

## **Community Meet and Greet Welcome – January 25, 2024**

### **Thank you**

Good afternoon. Thank you, Regent Krueser, for the kind introduction.

*Insert acknowledgement of Regent Krueser's comments and contributions as a Regent, community leader, and UW-Parkside alum.*

I am so excited to be here today as the Seventh Chancellor for the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. I want to begin by thanking each of you, thank you, for being here today and showing your support for this great university and community. While it's only been three weeks since I officially began my work here, I already know I've found a very special place to live, learn, and lead. Thank you to those I've already had a chance to meet with for the warm welcome. For the many folks I've not yet had a chance to personally meet just yet, I look forward to it very soon.

### **About Me**

You may be interested to know that I was born and raised in Illinois, and I think of the upper Midwest as home. I am the daughter of a veteran, whose service to our country provided the means to an education. And, I come from a family of dairy farmers that live a life of hard work to provide for others. While I am new to Wisconsin, my husband, Torin, and his family have deep roots in Wisconsin, Wisconsin education, and the Universities of Wisconsin. Within the family, so far, there are 5 degrees from the Universities of Wisconsin: one from UW-Eau Claire, two from UW-Stevens Point, one from UW-Oshkosh, and one from UW-Madison. I look forward to my son, Konner, adding UW-Parkside to the list in the next year or so.

Passion for education is a part of the family. My mother and father in-law have a combined 65 yrs of teaching in Wisconsin, with my mother in-law being a Wisconsin

Teacher of the Year in 1992. Torin and I have two son's, Konner and Kaiden, both are student-athletes in cross country and track. My son attending UW-Parkside is named after his grandfather, who was inducted into the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2001. And just in case you were concerned that this Chancellor coming from MN after 23 years might have some purple in the closet, I assure you, my household is all about the Bucks, Brewers, Packers, Badgers, and now best of all, the Rangers.

## **Why Parkside**

My entire career has been dedicated to creating opportunities and places where students can achieve. Be it in student life developing campus community, in academic affairs advancing student learning, or in student success creating meaningful connections, demonstrating care, and coordinating support. And that is why Parkside is the perfect place for me.

At UW-Parkside, we deliver on our mission to transform lives. Did you know:

- UW-Parkside serves a larger share of low-income and first-generation college students than the Universities of Wisconsin as a whole.
  - We have the highest percentage of students receiving Pell grants at 38%. The Universities of Wisconsin serves 23% in total.
  - We have the second highest percentage of first-generation students at 47%, with only UW-Green Bay higher at 51%. Universities of Wisconsin serves 31% in total.
- The UW-Parkside student body is the most diverse student body of the Universities of Wisconsin.
  - 31% of our students are underrepresented minority students, including 32.1% of our undergraduates. Overall, 15% of Universities of Wisconsin students are underrepresented minorities, including 16% of all undergraduates.

- Among small and medium master's level colleges and universities across the nation, the graduate student enrollment at UW-Parkside is recognized as being among the fastest growing at 203% in the past five years.

Now, who we serve is important. But what difference do we make?

- In 2022, UW-Parkside received the Excellence and Innovation Award for Student Success and College Completion by the American Association of State College and Universities.
- And did you know, that according to U.S. News Best College rankings, UW-Parkside is the 4<sup>th</sup> ranked public higher education institution across 12 states in the regional Midwest, and TOP among UW comprehensives, for increasing social mobility.

At UW-Parkside, we provide high value, high impact experiences:

- UW-Parkside is the most affordable university among the Universities of Wisconsin with our undergraduates paying the lowest cost in tuition and fees. At that lowest cost, however, we deliver a high-impact experience.

Consider for example:

- UW-Parkside's student Pre-Medical Acceptance Rate of 89%. The National Average, reported by the Association of American Medical Colleges, is 41%.
- Our award-winning Theatre Arts Department is recognized for Teaching Excellence utilizing a professional theatre training company model providing students immersive real-world experiences and career preparation.
- Our Department of Business programs in the College of Business, Economics, and Computing hold accreditation by The Association

to Advance College Schools of Business. A distinction earned by less than 5 percent of business schools worldwide.

- Our Sales Center, one of many applied learning laboratories here at Parkside, provides a world class sales education. The students of this program have brought home 53 competition awards over the past 14 years. Now that's high-impact action.

Speaking of action, UW-Parkside is a place for “learning in action” in partnership with our community. Our Community-Based Learning and Engagement programs provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world experiences. Each year, roughly 50 courses are matched to community organizations and approximately 1,000 students engage in community-based learning. In fact, UW-Parkside was the first university within the Universities of Wisconsin to be recognized for Community Engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

### **Bold Opportunities**

With all that said, most importantly, we have bold opportunities for the future. And this is where everyone that is gathered here today is key. The challenges before us within our region and state and beyond, be it educational engagement and attainment, our sense of community and place, workforce advancement and economic development, or civic leadership, are large and complex. I'm convinced that pursuing these bold opportunities will require collaboration, sponsorship, investment, innovation, and partnership. And I believe that UW-Parkside, our community, and this community of leaders, has what it takes to do just that. In the days ahead, I look forward to meeting each of you and working with you. I am so excited for what's ahead! Thank you.