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Milwaukee, WI—The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s School of Education (SOE) in cooperation with the Wisconsin Character Education Partnership (WCEP) is recognizing a number of Wisconsin public and private schools for their innovative, successful initiatives in integrating character education into their culture and curriculum.

The recognition for these schools will take place at the Annual Wisconsin Character Education Conference to be held at Alverno College, 3400 S. 43<sup>rd</sup> St., June 19-20. Seventeen schools, from primary to high schools, will be recognized for their Promising Practices. Two will become State Schools of Character and one will receive an honorable mention in this category. (Schools are listed below.).

Among the projects schools and students were involved in:

- Learning about sustainability by creating a school garden, which incorporated students’ science knowledge. The students shared the produce with a nearby food pantry.
- Learning about service and country by helping soldiers and their families.
- Encouraging mother/daughter bonding to strengthen confidence in young girls.
- Older students mentoring younger children.
- Breakfasts for seniors.
- Playing a game using French vocabulary to teach students how to help each other in school.

Each school independently developed its own plans with input from children, staff and families.

WCEP ([www.wicharacter.org](http://www.wicharacter.org)) is a statewide coalition founded in 2006. One of the focuses is State Schools of Character (SSOC), which follows the guidelines of the national Character Education Partners (CEP). Since being introduced to Wisconsin, 84 schools from around the state have received Promising Practices recognition; seven have been declared State Schools of Character. Schools are urban and rural, public and private.

The School of Education has partnered with WCEP since 2012.

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“Character development needs to be integrated into all school activities and creates a positive school climate and culture,” says Richard R. Pieper Sr., WCEP Advisory Council member. “The end goal is to achieve an environment where everyone is respected and supported; everyone is responsible for themselves as well as the others in their community; and academic achievement is enriched, encouraged and possible in such positive surroundings.”

Schools being recognized in 2014 include:

#### **Promising Practices Designees**

- Capitol West Academy – “Strides for Soldiers Run/Walk”
- Catholic Central High School – “Peer Mentoring Program”
- Catholic Memorial High School – “Student Growth Plan”
- Catholic Memorial High School – “Activating Our Values – 360 Evaluations”
- Columbus Elementary School/Discovery Charter School – “Valentines for Veterans”
- Lake Bluff Elementary School – “Mindfulness”
- Lakeview Elementary School – “The Lakeview PRIDE Assembly”
- MacDowell Montessori School – “Lessons for Real World Work”
- Pilgrim Park Middle School – “STP Character Activities”
- Prairie Elementary School – “Student Corps”
- Salam School – “Mentorship Among Peers”
- Sandburg Elementary School – “Student Personal Character Goal Setting: Pathways”
- Waterloo High School – “Student-led Character Education Program”
- Westlawn Elementary School – “Girls Getaway”
- Westside Elementary School – “T.E.A.M. Westside/Character Coaching”
- Westside Elementary School – “Youth Frontiers Kindness Retreat”
- Woodlands School (Bluemound) – “From Me to We” – A Real Life Game of Character

#### **State Schools of Character Designees**

- Woodlands School (Bluemound)
- Capitol West Academy

#### **2014 Honorable Mention**

- Catholic Memorial High School

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*As Wisconsin's premier public urban institution, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee enjoys a growing national reputation for excellence in research, teaching and community engagement. On an operating budget of \$700 million, it educates nearly 30,000 students and is an engine of innovation for Southeastern Wisconsin. The 104-acre main campus and satellite sites are located in the economic and cultural heart of the state. Expansion projects now underway include creation of the UWM Harbor Campus, the 80-acre Innovation Campus in Wauwatosa, and the Kenwood Interdisciplinary Research Complex on the university's main campus. Recent program expansion includes the founding of the nation's only School of Freshwater Sciences and the Joseph J. Zilber School of Public Health, the only comprehensive, dedicated public health school in Wisconsin.*