

## Northern EDGE: growing northern Wisconsin's economy

By Jo Futrell

AL MILLER, UW-SUPERIOR



### Northern EDGE helps build local businesses

Julianne Raymond, director of the Small Business Development Center at UW-Superior, works with Michael Carey of Superior on product development of leading-edge health-care software.

The economy of northern Wisconsin faces many challenges. A University of Wisconsin-Extension initiative is focused on building economic development capacity in northern Wisconsin, and takes a unique approach that combines the strengths of three of its divisions. Continuing Education, the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and the Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development (CNRED) program are collaborating on a project called Northern EDGE (Economic Development and Growing the Economy), the result of a U.S. Department of Labor grant

and the support of state Sen. Russell Decker and U.S. Rep. Dave Obey.

### Stimulating and supporting the local economy

Northern EDGE takes a grass-roots approach, recognizing the need to make the traditional economy of the region more productive while looking at new opportunities to attract higher skills and higher wages to the area. Supporters believe that to increase the demand for well-educated and highly trained workers in northern Wisconsin, they must stimulate and support locally based economic development strategies that result in high-wage jobs.

### Public and private funds support the project

Sen. Decker worked with Rep. Obey to obtain \$175,000 in U.S. Department of Labor set-aside resources, which will go toward raising wages and attracting or creating new jobs with higher wages. The UW System is providing \$45,000. Private sponsorships also are being sought, with Xcel Energy leading off with a \$10,000 contribution.

“Senator Decker is a champion for growing the economy of northern Wisconsin,” says Greg Wise, UW-Extension interim assistant vice chancellor. “He recognizes that what works in Madison and Milwaukee may not be effective for a region as diverse as northern Wisconsin. Senator Decker and Representative Obey recognize the great potential of the region.”

### County stakeholders take the lead

Northern EDGE allows key stakeholders in a community to set their own goals for economic development, identify priorities and act on them. By focusing on the building blocks of the economy, the project will help build the area's capacity to raise wages for existing jobs and grow new jobs by stimulating the economy.

The project will illuminate economic successes in the region. Profiles of best practices will be compiled and shared with project partners. Gaps in the region's economy and solutions to addressing them will be identified. The project will provide

micro-grants to community collaborators for innovative demonstration projects, which increase economic development capacity with an end goal of creating higher paying jobs.

### Twenty-nine counties to participate

UW-Extension CNRED agents in 29 participating counties will play a key role, collaborating with the region's UW campuses through Continuing Education offices and Small Business Development Centers.

“We see Northern EDGE as an outstanding opportunity to create a stronger entrepreneurial growth culture in our region,” says Julianne Raymond, UW-Superior SBDC director.

“UW-Stevens Point reaches out to business and industry in northern Wisconsin through UW-Extension Continuing Education, the Small Business Development Center and through a variety of initiatives,” says Joan Sosalla, executive director of UWSP Extension. “Northern EDGE is of particular interest because we can support successful businesses in northern Wisconsin and at the same time create access to proven technology applications for new local businesses.”

Northern EDGE is giving UW-Extension an edge on the state's future development by working to improve the economy of northern Wisconsin.

For more information: Greg Wise, (608) 262-4387 or [greg.wise@uwex.edu](mailto:greg.wise@uwex.edu)

## Wisconsin Public Television offers extensive election coverage

By Chris DuPré

During October Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) will devote considerable airtime to the candidates for governor and other statewide and congressional offices.

WPT Executive Producer of News and Public Affairs Kathy Bissen says that WPT is committed to in-depth election coverage because, “All of us need to know and understand how the candidates, our potential leaders, stand on the issues that will affect our daily lives. Wisconsin Public Television's coverage is diverse and includes a variety of statewide candidates so voters truly understand all the choices facing them on Election Day.”

### Upcoming election coverage on WPT

**Fridays, 7 p.m.** “WeekEnd,” WPT's weekly public-affairs program, will offer election-focused segments

**Oct. 29, 7 p.m.** A “We the People” gubernatorial debate is tentatively scheduled for WPT and Wisconsin Public Radio.

On three Thursday evenings WPT will offer candidates a chance to make direct statements to voters, with no filter. The schedule is:

**Oct. 17, 9 p.m.** Governor and lieutenant governor candidates (encore Oct. 21, 10 p.m.)

**Oct. 24, 9 p.m.** Candidates for attorney general and congressional districts 1, 2 and 3 (encore Oct. 28, 10 p.m.)

**Oct. 31, 9 p.m.** Candidates for congressional districts 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (encore Nov. 4, 10 p.m.)

