

# THE POST-CRESCENT

Appleton | Fox Cities, Wisconsin

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## County backs UW-Fox land buy

### Outagamie OKs \$550,000 for site to grow program

By Ed Lowe  
Post-Crescent staff writer

APPLETON — The Outagamie County Board decided the long-term benefits of adding a vacant business site to the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley campus will outweigh its costs.

On Tuesday, the board voted 31-3 to spend \$550,000 to acquire and modify the former home to Advance Tooling Specialists, Menasha, to expand space for the school's thriving four-year engineering degree programs.

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The site at 1655 University Drive will add two acres of land, including a 19,500-square-foot building and 65 parking stalls, to the campus.

The funding will be matched equally by Winnebago County under a plan to purchase the property and equip it with an elevator and stairwell.

Leon Church, past president of the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said the purchase allows the school's engineering programs to continue their growth and development.

"We've got to be able to supply the engineers" that manufacturers demand, he said.

Jennifer Jensen, project manager for the school's engineering program, said it has quickly grown from 30 students to 170.

Several supervisors lamented the school's bid for new county spending less than a year after the board approved \$5.3 million in matching spending on a new communication arts building.

However, the measure's supporters heralded it as an investment in economic development that would pay off in the long run.

UW-Fox Valley CEO and Dean Jim Perry said the program has produced 26 engineering degrees, with all the recipients employed in Wisconsin and 23 working in or near the Fox Cities.

The borrowing will cost the owner of an Outagamie County home valued at \$140,000, 82 cents per year over 10 years, Supv. Richard Gosse said.

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