*

Katie and her sister, Maggie, are first-generation college students. Maggie, who works as an engineer in Green Bay, is Katie’s biggest inspiration, having provided Katie with an example of perseverance and determination to pave her own path, and showing her that it is possible to succeed through hard work and resilience.

*“Growing up in Wisconsin, I was always inspired by University of Wisconsin—Madison’s reputation for excellence, particularly in research...The School of Pharmacy stood out for its legacy of innovation and its commitment to scientific advancement. It also offered the flexibility I was looking for, allowing me to pursue a dual major in Microbiology and Pharmacology & Toxicology, and truly tailor my education to align with my passions. Being a part of the School of Pharmacy has challenged me to grow academically and deepen my excitement for pursuing a career in research.*

**KILEY VON BERNTHAL – ENSURING PATIENT OUTCOMES**  
PHARMACOLOGY-TOXICOLOGY, ASPIRING DENTIST

*“I plan to attend dental school after graduation and potentially specialize in pediatric dentistry.”*

Kiley credits her boss and mentor, April Tressler, DDS, as being one of her biggest inspirations. As an assistant to Dr. Tressler, Kiley admires Dr. Tressler’s commitment to lifelong learning and expanding her skillset to better serve her patients.

*“The applications of pharmacology extend far beyond the discipline itself; as an aspiring dentist and healthcare provider, it is my responsibility to remain informed on the fundamentals of drug action and its varying consequences in order to ensure exceptional patient outcomes.”*

**COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—MADISON**

**BRENNAN FREYMILLER – GIVING BACK!**  
ENGINEERING, APPLIED MATH, PHYSICS

*“I am honored by your belief in my abilities and future, and it only makes me want to work harder in hopes I can one day give back as well.”*

Last year, Brennan joined “Engineers Without Borders,” a high-impact club partnering with professional engineers and nonprofits to design and implement systems that help developing communities worldwide meet basic needs. He most recently helped design solar panels to power a resilience center in a rural community in Puerto Rico. He is driven by a desire to make a tangible, real-world impact.

*“If I become an electrical engineer, I would like to move into either renewable energy or defense, allowing me to contribute to the battle against climate change or develop ways to assist and protect U.S. citizens and allies. Meanwhile, if I take a science policy route, I can shape policies that fund hospitals, support climate initiatives, or guide the ethical use of artificial intelligence. Ultimately, I just want to find a fulfilling way to serve my community and my country.”*





### **MICHAEL ADAM GLAS – A DREAM COME TRUE!**

**DATA SCIENCE, PUBLIC POLICY, INTEGRATIVE DESIGN, MATHEMATICS**

***“Your generosity makes my dreams possible. My mom supports us on a single income, and paying for school is not feasible without your help.”***

Michael will graduate in the Spring of 2027 with a Bachelor of Arts in Data Science and Certificates in Public Policy, Integrative Design of Built and Natural Environments, and Mathematics. He and his sister are children of a single mother who is a Polish immigrant.

*“My decision to come to University of Wisconsin—Madison was not an easy one... Money was my first concern when considering colleges, but something kept pulling me towards Madison. Any time I visited campus, I did not want to leave... Currently,*

*I am interning with my local government’s Land Use Department. I am incredibly passionate about community development... After I finish my undergraduate studies, I plan to continue to graduate school to attain a master’s degree in urban planning.”*

### **MOLLY FORKINS – STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE!**

**BIOLOGY – ASPIRING PEDIATRICIAN**

***“Your generosity has not only helped me financially but also motivated me to work harder and strive for academic excellence in all aspects of my educational journey.”***

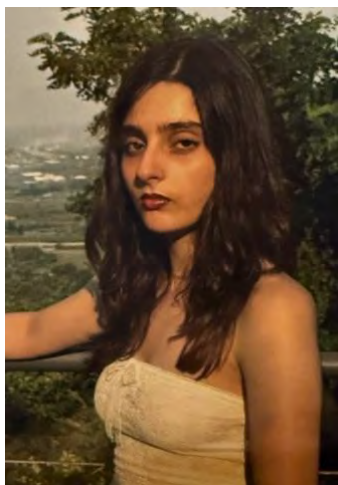
Molly has chosen a Biology major with the intent of pursuing a career in medicine. She emphasizes that her scholarship has had a significant impact on her life, both academically and personally, stating that she is committed to excelling in her studies and making the most of opportunities presented to her.

*“My future career goals consist of becoming a pediatrician... Working with children has always been a passion of mine as well, so being able to combine medicine and working with children is very important to me... Your belief in my potential has given me the confidence to pursue my dreams and make a difference in the world.”*



### **CHRISTINE NEGOVANI – COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**

**ENGLISH, CREATIVE WRITING**



***“I feel empowered knowing that I can more assuredly pursue my dreams and invest in my community the way you have invested in me.”***

Christine earned an Associate Degree in Science, Math and Technology from Madison College through the early College STEM Academy while also attending high school. She is the proud, eldest daughter of Albanian immigrants whose lessons of hard work and resilience have made her a first-generation college student. She has engaged in many leadership roles in youth voice, advocacy and sustainability.

*“Beyond my civic engagements, my real passion lies in literature and the arts, which is why I am pursuing an Honors in English major with an emphasis on Creative Writing... There are so many opportunities that I’m excited to take advantage of as I prepare to enter my sophomore year as a Badger.”*

**EVELYN BRYSON – GRATEFUL**  
COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

*“I hope to be fortunate enough to give back to my parents to thank them for everything they have provided for me in place of their own wants.”*

Evelyn is pursuing an education degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders. She has shadowed a speech-language pathologist several times and plans to continue this as she prepares for her future career as a speech-language pathologist in an elementary school setting. She is part of The National Speech Language Hearing Association and intends to pursue a chair position.

*“I’m determined to help those that have difficulty communicating and to discover a means of communication that enable them to express their true identities. My academic interests include everything science, especially biological and anatomical sciences, and childhood development.”*



**EVELYN SEPULVEDA – SERVING OTHERS**  
POLITICAL SCIENCE, INTEREST IN BUSINESS, ECONOMICS



*“I’m grateful for the University League General Sophomore Scholarship because it allows me to pursue my academic and service interests to the fullest potential by becoming more involved in clubs, service work and more.”*

Evelyn is proud to be a first-generation Mexican American college student. Her family, originally from Durango, Mexico, have always supported her many accomplishments and inspired her to become the best version of herself. Evelyn has done volunteer work and fundraising to support families facing food insecurity and job loss, and has advocated for awareness of human trafficking, domestic violence, and mental health issues. Her internships have sparked a growing passion in either economics or business.

*My interest in history and policy led me to pursue a major in political science.*

*I believe growing up in a predominantly Hispanic community also helped shape my understanding of the importance of representation and the need to support communities.”*

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS**

**General Scholarship**

Richard Leffler  
Bette McCauley  
Elaine Rosenblatt  
Peggy Wiederholt

**In Memory of**

**Mary Sue Hansen**

Katherine Grawe  
Roma Lenehan

**Frances Johnson**

Roma Lenehan

**Amal Vitale**

Roma Lenehan

**UL Great Dane Readers**

**In Memory of**  
**Frances Johnson**

Jane Pizer

**Nancy Webster**

Jane Pizer



**Quasquicentennial Trivia.....**

\* Interest Groups were first organized in 1949. Today we have 19.

\* In 1976 annual dues were raised from \$5 to \$6.

**Our Quasquicentennial will be celebrated in May, 2026**