



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

WEOP Happenings

ISSUE 1/JULY 2025

FEATURED STORIES

Welcome!

Welcome to The WEOP Happenings! In this biannual newsletter, you will stay up to date with all the exciting things happening in WEOP Talent Search. The goal of this newsletter is to provide updates, share information and encourage family connection within our WEOP Talent Search program.

What is Talent Search?

The State Talent Search Program provides information to youth and adults about postsecondary educational options as well as assistance in defining educational goals, applying and enrolling in college, and obtaining financial aid to pay for college.



Meet the Team!

Learn more about the WEOP
Talent Search Eau Claire team!

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2024-25 Recap

Dive into all things WEOP Talent Search students experienced this school year.

Meet the Team!

Joua Xiong, Public Instruction Supervisor/ Project Director, Educational Talent Search

I am thrilled to introduce myself as the Supervisor and WEOP Talent Search Project Director. Since January 1, 2023, I've had the privilege of overseeing the TRIO Talent Search Projects in Eau Claire, Ashland, and Wausau. As a proud WEOP alumna, I am especially passionate about supporting your educational aspirations, having once been in your shoes and experienced the incredible opportunities this program offers.

On a personal note, I am a proud mother of three wonderful children, including my eldest, who serves as a Staff Sergeant in the US Air Force and is currently stationed in Italy. My family is my greatest joy, and I cherish every moment with them.

When I'm not working, you'll likely find me in my garden, where I love tending to my veggies and flowers. Gardening is my way of unwinding and connecting with nature.

I look forward to getting to know each of you and supporting your journey with WEOP!



Joua Xiong

Kacie Glaser, Education Specialist

Hello! This was my first year working with students as an Education Specialist, previously I was doing administrative work for WEOP. My time is spent working with students at DeLong Middle School and Memorial High School. I have really enjoyed my time getting to plan workshops and field trips for our students to learn and grow with each new experience. It was a pleasure to meet and get to know your students this year!

Outside of work, I enjoy spending my free time with my husband and 2 children, playing outside and hanging out at our family cabins in the summer. I also love to work in our vegetable garden and try my best at planting a cut flower garden! If there's ever a moment to spare, I try to get to the gym to work out or go for a run outside!



Kacie Glaser

Bee Yang, Education Specialist

My name is Bee Yang, I am one of the Education Specialists for WEOP Talent Search.

I just finished my first year in the program back in January! I support students from Eau Claire North High School as well as Northstar Middle School. Before moving to Eau Claire my little family and I lived in La Crosse, where I taught Physical Education for 8 years! I enjoy playing sports, fishing, and trying different foods. If I am not doing those things, you can find me hanging out with my 2-year-old son and wife at home or at the park. Super excited to meet everyone!



Bee Yang

Meet the Team (cont'd)

La Mee Yang, Office Operations Associate

Hi, I'm La Mee, the Office Operations Associate for WEOP serving Eau Claire and Ashland.

One of my greatest passions is working with the youth. I believe in the power of storytelling to connect, inspire, and shape the minds of tomorrow.

As a mother and wife, I'm reminded daily of the importance of nurturing the next generation with love, guidance, and support. I believe self-love, self-care, and personal growth are the cornerstones of a thriving life. I strive to instill these values in every young person I work with.

Together, we can make a difference. Every child deserves the space to dream, create, and become who they are meant to be.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams and the power of their voices."



La Mee Yang

2024/2025 Field Trips

High School

Our high school students had the opportunity to visit 8 different universities this year! They toured UW - Eau Claire, UW - La Crosse, UW - River Falls, UW - Superior, University of Minnesota - Duluth, Viterbo, and Winona State University.



Middle School

Our middle school students were immersed in STEM experiences on field trips to SeaQuest in Roseville, MN and to Beaver Creek Reserve in Fall Creek, WI. They also pushed themselves out of their comfort zones at the UW-Eau Claire Eagle's View High Ropes Course! Many students conquered their fear of heights and climbed to the top of the course and maneuvered their way through the obstacles.



Summer 2024 Field Trips

Bee and Kacie took a group of high school students to Chicago for a few days. Along the way, we made a stop at UW - Madison to do a self guided campus tour and then were given a tour of Camp Randall and students had the opportunity to go on the football field! While in Chicago, we visited the Shedd Aquarium, Skydeck Chicago, Shoreline Sightseeing Architecture River Tour, Griffin Museum of Science and Industry, Adler Planetarium, Navy Pier, The Bean, and the University of Chicago. On our trip home, we drove up to Milwaukee to visit UW - Milwaukee.

