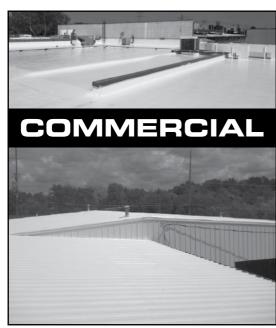
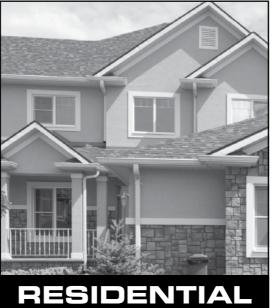




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# Learning through hands-on experience

Burlington student works at Aurora through youth apprenticeship

By Callie Koehne

CORRESPONDENT

High school students across the United States often ask themselves one burning question.

"What's next?"

The question might be simple for some to answer.

But for others, students find themselves seeking further answers while encountering obstacles, including false starts, concerns about student loans, and programs that simply don't pan out.

Burlington High School is trying to help its students answer some nagging, but important questions, courtesy of youth apprenticeships offered to juniors and seniors who can explore differing career pathways

BHS has a total of 20 Youth Apprenticeship students this year, all learning about various career pathways including construction, manufacturing, healthcare, education, and automotive.

The paid apprenticeships earn students credit towards their potential career as they study under a local business mentor and gain skills and experience that will help them determine what path they want to take.

The Youth Apprenticeship program is state-certified, and upon completion of the career path program requirements, earns the student an Occupational Skills Proficiency Certification.

"This certification verifies that they have gained the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to be successful in their chosen industry within the state of Wisconsin," said Science Teacher and Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator at Burlington High School

Hendricks said that employers have the opportunity to directly engage with students and train them in their respective industry skills.

"Students will also engage in conversations regarding the potential of continuing employment and bridging into a registered apprenticeship or training program," Hendricks said.

Senior Juliette Bousquet is one of the school's youth apprentices and became the very first from BHS to be assigned to Aurora Medical Center, of Burlington, and the first to be assigned to the surgical unit.

Bousquet, working as a nursing assistance youth apprentice at Aurora





**right:** Senior Juliette Bousquet, of Burlington High School, works as a youth apprentice at Aurora Medical Center in Burlington. She looks to pursue a career path in the healthcare industry. **left:** Bousquet (left) stands with her mentor, Anna Ganhs, at Aurora Medical Center during a shift she worked at the facility through a youth apprentice program.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

during her senior year, said she wasn't sure what she wanted to do with her life for quite some time

She thought about being a teacher, so she started working at a summer day camp, where she went through the motions of everyday activities with the children and loved it most days.

Ultimately, though, she decided that it wasn't for her

During her junior year, she took an advanced anatomy and physiology class that piqued her interest in healthcare. It was during a surgical shadow experience where she was able to watch three different cases in one day that something ignited within her.

From there, she knew what she wanted to do.

She talked with Hendricks about her

interests, and he came up with a way for her to explore the field of nursing.

He connected Bousquet with registered nurse Anna Ganhs, who serves as a manager of Surgical Services at Aurora.

The two were able to meet together in person at one of BHS's Opportunity Days, where Ganhs explained what an apprenticeship at Aurora would look like, and what she had to do to be accepted.

Bousquet decided to begin the application process, spoke to a recruiter, and had an interview with Ganhs before being offered the youth apprenticeship.

In Wisconsin, youth apprentices must complete nurse assistant training and pass the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) exam before they can qualify for a YA clinical role.

She completed her CNA through a

BHS partnership with Gateway Technical College in December after tackling the 75-hour course in under four weeks.

Bousquet said that the hardest parts so far have been the application process and finding someone who would take a chance on her as a new CNA with no experience.

"A lot of facilities didn't want to hire me," she said. "I was very lucky that Ms. Anna was willing to take a chance on me and give me the opportunity to start gaining the patient experience I need."

