

# CAMPUS & COMMUNITY



Photo of UWS regalia located in the UWS Bookstore in the Yellowjacket Union.  
Photo by Maddie Schaffer | The Promethean

## UW-Superior Hosts May 17 Commencement

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As the school year wraps up for students at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, the class of 2025 students are preparing for the spring 2025 Graduation and Commencement ceremony. The ceremony takes place on Saturday, May 17 in Wessman Arena at 2 p.m. where graduating students will receive their academic degree and diploma.

The goal of the spring commencement ceremony is to recognize students’ academic achievements, as well as make sure students and their loved ones have the opportunity to celebrate

together as well as capture some great moments.

“It’ll be an exciting day, something I’m excited for. It’s a cool moment for me and my family and a lot of my buddies I’ll be with also,” said Jonny Rhodes, a senior who also plays on the UW-Superior Baseball team. Rhodes is graduating from UW-Superior with a degree in Business Management and also touched on the idea of this moment being bitter-sweet.

“I’m excited to graduate but at the same time, there’s a lot of things that I’ll miss,” said Rhodes. Graduation will be exciting for all stu-

dents and families planning to attend, but those who aren’t able to attend still have the opportunity to watch the commencement ceremony as it is live-streamed.

Graduates can also get professional photos taken as they are offered on the day. Anyone attending graduation must have a ticket to enter due to building capacity and the fire code.

If you are not able to attend the ceremony but would like to watch, the ceremony will be live-streamed at: <https://www.uwsuper.edu/graduation/>. Doors open at Wessman Arena to graduates and guests at noon.

## Two Generations : One Stage Senior Commentary

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Persistence truly pays off. After more than three decades, I’m proud to say I’ve finally reached a goal I set for myself long ago, earning my college degree.

Growing up, I always understood the value of education. My father, a college recruiter, instilled in me the importance of going to college. After graduating high school in 1992, I started at a small technical college in Rhineland, Wisconsin. However, life took a different course and I became pregnant during my first year and quickly found myself juggling school, work, and motherhood.

Despite moving closer to family for support, the demands were overwhelming, and I made the difficult decision to put my education on hold. That break would stretch over 30 years and include raising three children. Still, I never gave up the dream.

In 2023, while watching my son Ryan thrive as a full-time student, McNair Fellow, and parent at UW-Superior, I felt inspired. His determination rekindled something in me. With the flexibility of UW-Superior’s distance learning program and the relevance of the Communicating Arts degree to my work in tribal public relations, I knew it was time to finish what I started.

When Brent Notbohm, the Communicating Arts Department Chair, realized how close I was to graduating, and that my son was set to graduate too, he asked me, “Would you like to graduate with your son?” I was stunned, but it was exactly the motivation I needed. I called Ryan, and his response was: “LET’S DO IT, MOM-

MA!” And now, here we are, walking the stage together, mother and son.

For Ryan, the road to graduation was just as intentional. After retiring from a mixed martial arts career, he chose to pursue higher education to build a better life for himself and his son. Though he began in computer science, his experience delivering meals to elders on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation opened his eyes to the mental health needs in the community. Wanting to be part of the solution, he switched to psychology.

While studying at UW-Superior, Ryan also served his community, first as a firefighter, then as fire chief, and as board secretary for the Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Institute. But he eventually realized the importance of work-life balance and stepped back from those roles to focus on personal well-being and fatherhood.

Now a Master of Public Administration student at UW-Oshkosh, Ryan plans to serve his community through government or nonprofit leadership. He also dreams of a future in law enforcement, where he hopes to earn a felony pardon and one day lead an agency or serve in executive protection. No matter the path, Ryan wants to be a role model, someone who shows it’s “cool” to give back.

Graduating together at UW-Superior is more than a celebration, it’s a testament to resilience, growth, and the unbreakable bond of family.

We hope our story inspires others to never give up, to chase their goals, and to believe that it’s never too late to make a dream come true.



Photo of Jon Pearson, Jake Edwards, and Tim Defore working in the media lab in the Holden Fine Arts Building late at night.  
Photo by Patrick Douglas | The Promethean

## The Film Grind for UWS Film Students

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As the end of the semester approaches, the film students here at the University of Wisconsin-Superior are preparing for finals week.

For them, the week isn’t about stressful tests and exams. Rather, the film students are more worried about the deadline to finish their movies. The spring semester is especially stressful because they need to meet both the deadline, and finish it in time for the annual UWS Film Showcase.

Filmmaking is time-intensive work. With the pro-

gram UWS offers, students are given full creative freedom over their films. This is nice because they don’t have to worry about their ideas clashing with someone else’s on a project.

However, this means that students are in charge of everything. They need to be the script writer, cinematographer, audio tech, lighting and grip, location scout, logistics manager, actor recruiter, and more. And that’s not even mentioning post-production.

Sometimes, students can sink hundreds of hours into

a short film less than 10 minutes long. So when they get the green light for a film, and they’re given less a single semester to finish it, the grind is on from the start. As the end of the semester approaches, and the days of class left begin to dwindle, you’ll start to see the film students populate the media lab more and more.

Whether it’s two in the afternoon or two in the morning, someone will be in there. Wish them luck if you ever pass by, they need it.



Photo of Jennifer Cadotte and her son Ryan Bunker Jr.  
Photo contributed by Wonaquance Cadotte