



*Our fave campus partner shot of the season: Staff at UW-Stevens Point Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility.*

## News

### Special Shout-out

The Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin (FCW) “could be the biggest thing we have,” said former governor and current UW System interim president Tommy Thompson during his State of the University Address on Aug. 20. FCW is one of ten projects Thompson listed as key to the system’s future.

“The Freshwater Collaborative is going to establish the nation’s most significant, integrated, multi-institutional higher education program for the freshwater economy,” Thompson said. “Can you imagine? People all over the world could come to Wisconsin, the only state that’s going to have these programs.”

What do you think about Gov. Thompson's comments? What programs do you want to see FCW offer? What interests you most about this new initiative? [Let us know →](#)

### Keep Clam And Carry On

An invasive Asian clam recently turned up in a southwestern Wisconsin stream for the first time. UW-Platteville freshwater invertebrate ecologist Becky Doyle-Morin, whose mussel sampling research is [featured](#) on the FCW website, reports that her team netted the specimen in July. The team also collected native clams, but has yet to find any mussels — other than a few dead specimens.

“It’s disappointing, but it does provide support for our hypothesis thus far, that land use and degradation of habitat in southern Wisconsin are not allowing mussels to flourish,” noted Doyle-Morin, adding she “didn’t want to be supporting that hypothesis.”

### The Bachelor

UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences has added a Bachelor of Sciences degree program to its roster, the school’s first undergraduate offering. Beginning in Fall 2021, students pursuing the new BS in Freshwater Sciences will be able to choose a focus in aquatic sciences or water policy. Undergrads will also be able to access statewide field, lab and course opportunities through UWM’s partnership with FCW. [For more information →](#)

### Steering Committee Kickoff

FCW’s steering committee convened for the first time, virtually, on Aug. 26. Members from all 13 UW System campuses discussed how to use each institution’s strengths to build a network of collaboration, creating new opportunities for students and innovative research projects statewide.

### H2Oh-no!

Could you get through the day without any water to drink, to use for cooking, cleaning and other daily tasks? FCW has joined the Value of Water national education campaign to get us all thinking about the crucial role water plays in our lives. On Oct. 21, we’ll mark Imagine A Day Without Water, and hope you will also participate. [For more information →](#)



## A Little Splash

### Water Words from FCW's Executive Director

Every morning, I ride my bicycle to Lake Michigan with my pup Fern running along my side. The lake is one of the major things that drew me back to Milwaukee and one of the main reasons why I hold this position, so I have a practice of thanking the water for her help and asking for her continued support.

On a recent late summer morning, something unexpected — something amazing — changed up our routine. I’d just learned a meeting was delayed, and I didn’t need to rush home, when I noticed a Native American woman following her tradition and offering tobacco as she gave thanks to the lake. I saw her standing ankle-deep as I was getting on my bike to head home. I wondered if I should say hello to her. Just then, two crows cawed overhead. Crows are special animals for me. When I’m unsure about something, they tend to show me the way.

So, I approached the woman. Her name was Pamela Stevens, and she explained that she was thanking Michigami for its support in healing our society right now. We are all going through deep healing, Pamela explained, and that’s why we are experiencing so much chaos. She was thrilled to hear that the crows, special animals for her as well, brought me to her. It was the perfect connection.

As we spoke, I told her about the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin, and that a priority for it is to co-create an environment where everyone is welcome.

In doing this work, I often think of the words of my colleague Kristina Ropella, PhD, dean of Marquette University’s College of Engineering: “Water professionals serve everyone, because everyone uses water, so water professionals need to look like everyone.” Mindful of that need, FCW is engaging in discussions with Black, Latinx, Hmong and Native American communities throughout the state, to understand and re-open the water decision-making table, and to make sure that everyone is welcome, invited and heard.

My academic training has taught me to rely on data to make decisions and reach conclusions. The scientific method is not the only valid approach, however. I find expanding my awareness of the perspectives of communities outside my personal experience, such as Indigenous ways of knowing, enriches my own view of the world. It’s something I hope FCW and all its partners embrace as we move forward together. If you’d like to read more about this concept, I’d suggest starting with the works of scholar [Melanie Goodchild](#).

Best,  
Marissa Jablonski



## Fresh Takes

### New People, Places and Ideas

#### Going Green

##### Emily Tyner

##### Director of Freshwater Strategy, UW-Green Bay

A passion for science has taken Tyner around the world — but she’s never ventured too far from water. The Michigan native has worked around the Great Lakes, the U.S. Virgin Islands and even East Africa’s Lake Malawi. Her roles have ranged from biological technician to science communicator, and each has helped prepare her to be UW-Green Bay’s first director of freshwater strategy.



Top among her priorities: coordinating the effort to designate Green Bay as a National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR). NERRs are a network of nearly 30 coastal sites across the country, run as partnerships with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and individual states to protect and study estuary ecosystems. While both Lake Superior and Lake Erie host NERRs, the proposed Green Bay designation would be the first for Lake Michigan.

“Green Bay is the largest freshwater estuary in the world and it hasn’t been highlighted,” says Tyner, adding that the NERR designation process, which can take up to six years, has a special goal. She says plans call for it to be “the most technologically advanced NERR in the system.”

Tyner sees multiple possibilities for the Green Bay project, such as deploying advanced sensors that will remotely transmit water quality data in real time. The advanced reserve will increase opportunities for research at all levels while remaining open to use for recreation and other activities.

Much like her team’s plans for the Green Bay NERR, Tyner sees the Freshwater Collaborative as a project to unite different groups for a greater goal. Says Tyner: “The Freshwater Collaborative will bring each campus’s assets together. It’s really a place for tech-focused research, a platform to research and collaborate.”

#### Instant Interest

##### Jessica Orlofske

##### Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, UW-Parkside

In 2019, a student suggested invertebrate zoologist Orlofske post some of the photos she was taking on Instagram, which has more than a billion active monthly users. Although she was new to the highly visual social media platform, Orlofske quickly understood its potential.



“It’s a way for me to brag about my students and show the cool things that they’re doing,” she says. “It’s recognizing that the time and effort students are putting in is meaningful and appreciated.”

Orlofske’s audience continues to grow, including everyone from fellow researchers to amateur entomologists around the world.

Facebook networks are usually family members, established friends, neighbors and co-workers: people you know, but who may not share your interests. “With Instagram,” says Orlofske, “interest drives the connection.”

It’s easy to see parallels between Instagram and FCW.

“The value of the Freshwater Collaborative is in being able to find each other and share with each other and work together on things that are interest-based,” says Orlofske. “(FCW) is a way to reach out across the system.”

And reaching out is increasingly important for scientists, whether it’s to peers or even broader audiences.

“Communicating with the public has become more important than ever. We can’t just assume others will do it for us anymore... We need to meet people where they are,” says Orlofske.

She sees Instagram as a valuable, free and easy outreach tool that can achieve a variety of pro-science goals. “It’s a personal choice but I encourage people to consider using it to promote research, ideas and especially their students.”

Find Orlofske on Instagram [@jorlofske](#).



## On the Horizon

What’s your water resolution? Maybe it’s to be more mindful of how you use this resource on a daily basis, or to offer thanks to the lakes or rivers that have special meaning for you. [Let us know!](#) In our Winter 2021 newsletter, arriving with the new year, we’ll share some of your ideas and inspirations.

*Photo credits from top: UW-Stevens Point; UW-Milwaukee; courtesy of Emily Tyner; Dr. Rachel Headley.*

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