Ganhs has a passion for working with students and helping them figure out what pathway they want to take while exposing them to different career options.

"Juliette has been a pleasure to work with," she said. "From the moment I met her, she was very energetic, positive and definitely excited."

Bousquet began working her youth apprentice program at Aurora in Burlington in late March and worked every day of her spring break.

After the break, she was working two days a week, for three hours before school, so she could play softball after her academic day has come to an end.

At first, Bousquet said she was worried it might be too much, but she's been thrilled that her supervisors at Aurora make sure she knows that school comes first.

"I have very much enjoyed my time here," she said at the time. "Everyone has been so welcoming and understanding that I am still in high school, so I'm balancing a work life with academics, which has been really nice."

Her duties involve shadowing nursing assistant Cindy Kramer, who taught her the basics like bringing patients in from the lobby, taking vitals, and getting them situated before the nurse comes in to prep them for surgery.

She said that she has no doubt that nursing is the career she wants to pursue and is currently talking with a recruiter about transferring to Aurora BayCare in Green Bay where she plans on attending college.

Ganhs said that her team has loved having a student in their department working with them, that it's been refreshing to teach Bousquet and help her gain the knowledge that will be beneficial to her as she enters nursing school.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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On the cover: Kids participate in a chalk art contest during Loop Day June 1 in the Chestnut Street Loop in Burlington. The event, "to celebrate the quirky little one-way street," is held annually the first Saturday in June.

Page 4 WONDERS OF RACINE COUNTY SUMMER 2024



**left:** Kelsey Henderson, 2023 Racine County Fairest of the Fair, passes the crown to successor Jennifer Hinkel during the May 31 coronation ceremony on the Racine County Fairgrounds in Union Grove. **above:** Hinkel, this year's Fairest of the Fair for Racine County, is congratulated by her brother, Christopher, and father, Bill, after she earned the crown.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

# Hinkel to reign as Fairest of Fair in Racine County

#### By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

Jennifer Hinkel's passion for the Racine County Fair began as a youngster, exploring the barns, watching exhibitors showcase animals, and participating in multiple activities.

Hinkel, originally from Franklin, said she became so fond of the fair that she eventually joined the Raymond 4-H Club and exhibited a dozen projects.

Years later, her passion continued, with the 2015 Franklin High School graduate competing for Racine County Fairest of the Fair on two other occasions before earning the crown on the third try during the May 31 coronation ceremony at the Racine County Fairgrounds in Union Grove.

Hinkel, a former Wisconsin Honey Queen and American Honey Queen, expressed disbelief when her predecessor and Wisconsin Fairest of the Fair Kelsey Henderson passed the baton at the ceremony.

"For me, it was always a highlight and an end goal. I have seen so many people selected, and I have gotten to know quite a few of them over the last couple of years while being 4-H Outstanding Teen and then as Fair Royalty."

Hinkel, 26, who earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing with a minor in communications at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, became inspired to run for the third time in honor of her late mother, Rose, who passed away recently.

## Family inspiration

Before she began showing at the Racine County Fair, Hinkel recalled spending time on the fairgrounds with her family, including parents, Rose and Bill.

ncluding parents, Rose and Bill.
"I didn't know about the Racine County

Fair until my parents took me there for my first time," Hinkel recalled, adding she walked through the horse barns and watched exhibitors showcase projects.

"I was just amazed at all they were doing," Hinkel, sister of Christopher, said. "That is what kicked off my knowledge of the fair and sparked my love for it. Then I was able to join Raymond 4-H."

As a Raymond 4-H member, she participated in a dozen projects, including horses, swine, poultry, shooting sports, basketry, photography, foods, electrical, and woodworking.

As an exhibitor, she learned all she could about the Racine County Fair, even as a youth.

"Even while I was a junior exhibitor showing, I was active in showing in the open class at the same time," she said. "I participated in some of the contests that the fair offered. I wanted to do it all and see as much as I could of the fair."

