

**Profile of
Carissa Menke
Senior Financial Specialist, Cashier's Office
University of Wisconsin–Platteville
2024 Regents University Staff Excellence Award Individual Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- Has worked in UW-Platteville's Cashier's Office for more than seven years.
- Responsible for collections contributing to the financial health of the university; steps in to cover workloads created by vacancies.
- Provides support and guidance to students, their parents, and community members.
- Shares Perkins Loan expertise with peers across the Universities of Wisconsin.
- Admired by her peers for her leadership efforts and approach.
- Communicates during off times in the semester; improved communication with students about past dues using texting as a communication tool.
- Voluntarily represents the Cashier's Office at student events, including New Student Experience and International Student Orientation.
- Provides students with a plan of action to pay down debt and past due balances.
- Created the electronic registration agreement form; helped lead improved communication with students before Early Registration opens for the next semester and ensures students have a plan of action to pay off/down any past due balance; because of her work, many students have been able to register on time because they met with her and were able to take care of any delinquent balances by the time they were set to register.
- Worked to identify solutions for students who were not able to work during the COVID-19 pandemic; her direct efforts retained many of the most at-risk students.
- Efforts resulted in improved registration and subsequent retention.
- Simplified forms that students need to complete for the pre-registration campaign resulting in a much smoother process.
- UW-Platteville received information from Navigate/EAB on how successful the university's pre-registration campaign has been: "The data from the appointment campaign revealed an intriguing insight: students who attended their appointments with the Cashier's Office exhibited a persistence rate of 84.1% from Fall 2023 to Spring 2024, compared to the overall persistence rate of 65.7% among all students selected for outreach. Consequently, this resulted in an additional enrollment of 30 students for the Spring 2024 semester...These outcomes underscore the importance of initial interactions with staff."

In Carissa Menke's own words:

- "The relationship with our alumni is of the utmost importance, and I want to be a reference for them in any way I can be....Serving the students and helping them progress to their goal of graduation is something I truly enjoy."

In the words of colleagues:

- "...[S]he comes to work every day with a smile on her face and always willing to help out the students and staff."—*Nick Rauch, Director of Student Financials, UW-Platteville*
- "Carissa goes above and beyond every day for the students and staff that she interacts with. She is responsible for the collection and reporting of delinquent student accounts. In this role, Carissa has demonstrated that she cares deeply about students and their futures. The focus of Carissa's approach in working with students is to keep them engaged with the main goal of re-enrollment. Carissa treats all students with respect, dignity, and compassion."—*Jay McDermott, Associate Controller, UW-Platteville*