

UW-Fox Valley begins capital campaign



THE FOX VALLEY CONCERT BAND ends their performance with a medley of Christmas music during a recent concert at the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley Fine Arts Theatre in Menasha. The university will begin its first-ever capital campaign to fund a \$13.9 million project.

Gannett Wisconsin Newspapers photo by Jeanette Merten

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Goal is to raise \$2 million in matching funds for arts center

By Jeff Bollier

Gannett Wisconsin Newspapers

OSHKOSH — Don't call the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley's proposed Communication Arts Center a theater.

UW-Fox Valley Foundation Executive Director Lisa Weiner said the \$13.9 million project will play more roles for the two-year college than the term "theater" could ever signify.

"We're trying to say it's not just a theater that will be used for three or four plays or two concerts. It will be used most every single day of the year for a variety of purposes."

Weiner said. "We do not have a large and safe gathering space for our 1,700 students. We have no place to hold a film series or our speaker series, our concerts and plays. There just isn't a safe and large enough area to accommodate that."

Weiner has become well versed on the multiple uses for the center's classroom spaces, 361-seat auditorium and other amenities as she prepares to engage UW-Fox Valley alumni, friends and supporters in the college's first major capital campaign.

Her task: Raise \$2 million to match the \$5.3 million Winneba-

go and Outagamie counties have already pledged to the project and the \$1.3 million for furniture and equipment the state of Wisconsin has pledged.

"All capital campaigns these days are a challenge, but I'm confident it will be successful," Weiner said. "We've had some preliminary discussions with supporters and friends who were waiting for the two counties to fund their portion."

The existing communications and arts spaces handle three or four drama productions each year in addition to numerous campus music concerts, lecture series, student-spon-

Interested in donating?

Contact Lisa Weiner at the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley Foundation, 920-832-2849, for more information.

How will the \$13.9 million CAC be paid for?

- \$5.3 million from Winnebago County; \$5.3 million from Outagamie County.
- \$1.3 million from state of Wisconsin for equipment.
- \$2 million from UW-Fox Valley Foundation capital campaign.

Source: Communication Arts Center information sheet

sored events, public forums, community theater group performances and drama classes.

A UW-Fox Valley information sheet provided to Winnebago County Board supervisors indicated 620 students, or about 19 percent of the total student body,

attend classes in the existing space and over a three-year average, the auditorium was used 81 percent of the semester days each year by about 170 separate events.

But the new Communication Arts Center is not needed simply to address the growing stu-

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dent population at UW-Fox Valley. The information sheet also notes no existing classrooms or auditorium spaces are accessible by students with disabilities and there are significant health and safety issues such as asbestos and out-of-date air handling equipment.

The foundation plans to get started on its fundraising mission right away and contact supporters and potential donors over the coming months. Weiner said a donor

can acquire naming rights for the auditorium for a \$500,000 donation or naming rights for the entire building for a \$1 million donation.

"A gift like this is a transforming gift for the university," Weiner said.

"It's a wonderful naming opportunity for the right person or family. In the grand scheme of fundraising, those are not significant amounts for being able to name the building."

Jeff Bollier writes for the Oshkosh Northwestern.

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