Hinkel, a former Racine County Fair intern, also became a Racine 4-H Outstanding Teen and decided to compete for the title of Racine County Fairest Fair in 2019 when she became Fair Royalty.

Hinkel had since run for Fairest of the Fair once more until she won the crown last week.

"I couldn't believe it actually happened," she said. "For years, I knew I wanted to run for the position."

Hinkel earned a lifetime membership to the Racine County Fair, a \$2,000 scholarship, and will represent the fair at the Wisconsin Association of Fairs convention in January at Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells. She will vie for the title of Wisconsin Fairest of the Fair at the convention.

Other candidates who sought the Fairest of Fair consisted of Sydney Van Swol, of Kansasville; Emma Henningfeld,

Franksville; Paige Koenecke, Union Grove; and Maggie Metzen, Franksville.

## Fair spokesperson

The Racine County Fair, themed "Stars, Stripes and Summer Nights," will be held from July 24-28 on the Racine County Fairgrounds.

Hinkel acknowledged her role carries importance, noting she will be responsible for outreach and welcoming thousands of visitors to the annual event.

"The Racine County Fair has always been something that I have looked forward to every single summer," she said. "It is a way to not only highlight the fair, but also the people involved behind the scenes that helped make this possible. Without the support of the 39 board members, who are volunteers, the Racine County Fair wouldn't be possible. The role is important to me and it is a way to reach new people that come to the fair."

Hinkel said the Racine County Fair offers something for everyone, even adults, who could come and enjoy a series of live music presentations.

Additionally, the fair features multiple

children's activities, including a petting zoo and other interactive exhibits.

"There are so many things happening," she said.

## Living through agriculture

Outside the Racine County Fair, Hinkel became the 2020 Wisconsin Honey Queen, serving as the spokesperson for the Wisconsin Honey Producers Association.

A year later, Hinkel earned the title of American Honey Queen, traveling through dozens of states as a representative of the American Beekeeping Association and hundreds of producers across the United States.

On the national stage, she delivered educational presentations while conducting outreach efforts.

Hinkel, owner and operator of Buffalo Bill's Christmas Tree Farm in Franklin, also works as the agricultural communications and education coordinator at the Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis.

"I get to live and love the fair every single day," Hinkel said.

## APPRENTICESHIP • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"I think making students aware of all the different options out there is important," Ganhs said.

Burlington High School Principal Amy Levonian echoes that sentiment.

"These Youth Apprenticeships serve as gateways for high school students to delve into the diverse areas of the workforce, opening up avenues for exploration and growth. We couldn't be prouder or more excited for Juliette as she embarks on this journey!"

Bousquet isn't quite sure what pathway

in nursing she wants to pursue, or where it will take her.

But as her senior year ends and her future dawns, she's content and happy to know that she's on the right path.

"At Burlington High School, we are dedicated to ensuring that our students have access to opportunities within our career pathways, enabling them to build a strong foundation for their future pursuits," Levonian said. "Our focus is on providing hands-on experience, fostering empathy, and nurturing a commitment to service."

# Honoring those who paid for our freedom

Memorial Day represents the sacrifices veterans made in securing freedom for Americans across the United States

Those sacrifices include loss of life that affects countless families

Secretary-designee James Bond, of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, commended the hundreds of people who attended a rain-soaked May 26 Memorial Day Ceremony at Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Union Grove for honoring and respecting those who gave their lives

Bond, who served in the United States Marine Corps from 1983 to 1988, said in his keynote address more than 1 million men and women have died while serving the country.

"The freedoms that every American enjoys today have been paid for at the cost of the lives of American military personnel and paid for with the tears of those whose lives were forever changed by the loss of a loved one," said Bond, who served on assignments at home and abroad.