2024/2025 Field Trips (cont'd)

WEOP Rising Leaders' Unforgettable Journey to Fresno, California!

In August of 2024 our WEOP Rising Leaders embarked on a thrilling adventure to Fresno, California, packed with inspiration, learning, and unforgettable experiences! The journey kicked off with an empowering session with the dynamic Superintendent of Fresno Unified School District, Misty Her who captivated us with her story of breaking barriers as a Hmong woman in educational leadership.

The excitement continued as we delved into the rich tapestry of Hmong leadership history with the brilliant CherTeng, a Professor of Sociology at UC Fresno State. Our leaders were also privileged to engage with the visionary Vice President of Strategic Enrollment, Phong Yang and the inspiring Shimmel Her, director of the UC Fresno Multicultural Center, along with her vibrant Hmong student club.

One of the highlights was meeting with the talented videographer David Lee, who produced the Hmong40 celebration documentary. Our discussion with him was a profound exploration of the Hmong journey to America, offering eye-opening insights and emotional reflections that deeply resonated with everyone.

The adventure didn't stop there! Our explorers ventured to UC Santa Cruz, where they soaked in the stunning campus views and uncovered the captivating history of the Henry Crowe Redwood National Park. At the Fresno Center, we were inspired by discussions on leadership in community service and mental health, sparking new ideas and passions.

The journey wrapped up with a reflective and engaging dialogue on leadership at the serene Japanese Friendship Garden in Woodward Park, leaving our leaders motivated and ready to make their mark. This trip was not just a learning experience—it was a catalyst for future leaders eager to change the world!



2024/2025 Field Trips (cont'd)

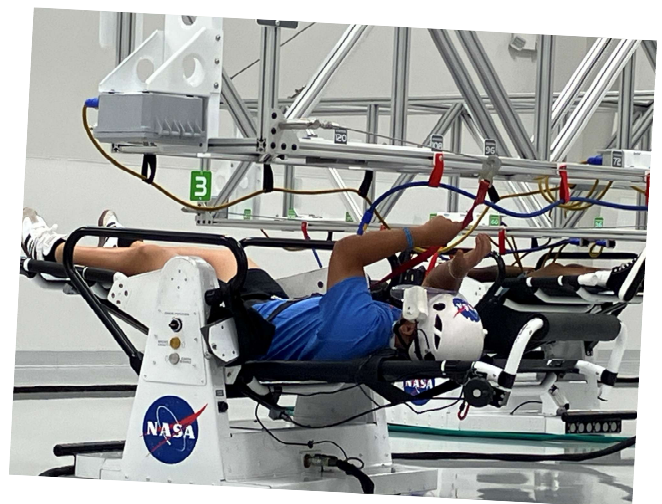
Mission Control we are clear for takeoff! 3, 2, 1 We have lift off... to NASA!

This summer, WEOP Talent Search North took 20 Eau Claire students from Memorial and North High school to Orlando, FL to participate in The Astronaut Training Experience at the Kennedy Space Center. The students performed many astronaut-like missions such as landing a rover on Mars, collecting Martian rocks from a different planet, fixing the Space Station using the microgravity chair, and of course simulating a space launch to the MOON!

Along with the amazing experience at NASA, the students explored a STEM sector of Orlando by visiting Wonderworks and the Orlando Science Center where they participated in over 100 hands on activities related to science, math, history, and engineering! Those activities included walking with Dinosaurs, experiencing hurricane speed winds, harnessing electricity, and much more!

Finally, to cap everything off, the students toured four beautiful universities in Orlando from Advent Health University, Full Sail University, Seminole State College, to The University of Central Florida! It was an amazing trip filled with friendship, exploration, and laughter! We can say it was a successful mission.

Mission complete!



2025 Family & Education Resource Fair Recap

On May 6, students and families were invited to attend our annual WEOP Family & Education Resource Fair hosted at the Pablo Center at the Confluence. Students worked their way through 4 different workshops including STEM hosted by Tommy Xiong, Financial Literacy hosted by Royal Credit Union, Career and College Exploration, and a College Simulation Experience hosted by UW - River Falls.

