



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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April 1, 2019

Joint Finance Committee
WI State Capital
Madison, WI 54702

RE: Support for the Proposed Science and Health Sciences Building, UW-Eau Claire

Esteemed Committee Members:

As the Economic Development Manager for the City of Eau Claire, I am writing in support of the proposed construction of a new Science and Health Science facility on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC) campus.

Eau Claire is the regional hub of west central WI for education, healthcare, retail, and employment. Growing employment clusters include healthcare, technology businesses, steel fabrication, electronics, and polymers/composites. These employers provide good paying wages and benefits, and contribute substantially to the local and state tax base. As labor markets continue to tighten across the country, it is vital that we support the growth of our successful businesses, and UWEC is a strong part of that effort.

UWEC provides a rich pool of educated potential employees that many of our local businesses have discovered and rely on. UWEC graduates from the sciences programs find numerous homes in Eau Claire: From R & D labs in companies such as Hutchinson Technologies and Intel Corp to Quality Assurance Labs in companies like Nestle and Philips-Medisize. Graduates of the Health Sciences programs in nursing, biology, and chemistry help meet the critical shortage of healthcare practitioners across the region, state, and nation.

The proposed facility will also provide service to area manufacturing through testing of materials with equipment not found in many of our smaller manufacturers, as well as potential of partnerships on projects. This is an invaluable service to area business, and provides opportunities for students to gain real world application of their studies.

To provide the services listed above, UWEC needs to attract talented students and that requires a facility that meets the needs of those students. The current space has exceeded its useful life, and it is time to be replaced with a modern facility that will meet the needs of students, faculty, and industry in the coming decades. Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 715-839-4914.

Regards,

Aaron J. White
Economic Development Manager, City of Eau Claire

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