Distributed by UW News Service, January 13, 2025

Link to original story: <https://www.uwlax.edu/news/posts/a-taste-of-home/>

### **A taste of home**

### **UWL Dining initiative brings students comfort through home recipes**

Written by UW-La Crosse University Marketing & Communications

At UW-La Crosse’s [Whitney Center Dining Hall](https://www.uwlax.edu/university-centers/services/dining-services/dining-locations/), an initiative is offering students a comforting way to stay connected to home through cherished family recipes.

The program, Recipes from Home, launched in 2009 to help students fight homesickness by bringing a taste of their childhood to campus. Parents and guardians can submit favorite recipes, which are then prepared and served in the dining hall.

“When the semester gets long, a homemade dish from childhood can make all the difference,” says [Lizzy Haywood,](https://www.uwlax.edu/profile/lhaywood/) assistant director of business and dining operations.

Each June, families of incoming first-year students are invited to share a home-recipe through an online survey, part of UWL’s [START](https://www.uwlax.edu/admissions/start/) orientation program. From September to November, Whitney Dining Center features five to eight of these recipes each week.

“We notify the student and the person who submitted the recipe ahead of time,” Haywood explains. “The student gets to look forward to a familiar meal, and the parent knows they’ve created a special moment that day.”

The featured recipes range from entrées and soups to salads, casseroles and desserts. Each dish comes with a card displaying the student’s name, hometown, and the recipe’s ingredients.

Recipes served this fall include white chicken chili, cherry coffee cake, buffalo turkey burgers, tortellini soup and chicken bacon ranch tater tot casserole.

“It’s exciting to see students share the experience with friends and interact with the dining staff when their favorite dish appears on the menu,” Haywood adds.

Parents and students alike have embraced the program.

“I heard from my student that our family recipe was featured,” says Katie Bloom, a parent. “It’s such a great way to share recipes and help kids feel less homesick."

“Having a recipe from home being featured was exciting,” says first-year biology major Keira Bloom, daughter of Katie Bloom. “I was homesick at the time, and being able to have a meal that reminded me of home was special. I got lots of compliments from my friends and other people on my floor about both meals.”

The program has also extended its reach to international students, partnering with UWL’s [International Education and Engagement office.](https://www.uwlax.edu/international-education/)

“During [International Education Week](https://www.uwlax.edu/international-education/blog/international-education-week/), we featured 14 recipes provided by international students,” Haywood says. In addition to the name and hometown of the student being displayed on the card, it also featured education about the country and the dish.

Recipes from Home is more than a dining program. It’s a heartfelt way to connect UWL students with their families, offering a much-needed reminder of home when they need it most.