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A PARK PACKED WITH THIS MUCH INSPIRATION MERITS ITS OWN GLOSSARY OF TERMS

You might say Alumni Park was more than a century in the making

The idea of a park-like promenade in this very same spot on the shore of Lake Mendota was included in the 1908 Campus Master Plan. The notion surfaced again during planning for the Wisconsin Alumni Association's 150th anniversary in 2011. This time around idea became reality, and Alumni Park opened in October, 2017.

Planning was meticulous. No stone was left unturned, so to speak, in determining who and what to feature. When all was said and done, the full story of UW-Madison was veritably packed into 1.3 acres.

What It Is

This is a place to be inspired by all that UW alumni have done to make the world a better place and to consider what's possible in our own lives. "I had no idea!" moments are virtually guaranteed. Descriptors like artful, quirky, fun, scenic, and playful also apply.

What It Is Not

This is not a stuffy, elitist, hushed, unapproachable space. While there are museum-quality exhibits and sculptures throughout, don't read "boring" into that. In fact, this is the antidote to that.

Let's Call It...

A story park overflowing with singular discoveries.

Above All Else

The most important message here is the **Wisconsin Idea**, reaffirming the commitment of UW and its alumni to make a positive change in the world.

Now for the Glossary

- **Alumni Way:** The park's central walkway marked by five 18-foot long panels, each representing one of the pillars of the Wisconsin Idea: Service, Discovery, Tradition, Leadership, and Progress. The limestone top of each panel feature big ideas, questions to ponder and bas reliefs of iconic alumni such as Charles Van Hise, the UW-Madison president who inaugurated the Wisconsin Idea, and Robert La Follette, architect of the Progressive Movement. The bottom sections are full-color porcelain panels featuring stories of more contemporary alumni, as well as UW-Madison traditions and innovations.
- **Progress Point:** Follow Alumni Way to the overlook known as Progress Point, with views of Lake Mendota, the campus shoreline, and Picnic Point. Inscribed in the railing overlooking Lake Mendota is a statement to inspire current and future alumni, "Make Your Mark on the World." Look down and you'll see inlaid in the pavers the historic Numen Lumen University seal which loosely translates to "our spirit is light" or "our spirit is knowledge." Stainless steel bearing lines emanating from the seal with inscriptions pointing to significant places and moments in UW history. Interesting note: These bearing lines were precisely mapped using Google Earth.
- **The Lantern:** This seven-foot high steel cone is lit from within to illuminate the laser-jet cut imagery chronicling ten decades of University culture, including inspirational words from alumni commencement speakers.
- **Badger Pride Wall:** This 80-foot long and six-foot high backlit wall of COR-TEN steel features Madison artist Nate Koehler's whimsical renditions of UW icons cut into the steel.
- **The Fountain:** This massive granite fountain is the centerpiece of the park's Welcome Plaza. Water cascades from a backlit full-color UW-Madison crest in the center over a series of gentle ripples carved in the stone, symbolizing the widening circles of alumni influence radiating from campus outward to the world.
- **Bucky Badger Sculpture:** A nearly eight-foot high bronze and glass sculpture of beloved UW-Madison mascot Bucky Badger created by renowned sculptor Douwe Blumberg with glass artist Dan Neil Barnes. Sure to be a favorite photo opp spot.

A Lot More to Take In

Exhibits are organized around broad academic areas – think of these as discovery gardens:

- Arts & Humanities
- Computers & Technology
- Ecology & Environment
- Education
- Enterprise & Entrepreneurship
- Exploration
- Food & Nutrition
- Government & Social Policy
- Health & Medicine
- Media & Journalism

Then, within those gardens are even more finds:

- 3D-printed sculptures about the size of a basketball, lit from within, serving as a marker for each academic area – think globe for ecology, milk carton for food.
- Bronze sculptures that pay tribute to alumni achievements accompanied by inspirational captions. These sculptures just beg interaction, most notably the full-size rendition of a classic Harley-Davidson motorcycle.
- Quotations from alumni cut into the steel walls cladding the landscape beds, backlit and illuminated at night.
- Etchings on bronze plaques in the stone benches illustrating alumni achievements. Tip: Make a commemorative rubbing.

Adjacent to Alumni Park

- **One Alumni Place**, a 3,000-square-foot space with rooftop deck serving as “home base” for visiting alumni and the information center for park visitors.
- **Goodspeed Family Pier**, open since 2013 and named in honor of alumna Mary Sue Goodspeed Shannon '81 and her family, featuring public dock space for 17 watercraft.

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