Distributed by UW News Service, February 24, 2025

Link to original story: <https://www.uwsuper.edu/about/news/new-library-space-fosters-community-professional-growth/>

**New library space fosters community, professional growth**

Story by UW-Superior

The [Jim Dan Hill Library](https://library.uwsuper.edu/library) at the University of Wisconsin-Superior is proud to announce the opening of a new Learning and Gathering Space designed to support faculty development and enhance collaboration. Thanks to the generosity of a dedicated donor, this space is already making an impact, having recently hosted over 100 instructors and staff for professional development sessions.

The new space is dedicated to long-time library supporter Barbara J. Schaal (1950-2024), an alumna of UW-Superior. Schaal devoted her career to teaching and championing learning and literacy in Wisconsin. She earned her bachelor’s degree from UW-Superior, her master’s degree from UW-Oshkosh and her Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska. Schaal served as the president of the Wisconsin Title I Association, and the International Literacy Association honored her with the Excellence in Literacy Education Award in 2008. The university is proud to honor Schaal’s legacy of care toward all learners and educators.

Director [Jamie White-Farnham](https://www.uwsuper.edu/about/faculty-staff-directory/white-farnham-jamie/?_rt=MXwxfHdoaXRlLWZhcm5oYW18MTczNzY1NTIyMw&_rt_nonce=dd92510015) expressed deep gratitude for the support that made this space possible:

“We are very thankful for the generosity of Dr. Schaal, whose contribution has expanded opportunities for faculty and staff to connect, learn, and grow together,” she said. “This space has quickly become a hub for collaboration and innovation, and we are excited about the possibilities it brings.”

The new facility offers a welcoming environment equipped with modern resources to support workshops, training sessions, and networking online, face-to-face, and in hybrid modalities. With its flexible design and accessible features, the space has already broadened access to professional development, enabling faculty and staff to engage more effectively with their peers. It also features a plaque memorializing Schaal.

“The response from our instructor and staff community has been positive,” White-Farnham said. “We’ve seen a promising level of engagement in just the first month, and it’s clear that this space is poised to foster a stronger sense of connection across the university.”

For more information on upcoming events and opportunities in the new space, [visit the library’s website](https://library.uwsuper.edu/aboutthelibrary/hours-and-events).