### Debate broadcast details in process

As *News and Ideas* went to press, details for the “We the People” gubernatorial debate were still being worked out. Bissen says, “Invitations have already been extended to incumbent Republican Scott McCallum and Democratic challenger Jim Doyle. Other gubernatorial candidates will also be invited if they meet our debate-inclusion criteria. Plus, all gubernatorial

candidates have been invited to participate in the candidate statements broadcast.”

For up-to-the minute information on WPT's election coverage, visit [www.wisconsinvote.org](http://www.wisconsinvote.org). The site also includes the standards and criteria for inclusion in debates.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

## Building a stronger state one community at a time

I recently had the pleasure of speaking to members of the Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education (WAHCE) at their annual conference. I shared some highlights about Family Living programs that are addressing some of society's most pressing contemporary challenges.

### Parenting

Because people who need parenting education the most are least likely to come to a class on the subject, we produce and distribute *Parenting the First Year*, a newsletter for new parents. UW-Extension offices in 70 counties coordinate distribution of this material in partnership with local Kiwanis clubs, hospitals, health departments and other organizations. Approximately 90,000 Wisconsin families, including over half of all new parents, received the series last year.

### Literacy

Helping children develop good language skills and a general enthusiasm for learning is vital.

Addressing this need has brought WAHCE members together with Wisconsin Public Television and the Family Living program to offer the First Book program in 45 counties. This effort has involved some 500 volunteers, who have reached over 5,200 children and distributed some 42,000 books.

### Food security and safety

Across the state, local Family Living agents and Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program representatives are involved in monitoring and responding to food security issues, helping to ensure access by all people at all times to nutritious, affordable and sufficient food for their families. Likewise, with increased awareness of food-borne illnesses, education in food storage, handling and preparation is helping to protect families and improve food safety.

### Financial literacy

National surveys show that most high school seniors cannot pass a simple test of basic financial literacy. In fact, scores have actually



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declined in the past few years. In partnership with the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), UW-Extension is helping to educate high school students about basic money management. Over the past four years, 24,526 Wisconsin high school students have increased their financial literacy by participating in the program, learning the basics of cash-flow management, credit, saving, investing and insurance.

### The impact

People are beginning to understand that workers and residents who do not benefit from a healthy home and community environment simply are not as productive and happy as people who live in strong communities supported by robust educational programs. UW-Extension brings the best of our university to cities and towns in ways that enable people to become better parents, make healthy dietary choices, and enhance their economic security.

UW-Extension and five collaborating University of Wisconsin institutions will receive nearly \$160,000 over the next five years from the federal Bureau of Health Professions to partner with the Wisconsin Geriatric Education Center (WGEC) to develop an online certificate program in gerontology. The five partnering campuses, **UW-Parkside, UW-Superior, UW-La Crosse, UW-Madison** and **UW-Milwaukee**, and WGEC currently offer on-campus certificate programs in gerontology. UW-Extension and UW Learning Innovations will provide facilitation and support for the program.

**Harv Thompson**, professor, UW-Madison Department of Liberal Studies and the Arts in the Division of Continuing Education, is the recipient of the Distinguished Merit Award from the American Association of Community Theatre (AACT). The award is presented to individuals and organizations in recognition of contributions made to promote and develop the highest standards of community theater.

UW-Extension's **Instructional Communications Systems** unit is seeing significant increases in the use of WisLine Web, a Web conferencing and collaboration service that allows UW institutions and state agencies to conduct real-time interactive training, presentations and meetings over the Internet. During 2001-02 attendance reached 15,721 in 837 online events, a 128 percent increase in attendance and a 38 percent increase in online events over 2000-01. For more information: [www.uwex.edu/ics/wlweb](http://www.uwex.edu/ics/wlweb).

The Division of Continuing Education Extension recently honored three employees for reaching milestones in their years of Extension service. Employees from the Dean's Office, Learning Innovations (LI) and School for Workers (SFW) gathered at LI for the divisional recognition reception July 31, 2002. Honored were **Kristine McGrew**, LI (20 years); **Steven Boldt**, LI (10); **Carol Halma**, SFW (10).