"We are a nation

whose freedom has been guaranteed by our veterans. They have shaped our lives and shaped the very fabric of this nation," he

Bond recognized the Gold and Blue Star families in attendance at the ceremony and said the Department of Veterans Affairs will continue supporting them.

"On behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, I want to say: We stand with you. Words seem inadequate to the task of conveying how grateful we are for the sacrifices your loved ones have made, how grateful we are for the sacrifices you have made," Bond said.

## Commemorating D-Day

Bond said Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery holds the graves of soldiers who served in multiple conflicts spanning more than a century.

Bond reminded those present that in a few days, the country will mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day in World War II.

On June 6, 1944, the Allied forces' momentous and incredibly risky invasion of Europe - code-named Operation Overload started the effort to liberate Europe from the cruelty and oppression of Nazi Germany.

Of the 4,400 allied serviceman killed on D-Day, 2,500 came from America, Bond

"More were killed in the days immediately following the invasion, but their efforts opened the western front of World War II in Europe and led to Allied victory within a year," Bond said.

"The American sacrifice at Normandy was storied - from the Naval landings and storming of Utah and Omaha Beaches to St. Mere Eglise – to the daring paratroopers who jumped behind enemy lines to face danger all around them."

Never forget Bond admitted it's sometimes easy to

...It's important to remember that each of these graves belongs to a person whose absence mattered in the lives of the people they left behind.

– James Bond, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs







above: Two representatives from Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 767 salute during the Battle Field Cross Ceremony at the cemetery. above left: Secretarydesignee James Bond, of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, speaks during the Memorial Day Ceremony at Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery. at left: Retired Lt. Col. Bruce Oldenburg (left), of AMVETS Post 911, Sgt. Rich Brower from American Legion Post 1865, and Airman First Class Frank Konieska from American Legion Post 171 serve as representatives of the Vietnam Wreath on behalf of the 50th anniversary. below: Lisa Bixler, Colleen Lemke and Aleta Bath prepare to place the Gold Star Mothers Wreath May 26 at Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

> JASON ARNDT PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

forget the lives each military member left

Bond said they were more than soldiers they were fathers, sisters, sons, daughters, brothers and mothers.

'As you look around this beautiful cemetery, it's important to remember that each of these graves belongs to a person whose absence mattered in the lives of the people they left behind."

Bond encouraged those in attendance to visit the gravesite of each military member, take a minute to think about the people they helped, and simply say "thank you.

He also said the gratitude should extend beyond the confines of Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Union

"What better way to honor the dead than by honoring those living among us today," Bond said. "Find a way to carry their legacy forward. It doesn't have to be big or grand. Honor their service by serving others. You'll be glad you did."



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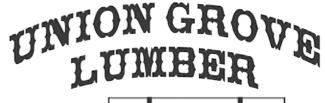
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## Aquatic Center opens for another season

## Director reports staff members are ready to serve

By **Jason Arndt** 

STAFF WRITER

The Burlington Community Aquatic Center made its first splash of the season last weekend.

With a steady roster of staff members, including lifeguards, some maintenance improvements, and new additions to the concessions stand, Executive Center Director Jeanne Otter looks forward to welcoming thousands of visitors for the pool's seventh season.

"We are excited and we have a good crew. We have a bunch of new people and lot of returning people," Otter said. "We are just thrilled to get the season started."

The Aquatic Center officially opened June 1, when the area experienced some rainfall, but had its first full day June 2 when it was open 11 a.m. until 7 p.m.

While the pool had limited hours initially, running from 4 until 8 p.m., Otter said once area schools fully dismiss students for summer the hours would expand and the pool would be open 11 a.m. until 8 p.m., weekdays, and 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. on weekends.

The expanded hours began June 8 and run through the summer.

Cost of admission, including daily passes for both residents and non-residents, will remain unchanged from what they were last year.

For additional information on rates, visit the Aquatic Center website at burlingtoncommunitypool.org, or on Facebook.