Tommy showcased our new 3D printers we will be utilizing in STEM workshops this upcoming school year, as well as trying out our new VR headsets! RCU played a game, Go Big or Go Broke which is an engaging, life-sized board game designed to teach students financial education in a way that's anything but boring! Within the Career and College Exploration workshop, students had the opportunity to talk to 6 different colleges and universities, and 12 different community partners. Each exhibitor booth gave them valuable information on colleges and careers for the students to explore. Lastly, Bryanne Stites from UW - River Falls covered College Life where 2 current UWRF students shared their experience on campus. She talked about the independence and choices that come with college and how based on what you are interested in and who you are, there are different ways to be successful.

This is our biggest event of the year, hosting all 4 of our target schools, DeLong and Northstar Middle Schools and North and Memorial High Schools. We had over 70 students in attendance!

We want to extend a huge thank you to this year's exhibitors: Pablo Center at the Confluence, Chippewa Valley Technical College, UW - Eau Claire, UW - River Falls, UW - Stevens Point, UW - Stout, Universities of Wisconsin System, Aurora Community Counseling, Eau Claire Area School District, Eau Claire County 4H, Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, The Community Table, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library, Mayo Clinic, Royal Credit Union, Wisconsin Education Opportunities Program, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and Wisconsin Hmong Chamber of Commerce!



STEM Workshop



University and Community exhibitors



RCU Go Big or Go Broke!

2025 Senior Recognition

We would like to extend our biggest congratulations to our graduating seniors for the 2024-2025 school year! All of their hard work has paid off. Whether they are continuing their education, entering the work force, or joining the Armed Services, we are so incredibly proud of all of our seniors!



North High School

Lindey Haller- UW EC
Jenny Hang- UW River Falls
Breena Her- Undecided
Dontae Her- CVTC
E Shi Her- CVTC
Jame Her- CVTC
Tony Lee- UW Stout
Tshajlij Lee- Undecided
Chunew Lor- UW Milwaukee
James Lor- UW Madison
Koua Lor- Undecided
Maipriya Lor- UW River Falls
Malachi Lor- UWEC
Edward Moody- CVTC
Caiyou Moua- Undecided
Ian Moua- CVTC
Peter Moua- UM Twin Cities
Gisele Otoy- UW EC
Andy Pha- UW Stout
Emery Rodriguez- UW Oshkosh
Bailey Thao- UW EC
Angelina Vang- CVTC
Anthony Vang- Undecided
Ethan Vang- UW Madison
Gao Cha Chia Vang- CVTC
Jayde Vang- CVTC
Natalie Vang- CVTC
Rinoah Vang- Undecided
Amanda Vue- UM Twin Cities
Lang Vue- Undecided
Darlene Xiong- UW EC
Gao Sheng Xiong- CVTC
Gavin Xiong- Undecided
Kaily Xiong- Undecided
Kevin Xiong- UW EC
Samyal Xiong- MSOE
Adikan Yang- Undecided
Chu Yee Yang- CVTC
Selena Yang- CVTC

Memorial High School

Camila Arevalo - CVTC
Yusef Chang - UWEC
Julissa Flores - UW - La Crosse
Bee Her - Undecided
Muachi Khang - CVTC
Kinghis Kong - Undecided
Dante Lee - UWEC at Barron County
Chengpaocher Lor - UWEC
Nathan Mitiku - WI Lutheran College
Lily Moua - CVTC
Alvaro Reyes Ponce - CVTC
Ivan Sanchez - CVTC
Andre Thao - U of MN - Twin Cities
Aaron Vang - UWEC
Nora Velazquez-Garcia - UWEC
Gena Xiong - UWEC
Jasmine Xiong - U of MN - Twin Cities
Maiyer Xiong - UW - Stout
Tou Yang - Undecided



Summer encouragement!

It's important to keep your mind sharp over the summer, so we wanted to offer some summer encouragement tips for everyone!

Middle Schoolers!

- Prioritize physical activity and spend time outside in the fresh air!
- Attend summer camps, such as the free opportunities at the Pablo Center at the Confluence that you can sign up for through the school district!
- Read everyday!
- Volunteer or help out!
- Watch your email/text messages for communication from Kacie or Mr. Bee about potential WEOP activities!



High Schoolers!

- Take free online courses that could earn you a certificate to boost college applications!
- Work, intern or volunteer!
- Visit colleges, research scholarships and start building a resume!
- Stay active and social!

QR Code for Application!

Interested in signing up for WEOP Talent Search? In Eau Claire, we are funded to serve students at DeLong Middle School, Northstar Middle School, North High School and Memorial High School in grades 6 through 12. If you attend any of these schools, please scan the QR code to submit an application for review!

All of the resources offered through Talent Search are free of charge! Everything you read about in this newsletter was funded by Talent Search and was no cost to the students or families.



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