The fall 2001/winter 2002 issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* included papers by UW-Extension faculty and staff including **Greg Wise**, interim assistant provost and vice chancellor; **John Preissing**, Northern director, Cooperative Extension; **Karen Early**, senior lecturer, Cooperative Extension; **Kay S. Taube**, assistant dean, Continuing Education Extension; and **Mary Brintnall-Peterson**, professor, Cooperative Extension. Access the publication at [www.uga.edu/jheoe/current.htm](http://www.uga.edu/jheoe/current.htm).



## assists Wisconsin communities

By Jo Futrell

The tornado damage in Ladysmith this Labor Day and the tornado fatalities in Siren in June 2001 are harsh reminders of nature's force. University of Wisconsin-Extension helps Wisconsin communities deal with such devastating events, coordinating resources in response to a disaster. In Siren, the Burnett County UW-Extension office was mobilized for

emergency communications, and local Extension educators continue to help the community recover.

### EDEN provides multi-state help

"This is a natural role for the organization," says Dave Hinds, UW-Extension professor emeritus. "People know Extension is connected to a lot of resources, and Extension is there."

UW-Extension is a member of the Extension Disaster Education Network, or EDEN, a collaborative, multi-state effort by extension services across the country to improve the delivery of services to citizens affected by disasters.

"The network has come in handy quite a few times in Wisconsin," Hinds says. "When one state in the network needs an expert in a par-

ticular area, EDEN makes that person available."

### UW-Extension provides long-term assistance

UW-Extension is uniquely suited to play a role in the four phases of emergency management. UW-Extension educates communities in the Preparation Phase and works to integrate Mitigation Phase concepts into Smart Growth and housing programs. UW-Extension's agricultural personnel play a key role in the Response Phase, ensuring the safety of the food supply by protecting livestock, crops and stored grains from radiological and biological threats and disease.

"Extension is especially equipped for the Recovery Phase because of our long-term involvement in communities," Hinds says. "Emergency Government and FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] are only there for a short time, but Extension is there for the long haul."

UW-Extension will partner with state emergency management and the Red Cross in future emergencies, coordinating agricultural preparedness and rural disaster recovery programs.

For more information:  
**EDEN Web site,**  
[www.agctr.lsu.edu/eden/](http://www.agctr.lsu.edu/eden/)

**UW-Extension Local Government Center's Disaster Management and Recovery Web site**  
[www.uwex.edu/lgc/disaster/disaster.htm](http://www.uwex.edu/lgc/disaster/disaster.htm)

### Oct. 15 dual-choice health insurance conference

By Marilyn Leffler, Manager, Payroll and Staff Benefits Office

Currently insured UW-Extension employees may switch from one health plan to another or from single to family coverage without restrictions during the dual-choice enrollment period, Oct. 7-25. Employees and retirees considering changing their health plan for 2003 are invited to participate in a statewide informational conference **Tuesday, Oct. 15, 9-10:30 a.m.**

The conference will be offered at 34 WisLine sites throughout the state through UW-Extension Instructional Communications Systems (ICS). For information on the site offering this program in your area, see [www.uwex.edu/payroll/DCSites.html](http://www.uwex.edu/payroll/DCSites.html) or call ICS at (608) 262-7590.

For more information: [payroll@uwex.edu](mailto:payroll@uwex.edu)

## Wisconsin-Mexico exchange builds culture bridges

By Mary Ellen Bell

**“LOS PUENTES”** is Spanish for “bridges,” and in Buffalo County, bridges now reach all the way to Buena Vista, a small community halfway between Mexico City and the Pacific Ocean.

### Wisconsin dairy farmers visit Mexico

In November 2001, 10 Wisconsin dairy farmers crossed that bridge to learn about the language, lives and families of the people who work for them. This September, 10 people from Mexico visited Wisconsin to learn about Wisconsin’s dairy industry, enroll in a UW-Madison Dairy Institute Short Course, and attend the World Dairy Expo in Madison. Later this fall another contingent from Wisconsin will take the bridge back to Mexico.

Chris Weisenbeck, one of the farmers who went to Buena Vista a year ago, says he decided to participate because he wanted to improve communications with his five Spanish-speaking employees. “It was not just a matter of the language. It was also a matter of better understanding the culture,” he explains.

