



Fund for Wisconsin Scholars (FFWS) News Release

For Immediate Release

September 11, 2023

CONTACT: Kelly Ruppel, 608-238-2400, kruppel@ffws.org

Fund For Wisconsin Scholars (FFWS) announces an additional \$25 million to keep college accessible and affordable in Wisconsin.

Morgridges' investment in the future workforce through higher education grants and stipends to students in Wisconsin now exceeds \$260 million.

Madison, Wis. (September 11, 2023) – The Fund for Wisconsin Scholars, Inc. (FFWS) today announced a significant gift from founding trustees John P. and Tashia F. Morgridge of \$25 million. The gift is in addition to the \$235 million gifted from the fund's inception in 2007. This gift will allow the permanent endowment to expand our reach to more students across the state providing financial grants for eligible, lower-income, talented graduates of Wisconsin public schools attending a Wisconsin public post-secondary school. Since 2007, FFWS has distributed over \$125 million to 25,000 low-income scholars through grants and stipends reaching scholars in every county in Wisconsin.

"We have chosen to make this additional investment at a time when Wisconsin students are finding it harder to pay for college and daily living expenses. It is critical to the future of the state of Wisconsin that we continue to invest in our youth, our future workforce, and in higher education to remain competitive on a national and global landscape," said John P. Morgridge, who is former chair of Cisco Systems.

As a retired public school teacher and active member of many education-related boards and commissions, Tashia Morgridge states, "Wisconsin's public high schools do an outstanding job of preparing students for higher education. We are committed to helping ensure that higher education is accessible and affordable for Wisconsin residents."

Executive Director Kelly Ruppel stated that with this gift, the FFWS incoming 2023-24 cohort will be the largest ever, with nearly 1,500 new scholars across the state receiving a five-year grant of \$4,500 per year. Across all current cohorts, FFWS will support over 3,000 scholars in 2023-24 alone. Cumulatively, FFWS has graduated 15 cohorts. 25,000+ UW students have received a grant or stipend from FFWS. FFWS is the leading private provider of student grant funding for the UW System.

Ruppel explained that the purpose of the FFWS is to reduce financial barriers to college and to lighten the debt that far too many Wisconsin students incur during their college years. "We know that when students graduate with debt, their careers often choose them. We want students choosing careers that

they love and where their unique talents can thrive,” Ruppel stated. The grants come as a response to the gap created by decreased government aid which has not kept up with inflation and the increased costs of college education.

“Without FFWS, I wouldn't be graduating debt-free. I also wouldn't have been able to pursue graduate school because the thought of further debt would have held me back. The FFWS grant has opened so many doors for me, and I hope other students will be able to enjoy the benefits that I have,” said Tien Vo, a UW-Madison 2023 graduate.

FFWS SCHOLAR GRANTS & STIPEND
DISTRIBUTED SINCE 2007

UW COLLEGES	\$4,612,108.86
UW-EAU CLAIRE	\$10,137,187.82
UW-GREEN BAY	\$7,072,319.52
UW-LA CROSSE	\$8,629,593.57
UW-MADISON	\$12,339,011.64
UW-MILWAUKEE	\$20,340,129.27
UW-OSHKOSH	\$9,035,236.61
UW-PARKSIDE	\$4,498,615.12
UW-PLATTEVILLE	\$6,843,523.06
UW-RIVER FALLS	\$4,227,503.21
UW-STEVENS POINT	\$11,050,724.66
UW-STOUT	\$6,364,482.88
UW-SUPERIOR	\$1,405,590.53
UW-WHITEWATER	\$10,150,879.32
UW SYSTEM TOTAL	\$125,081,393.79
WTCS TOTAL	\$8,063,476.73

The Morgridges created FFWS because of their commitment to philanthropy, affection for their childhood home of Wisconsin (where they graduated from Wauwatosa High School and the University of Wisconsin–Madison), and commitment to accessible, affordable education for young people.

The Morgridges’ giving is grounded in their desire to be catalysts facilitating change and causing good things to happen. Their hope is that their giving will allow students to be active participants in their campus community and stimulate other funding and giving. “We encourage private and public funders to join us in this effort. There is no better investment than in the youth of today for the economy of tomorrow,” said John Morgridge.

###

If you would like more information, please contact Executive Director Kelly Ruppel, 608-238-2400, kruppel@ffws.org