

## **UWO roots run deep for new alumni board president**

**by Alyssa Kadansky - Wednesday, July 24, 2013**

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University of Wisconsin Oshkosh alumnus Jim Rath '76, shares a family legacy with his three siblings, Tom '70, Mary '65, and Hilarie '81, all graduates of UWO. They are committed to giving back to the University community with their service and the recent endowment of the Rath Family Scholarship.

Jim, who is set to take his place as the UWO Alumni Board president for 2013-2014, graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science and was very involved in the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity as a student. Later in life, he served as the fraternity's regional commissioner. While attending UWO, he also participated in intramural sports and served on the Reeve Union Board.

"I have good memories from my days at UWO, especially of the people I've met along the way and friends from athletics," Jim said.

Tom also remembers his time at UWO as being positive.

"I was living at Fletcher Hall as a resident assistant," Tom said. "In looking back, I can appreciate all aspects of my time on campus, including social, academic and athletic endeavors."

Tom received his bachelor's degree in education and landed his first teaching job in Stevens Point. He later returned to UWO to finish his master's degree in education.

While attending UWO, Tom was a star athlete, competing as a jumper in three events. With former athletic director James Flood as Tom's coach, he would later achieve All-American status in the National Association for Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), along with induction into the UWO Athletic Hall of Fame.

"I owe a lot of my success to [the] coaching, and we have kept in touch over many years of friendship," Tom said. "He was very supportive and encouraging, as were many of the coaches in all sports at the time."

Tom and his brother Jim stay active in the UWO community today.

"I continue to keep connections with UWO, presently serving on our UWO Alumni Board and on our UWO Athletic Hall of Fame Board," Tom said.

Encouraged to join the Alumni Board and working as its treasurer in the past, Jim now looks forward to becoming the board's president. He believes that being involved with the Alumni Board is all about giving back to his alma mater.

"It's been an honor to be asked and to serve," Jim said.

Jim has been a contributor to the UW Foundation and has been involved in helping set up a number of small endowments for the Delta Sigma Phi Foundation. But one of his goals was to set up his own family scholarship—and Jim was not the only Rath to take part. Jim reached out to his siblings for financial assistance.

With all of the Rath siblings on board, the Rath Family Scholarship was created and has recently been endowed. This \$500 scholarship connects the Rath's hometown with UWO. It goes to a deserving graduate from their high school, Two Rivers High School, who has been accepted as a full-time student at UWO. The scholarship is presented annually at the high school's spring awards ceremony.

Jim's sister Mary believes that the scholarship will allow a student's dream of going to college to come true.

"When I was in high school I received a scholarship from a Parent Teacher Association for someone who was interested in a teaching career," Mary said. "That scholarship meant that I would be able to go to college. My hope is that another student would be able to dream their dream with the help of a scholarship."

While attending UWO, Mary worked hard to maintain her college dream. After graduating with her bachelor's degree in education, she returned to Two Rivers to teach.

"I tried to give back to the community that made it possible for me to attend college, so I taught in Two Rivers for a year after completing my training at UWO," Mary said.

Mary later moved to Racine, where she worked for more than 40 years as both a teacher and a principal for Racine Unified School District.

Tom believes that the legacy that the four of them share, as well as the endowment of a scholarship, is something to be proud of and a way of giving back to the community that helped them achieve their goals.

"I'm glad to share this story," Tom said. "It is a source of pride to think that the four of us could collaborate to do this. It's a way of thanking those who helped us along the way, starting with our parents and our hometown of Two Rivers, Washington High School where the four of us graduated and UWO which provided us with degrees to follow our career choices. It gives me an opportunity to say 'thank you' to all of them."

Do you have a UWO family legacy you'd like to share? Send your story to [alumni@uwosh.edu](mailto:alumni@uwosh.edu).

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- [UW Oshkosh Foundation](#)