Weisenbeck had vacationed in Mexico, but he says nine days in rural Mexico gave him a new appreciation for the country and its people and a new understanding of

why his employees had come to the United States to work.

“I saw how important family is in their culture,” he says. “Those who come here do it to give their families a chance for a better life.”

### An increasing number of Mexican dairy workers

A growing number of Mexicans work on Wisconsin dairy farms, says Carl Duley, Buffalo County University of Wisconsin-Extension agriculture agent. Employers have found their new workers eager to work and learn, but both employers and workers have struggled with communicating in different languages and across unfamiliar cultures. And in the community, some residents have been wary of their new Hispanic neighbors.

In an effort to bridge the gap, Duley and Shaun Duvall, the Spanish teacher in the Alma Area Schools, applied for funding from the Babcock Institute at UW-Madison for a series of international exchanges.

### Wisconsin farmers learn about language, culture and families

While in Mexico last year, the Wisconsin farmers enrolled in classes in Spanish language and culture. They learned firsthand why Mexican



CARL DULEY

### Building a bridge between Mexico and Wisconsin

During their “Puentes” (bridges) journey to Mexico last fall, Wisconsin dairy farmers met the families of the people who work for them in Wisconsin.

workers are willing to leave home for years at a time for a chance at a job in the United States. They also visited typical Mexican farms and met with their employees’ families.

“The time with the families was emotional for both the Americans and the Mexican family members,” Duley says. “One Mexican journalist who accompanied us was astonished that American business people would care enough to come to meet with their workers’ families.”

Weisenbeck had the opportunity to meet with the family of Lamberto

Tepole, who has worked at Weisenbeck’s 425-head dairy for the last three years. Tepole, whose son arrived to work on Weisenbeck’s farm five months ago, said he was very happy that his boss was able to meet his family.

### Sharing information with Wisconsin communities

The American travelers are sharing what they’ve learned by talking with community groups about their experience. The Puentes program provides Spanish and English classes for employers and workers in addition to exchange visits between Wisconsin and the Mexican state of Veracruz.

## Program impacts help show value of UW-Extension work

By Amy Pikalek

In this time of statewide budget belt tightening, there is an increasing need to document the importance of University of Wisconsin-Extension’s work. The new leader of the institution-wide Program Impacts Team says communicating the positive impact of

extension work is a crucial initiative. Leader Mary Crave, evaluation and diversity specialist for Continuing Education Extension explains, “We need proactive accountability. We don’t want to be waiting until we’re asked to prove our worth to our stakeholders statewide.

We need to have evidence ready now to show how our programs are important and making a positive difference in peoples’ lives.”

### Program impacts process in place

UW-Extension is in the sixth year of its program impact initiative, aimed at documenting the value of extension work statewide. The Program Impacts Team created a formal process for identifying programs, conducting impact evaluation, and building a database of program impact reports. Crave credited past chair Ellen Taylor-Powell, evaluation specialist for Cooperative Extension, for turning a philosophy into a process.

### Online training to be available

According to Crave, the primary goal for the August 2002-August 2003 year is to build evaluation capacity by training programmers in all four Extension divisions on how to conduct impact evaluation. An interactive online program will be developed, consisting of three modules: focusing the evaluation, collecting data, and using the data. Webconferencing will complement the online training modules.

“What we want to report goes beyond counting participants and listing our activities,” Crave says. “We need to focus on measuring how our programs help people learn, take action, and improve conditions in their lives.”

### Impacts database expected to expand

The Program Impacts Team expects to see nearly 50 updated and new reports added to the database this year, Crave says. According to Vice Chancellor and Provost Marv VanKekerix, Extension programmers have been using the impact data they’ve collected in many different ways. “I’ve been told that many of our programmers have used the program impact data to help them obtain grants, improve the effectiveness of their programs, and market and promote their programs to new, potential learners,” VanKekerix says. “While many said they were reluctant to undertake an evaluation at first, they have since seen the value of it and plan to continue and expand their evaluation efforts.”

