

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN

Superior

Acclaim

SIDE LINE SHORTS

- UW-Superior held its annual Chorifest event, November 7, which showcased 200 youth voices. Since 1984 talented singers from high schools in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan have gathered at UWS to spend a day with a guest conductor who helps them improve their vocal skills.
- Dr. Deborah Davis Schlacks's book chapter titled "Echoes of the Middle Ages: Teaching the Medieval in 'The Great Gatsby'" will appear in the book "Approaches to Teaching Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*," to be published in January 2009 by the Modern Language Association. The book is a volume in the series *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*.
- On November 11 and 12, UW-Superior held Student Retention Forums in the Rothwell Student Center Snack Bar. Over 100 participants, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members, showed up to brainstorm on suspected barriers to student retention and persistence at UW-Superior.

UW-SUPERIOR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP SENDING STUDENT TO WASHINGTON TO OBSERVE THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION



When Barack Obama takes the oath of office in January to become the nation's 44th president, University of Wisconsin-Superior student Betsy Gregg (left) will be in Washington, D.C., to observe the event through an opportunity provided by the UW-Superior Foundation. Gregg, a senior from Crookston, Minn., majoring in Sociology, will be in Washington Jan. 10-21 to attend the president's inauguration, observe related events and attend educational seminars at The Washington Center, a non-partisan study center. She was chosen for the opportunity from among 24 UW-Superior students who applied for the Campaign 2008 – Presidential Academic Seminar Series Foundation Scholarship provided by the UW-Superior Foundation. "I was in disbelief when I heard I had been chosen," Gregg said. "I gave it my best shot, and finding out I got it was thrilling." The UW-Superior Foundation offered the scholarship as part of its emphasis on providing active teaching and learning opportunities for students, said Jill Schoer, assistant chancellor for university advancement. "This is the opportunity of a lifetime for a student to actively participate in the political process," she said. Gregg said she hopes to make public presentations about the inauguration after she returns. "I'm just hoping to be a good representative of Superior while in Washington, D.C.."

STUDENTS USE MATH SKILLS TO SOLVE A PROBLEM HALF A WORLD AWAY

Heather Kahler, math specialist for UW-Superior Student Support Services, caught Channel 10 News's attention. Why? For having her students work on a real-life problem that could help a village in Africa. Kahler got the idea in 2007 after she and husband visited their friend Erik, who's working at a small village in the west African nation of Gambia. While there Erik pointed out the serious soil erosion problem around the village. After she returned to her job at UW-Superior, the opportunity arose for Kahler to secure a grant through the university's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to use technology to add a global emphasis to her course. That's when she decided she could put her students to work on a real-life math problem half a world away. Using Skype to hold two-way video phone calls with Erik in Africa, the students learned more about the problem facing the village. Then, with topographic maps of the village, they put their math skills to work, locating contour lines on the map and figuring the slope water follows from various points along the contour lines. With the slope figured, the students could then use the topographic maps to determine the areas around the village that were most prone to erosion. The maps and their reports are then sent to Erik. Kahler credits the project's success in part to Lisa Larson, coordinator of instructional development at UW-Superior, who enabled her to secure the grant, and Brian Hood, the university's academic technology coordinator who set up the Skype sessions for her class. This is the second semester that Kahler has used the erosion problem in class. Her students are learning about Skype, as well as a practical application of their math skills. Just as important, they learn about Gambia and village life there – another way of meeting UW-Superior's goal of giving students a broader world view as part of their education.

