

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

UWS honorable mention at National Model United Nations Conference

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Students from the International Peace Studies Association (IPSA) at the University of Wisconsin-Superior (UWS) earned an honorable mention at the 2025 National Model United Nations conference in Washington, D.C.

The team chose Ethiopia from a list of countries for their group to represent, where they would research global issues and negotiate and collaborate with other student groups on different policies.

The participating students, Maëlle Rihouey, Brett Hesselberg, Kidest Mitiku, and Elroee Sirak, prepared for the event by reviewing and practicing policy work and spending time speaking to their professor, Khalil (Haji) Dokhanchi.

“It was a very tedious thing to get

ready for, but at the same time, it was really fun. We did have a little bit of grace because we had a couple of students go before us, so we had the materials to get ready for it,” Mitiku said.

The conference was a multi-day event for students to get introduced to their topics and begin discussions with other student represented countries. “So, we had the opening ceremony, then we had dinner, and then we had the first session. That first community session was basically like choosing the topic we’re going to talk about for the next few days. So that was Friday, on Saturday. The whole day was sessions, upon sessions, upon sessions,” Rihouey said.

On the final day, the closing ceremony commenced, where the UWS students were pleasantly surprised to receive an honorable mention. “They recognize schools in their entirety,

so you know all four of us in our own committee made enough of an impact to get our honorable mention, which, honestly, for four of us, I mean, some schools there bring 50 to 100 people, so it felt nice to see ourselves up there on the screen for that closing ceremony,” Hesselberg said.

A large part of this trip was to showcase what experiences their club can offer. “I’ll be honest, IPSA, we’re a little low on members right now, and so kind of our initiative of going on this trip, even though it was kind of short notice, going into the year, is to have some photos and some experiences and everything else to talk about, you know, when we get into like the next Jacket Fest event and stuff like that, to encourage people to come into the club,” Hesselberg said.

The IPSA is looking forward to the upcoming spring 2026 semester, where they hope to participate in the

next National Model United Nations conference in New York with brand new faces.



Maëlle Rihouey, Elroee Sirak, Kidest Mitiku, and Brett Hesselberg at the National Model United Nations conference.
Photo contributed by Kidest Mitiku

Esports are not just video games



Playing Mario Kart World at Swenson Hall on Nov. 19.
Photo by Noa Mikami | Promethean

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“Global Games & Esports Night,” designed to foster student interac-

tion, was held at the University of Wisconsin-Superior (UWS) Nov. 19. Nestor Martinez, a user support specialist and the UWSuper Esports advisor, hosted this event in the Esports Lab, room 1019, in Swenson Hall.

Martinez talked about how he was inspired to host this event; he had hosted an event of the Mario Kart game before,

and he thought it would be great if he could collaborate with the Yellow-jacket Activities Crew (YAC) to have an esports event. He desired students

to have fun in esports with new people they met in esports or friends, and he wanted people to get to know more about esports.

Martinez said, “I want students to experience and share the different cultures of games from around the world and gather at night. And I wanted everyone to have fun. That is the most important thing.” That was why Martinez chose Mario Kart World for the tournament game. People could play more easily because skill was not a necessary requirement.

Nhi Phan, who is a freshman from Vietnam, saw the flyer and decided to join the event with her friends to

enjoy the games and free food. Martinez and YAC provided 18 boxes of Domino’s Pizzas for students. There were many kinds of pizzas, such as cheese, teriyaki, and meat.

Phan often plays games in her room. “I play RPG and Turn-Based for a few days a week, but I enjoy playing Honkai: Star Rail the most.” That is why she was interested when she found a flyer about esports. Phan usually checks the flyers for what event UWS holds.

Phan enjoyed a night with her friends, and she said, “It was fun to play Mario Kart World with my friends. If they hold other events again, I will visit.”

Fall 2025 enrollements rates

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As of fall 2025, the Universities of Wisconsin (UW) have reported a total systemwide enrollment of 164,626 students. This year marks the third straight year of growth for UW systems. This growth was driven by a record 5.5% increase in new Wisconsin-resident freshmen, the largest increase recorded in UW’s history. This is reflected in the student body of 2,872 this fall, the highest campus-wide headcount for the University of Wisconsin-Superior (UW-Superior) in years.

According to UW-Superior’s freshman admission counselor Joshua Porter, this surge in enrollment and local campus growth is deliberate. This is the result of flexible options, such as asynchronous programs and an ongoing effort to connect with students statewide. Porter discussed how many of UWS’s on-campus enrollment remains local. “A lot of our students on campus come from within, an hour and a half, two-hour drive time from campus. We have a lot of local students

who come in for campus visits just to see what we have to offer.” Thus making in-person campus visits one of the most effective recruitment tools.

Porter also highlighted the system’s newest statewide initiatives, especially the “Direct Admit Wisconsin” program. This initiative automatically admits qualifying high school seniors and allows for their participation on campus like UW-Superior; eliminating the traditional barriers of lengthy applications.

Porter says that for many students, especially those who may have never considered college before, that simple admission offer can be a game changer. “For some, it’s the first time they realize: ‘Hey! College is actually an option for me,’” Porter said.

In discussing what makes UWS stand out; Porter discussed how class size averages 15-18 students, “It’s one of the smallest class sizes offered in the UW-System” Generally, many find the close-knit classroom environment, and increased access to professors, a major draw. For students in science or environmental studies, UWS’s location near Lake Superior and the Twin Ports area

offer unique opportunities for fieldwork and research.

For working adults or those needing flexibility, the school’s asynchronous online programs are especially attractive. Porter discussed how Students can complete this online degree and still work. Still getting the opportunity to do what they’re currently doing and not have to give up everything to go spend four years at a college.” Porter says offering online degrees that students can complete around jobs or personal obligations helps UW-Superior stand out in a crowded higher-ed landscape. “You don’t have to put your life on pause,” he said. “You can still make college work for you.”

The UW system’s press release credits the growth in large part to “Direct Admit Wisconsin” and a statewide affordability initiative, the “Wisconsin Tuition Promise.” For UW-Superior, those initiatives paired with targeted local outreach, flexible class formats, and

campus-level recruitment, have paid off and resulted in growth all through out the UW system.

Porter believes the statistics this fall signals a broader shift: as the state’s demographics change and traditional forms of education become less accessible, UW campuses that adapt by offering flexibility and genuine support will lead the system’s next chapter.

“We’re not just waiting for students to come to us,” Porter said. “We’re working to meet them where they are: in high school, online, or at home, and show them college can work for them.”



Admissions office at Yellowjacket Union on Dec. 3.
Photo by Alicia Zoltowski|Promethean

‘Swinging to the next web’

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