**“I’ve worked with UW-Extension since the late 1970s, and I know that when we go to work every day, it’s with the conviction that what we do is important and matters to the people of Wisconsin. The Program Impact system helps us document and articulate that value in a framework that’s consistent across any of the four UW-Extension divisions and speaks to our partners, stakeholders and colleagues.”**



-Mary Crave, Leader of UW-Extension’s Program Impacts Team

## Rosemary Lehman: a leader in education technology

By Marcia Baird



**Rosemary Lehman**

Senior outreach/distance education and instructional design specialist  
Instructional Communications Systems

This fall she's co-keynoting a conference at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., publishing a book, and evaluating the use of video modules on a handheld. She's also speaking at an Atlanta conference, writing a monthly e-newsletter, helping launch this year's Governor's Wisconsin Educational Technology Conference, and working with dozens of faculty and staff in between.

One thing is clear: Rosemary Lehman is busy. At a time when there's increasing interest in developing reusable learning objects, improving teaching and learning, and stretching operating budgets, she is comfortable teaching about many of today's outreach options.

### Helping others use technology

Lehman is a senior outreach/distance education and instructional design specialist for Instructional Communications Systems (ICS), a position she's held for eight years. In her work she introduces a variety of professionals—from elementary teachers to highway engineers—to a broad range of instructional technologies and how to effectively use them. Her ICS work builds on a diverse foundation. She's used cable television, television, videotape, satellite,

audioconferencing, videoconferencing and webconferencing to help organizations reach their goals.

### Improving education at all levels

Lehman is dedicated to using technology to improve education at all levels, according to Richard Sorensen, a retired consultant for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. "Rosemary's knowledge, skill and personality are unique qualities that set her apart," he says. "She understands the many varieties of electronic communications technology, and she perceives how they can be used to improve teaching and learning."

Hundreds of Wisconsin organizations are currently expanding their use of technology, and many of them are calling on Lehman's expertise. For example, Lehman and her ICS Distance Education team are helping course developers at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) design and revamp

28 courses. She and a UW-Milwaukee colleague are also experimenting with emerging technology tools. They've taken 351 short video clips from an American Sign Language distance education course and transferred them into "learning objects" for access via handheld technology and the Web. Others who have benefited from Lehman's recent videoconferencing workshops include Dane County K-12 teachers, staff from Wisconsin Juvenile Corrections facilities, the UW-Madison International Institute, the European University Institute and many more.

### Award-winning work

Lehman's efforts have not gone unnoticed. Last year she received the first Carman Award, presented by the Governor's Wisconsin Educational Technology Conference (GWETC). The Carman Award recognizes an individual for service, accomplishment and significant contributions to educational technology in Wisconsin. Recently the

Madison Civics Club also honored Lehman for outstanding accomplishments in education and communications.

Following degrees in English and communication arts/television, Lehman received her doctorate in continuing and vocational education from UW-Madison. Earlier in her career she was the city of Monona's first cable administrator, helped launch other community cable initiatives, produced Wisconsin historical docudramas for television, and worked for UW-Extension's Continuing Education Division.

### A lifelong learner

She is a lifelong learner. Recently Lehman and five other ICS colleagues took a six-week creativity and invention course. The Connecticut-based instructor taught the WisLine Web course from his home computer, while Lehman and others joined the weekly webconferences and problem-solving sessions from their individual desktop PCs.

## Education technology conference scheduled for Oct. 8-10 in Madison

By Milly Jones

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Governor's Wisconsin Education Technology Conference (GWETC). The conference kicks off on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, and continues through Thursday, Oct. 10. More than 1,200 educators from across the state are expected to attend.

The conference will focus on applying technology for the benefit of learners of all ages, promoting alliances that improve teaching and learning, and creating a forum for Wisconsin educators to learn about and discuss technology applications in education.

The conference schedule includes two keynote speakers, 12 hands-on pre-conference workshops, nearly 200 concurrent sessions, and more than 100 exhibitors representing educational and technology services.

Rosemary Lehman and Milly Jones, both of UW-Extension's Instructional Communications

Systems (ICS), serve on the conference steering committee.

"We encourage you to attend GWETC 2002. It provides a unique opportunity for Wisconsin educators from all levels to learn from their colleagues about the latest in educational technologies and their applications in teaching and learning," Lehman says.

GWETC is co-sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, University of Wisconsin System, TEACH Wisconsin, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Educational Communications Board and Wisconsin Technical College System Board.

### For more information:

Conference details and registration, [www.gwetc.org](http://www.gwetc.org)  
GWETC office, (608) 261-7437 or  
[gwetc@teach.state.wi.us](mailto:gwetc@teach.state.wi.us)

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