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UW-Eau Claire Foundation / Blugold Real Estate Receives 2024 Paragon Award for Community Commitment

Eau Claire, WI – August 6th, 2025 – The Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is proud to announce the UW-Eau Claire Foundation / Blugold Real Estate Foundation as the prestigious 2024 Paragon Award recipient. This recognition celebrates UWEC Foundation's / Blugold Real Estate Foundation's exceptional contributions to the community, exemplifying their commitment of excellence and dedication to fostering stronger, well built and well educated communities.

The Economic Impact Paragon Award has been presented to strong businesses in our community since 2001, with Royal Credit Union being its first recipient. Today, Royal Credit Union continues to support the Paragon Award by sponsoring yearly as well as presenting the award to each new recipient. The prestigious award is presented to one business each year, with the qualifications that the business has a positive impact on the community by creating quality jobs, substantial investment in capital equipment, increasing overall tax base, commitment to continued education, support of community economic development activities and innovations in the development of new technologies or products.

"I am incredibly honored to accept this award on behalf of the entire team," says Curt Krizan, president of the UW-Eau Claire Foundation and executive director of the Blugold Real Estate Foundation. "From the Confluence Project to The Sonnentag, we've received tremendous support from our community and civic partners, business leaders and residents. I personally want to thank everyone for their support in making these projects come to life."

Community-Minded Initiatives

The UWEC Foundation's / Blugold Real Estate Foundation's commitment to community extends far beyond education. In 2024, The Sonnentag opened its doors to the community. The Sonnentag is the largest Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design in V4 gold-certified recreational center in the nation operated by a public university. The 229,900-square-foot facility is estimated to have generated \$38 million in construction wages and benefits to dozens of firms and hundreds of workers who helped build the facility.

They have also worked on and built The Children's Nature Academy, The Confluence Arts Center (now known as the Pablo Center at the Confluence), and Haymarket Landing.

The Haymarket development was estimated to have generated more than \$100 million in new construction in Downtown Eau Claire and since its establishment, it has been a catalyst for the rebirth and re-energization of the City of Eau Claire.

In addition, they have a contract with the university to manage the Aspenson Mogensen Apartments at 222 Water Street.

Core Values

UW-Eau Claire Foundation's / Blugold Real Estate Foundation's mission is to assist in the continued tradition of academic excellence at the university, as well as to act as an advocate between the university and community. They hope to be the primary funding for the university to achieve success as the premier undergraduate experience in the Midwest.

Conclusion

UW-Eau Claire Foundation / Blugold Real Estate Foundation is a shining example of what it means to be community-minded and dedicated to excellence. The Eau Claire Area EDC congratulates the UW-Eau Claire Foundation / Blugold Real Estate Foundation on this well-deserved recognition and looks forward to their continued impact in the region.

For more information about the UW-Eau Claire Foundation / Blugold Real Estate Foundation and their community initiatives, visit <https://foundation.uwec.edu/>.