#### New items, some improvements

One year after drawing nearly 46,000 people to the pool, Aquatic Center officials completed some general maintenance improvements, including a new shade atop of the water slide tower, and some repainting and re-sealing.

"We had to make some improvements in our mechanical room this year, so that is where some of the money went to. We did get a new red shade atop the slide tower, so it always looks pretty and colorful," she said.

In the concession stand, some new items were added, such as churros and cheesy bread with marinara sauce.

The new additions are in an effort to keep people coming, Otter said. "We have a few new items in our

concessions stand this year," she said. "We always try to bring in new things and keep it

fresh for everybody."

Unlike last year, when the pool waited until the middle of the season, the latest feature called the AquaZip'n Zipline will be available for users all summer.

The AquaZip'n Zipline, located next to the climbing wall, experienced some delays in arrival last year because of lead times.

#### Bolstering staff

Otter said she's confident in having enough staff to cover the entire season with new lifeguards coming on board.

Entering the season, Otter hired pool attendants, with some planning on taking the lifeguard course to become certified to maintain the safety of users.

The pool's on-site lifeguard instructor and trainer will guide the new lifeguards this month

"Right now, they are pool attendants until they take their lifeguarding course," she said. "We try and feed ourselves that way."

The Aquatic Center has also worked on retention efforts, such as promoting long-time staff members to new positions, Otter said.

"We created a new position for some of our employees. We like to promote from within, and we love having our employees return every year, so it gives them opportunities for growth as well," she said.

Otter said the Aquatic Center – unlike a handful of other pools in southeast Wisconsin – did not need to close because of staffing shortages in 2023.

However, the pool does close if the temperature drops below 65 degrees, or when there is severe weather.

"We try to monitor (the weather)," she said. "Personally, I don't like to be closed."

Additionally, the Aquatic Center has seen an influx of families enrolling their children in swim lessons as well new memberships.

"It's looking very promising and our swim lessons are up from last year," Otter said.

#### Early tune-up

Before the pool opened for the season, the facility held a few private parties. Otter said they offered an opportunity for staff members to prepare for thousands of visitors during the hot summer months.

"Burlington Catholic Center came in, and we probably had at least 400 people," said Otter, adding Foursis Dance brought in about 350 people.

"We have those types of parties before we technically open. It is a nice way for our employees to get in and get trained without the general public," Otter said.

The Aquatic Center, 394 Amanda St., is open to both residents and non-residents of Burlington.

Many visitors come to the center from Kenosha and Walworth counties as well as other outlying communities.





top: A boy uses the AquaZip'n recently at the Burlington Community Aquatic Center. The AquaZip'n will be available all season after experiencing a delayed arrival last year. above: Jennifer Zawislak, of Lake Geneva, reads a book while at the Aquatic Center last August when the area nearly reached triple digit temperatures. The center is staffed with a dedicated crew, according to representatives.

JASON ARNDT PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

WUHS recognized for Project Lead the Way Waterford Union High School recently received recognition as a 2023-24 Project Lead the Way Distinguished High School, according to an announcement from district officials.

The PLTW Distinguished School recognition honors schools committed to increasing student access, engagement, and achievement in their PLTW program.

Waterford, one of just a few hundred schools nationally to receive the designation, also has the honor of being one of 16

PLTW is a national nonprofit organization that serves millions students from kindergarten through 12th grades and teachers in more than 12,200 schools in the United States.

To be eligible for the designation, Waterford Union High School had to meet several criteria in the 2022-23 school year.

Among the criteria required were a certain number of PLTW courses available to students, percent of students enrolled in related courses, percentage of students taking more than one PLTW course, and efforts to ensure equitable access to the courses.

Project Lead The Way high school programs "prepare today's students for the careers of tomorrow, by not only incorporating STEM skills into their learning but building students' collaboration, teamwork and communication skills so they can be ready for whatever path they take," officials wrote in a news release.

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