

The 1988 Wisconsin Idea in Resource Policy Award to Harold C. "Bud" Jordahl
(Presentation by UW-Extension Chancellor Patrick G. Boyle)
University Club
April 12, 1988

Thank you Tom. Good evening ladies and gentleman. It is a pleasure to be here with you this evening. More importantly, it's an honor to be able to make this presentation of the Center for Resource Policy's 1988 Wisconsin Idea Award to my friend and colleague Professor Harold "Bud" Jordahl.

Professor Jordahl's receipt of this Wisconsin Idea award comes as no surprise to those of you who know Bud and have worked with him. In fact, if we were asked to describe the Wisconsin Idea in terms of an individual who embodies it, I have no doubt that we would describe Bud Jordahl.

Rather than give you a lecture on the evolution and contribution of the Wisconsin Idea, let me give you a sense of the spirit behind it by quoting one of its most ardent proponents, UW President Charles Van Hise:

"University education must be so organized as to adapt itself readily to changing conditions," Van Hise wrote eight decades ago:

"It must be prepared at any time to take up whatever new work falling within the legitimate scope of University service is demanded by the people, and, on the other hand, must discontinue established activities if the time comes when a local or state agency has become better prepared to give the service."

As articulated by Van Hise, the foundation of the Wisconsin Idea would rest upon adaptability and service to the people. Eighty years later University professors like Bud Jordahl are remaining true to the spirit and to the commitment of the Wisconsin Idea. Thanks to Van Hise, Governor Robert LaFollette, and their predecessors, the University of Wisconsin had determined that its professors and administrators would be attentive to public concerns -- especially Wisconsin concerns -- and that the University, the State, and its citizens were to be partners in education and development.

Nowhere is this "attention" to public concerns and the strength of this partnership more evident than in the experience of Bud Jordahl. It began, innocently enough, nearly four decades ago when Bud was a district game manager with the Wisconsin Conservation Department in Viroqua and Black River Falls. There he prepared management plans for public and private lands, and, more importantly, collaborated with individuals like Taylor County Extension's Joe Tuss. Bud learned quickly from Tuss how the University and the State could work together to benefit the public. To this he added his own special instinct for county-state cooperation which helped to expand the positive legacy of the Wisconsin Idea. It's something that Bud has been practicing ever since those early years with Joe Tuss in Taylor county.

From Viroqua and Black River Falls Bud moved on to Spooner and Madison, with a short stop at Harvard University in between. As an area game biologist and later a federal aid coordinator, Bud began to incorporate his Wisconsin Idea game management practices into other types of land use, such as forestry, recreation, and private land management. During this time, Bud was working closely with Wisconsin Idea practitioners at the University like Ray Penn, Walter Rowlands, Jake Beuscher, Fred Clarenbach, and Eng Hembre. Like his collaboration with Joe Tuss, these State-University relationships were mutually beneficial. They further developed and enhanced the already strong connection between the University and state agencies. In the long run, the biggest beneficiaries turned out to be the citizens of Wisconsin.

Bud's Wisconsin Idea apprenticeship paid big dividends in the late 1950s and early 1960s as he joined the Gaylord Nelson administration and helped to weave an environmental vision into the the Wisconsin Idea. As recreation specialist, resource specialist, deputy director, and, on occasion, director of the newly-created Wisconsin Department of Resource Development, Bud actively participated in the development and implementation of the Wisconsin State Plan, thereby generating a new environmental agenda for Wisconsin.

To be sure, Gaylord Nelson did not need any prodding on environmental issues. But in Bud Jordahl, Nelson had found a real ally, an individual who practiced what others merely preached. During those exciting and innovative days, it seemed as if the State and the University were collaborating on just about every aspect of conservation, transportation, and economic development. In his own words, Nelson had set out "to incorporate University expertise in beefing up existing institutions, in designing new ones where they were badly needed, and in providing day-to-day knowledge regarding the tough problems we faced." The former governor later added, and I quote:

"It is evident that the Wisconsin Idea was important to me during my gubernatorial tenure, and when the Wisconsin Idea is implemented, benefits accrue to everyone. One benefit for the University is in the reverse flow whereby individuals with extensive experience in the public policy area like Bud Jordahl later join the faculty."

And join the faculty Bud did. But he never forgot his relationship with University faculty at the county level like Taylor County's Joe Tuss, his collaboration with the University, and his commitment to the Wisconsin Idea. Rather, he brought it into the classroom with him, igniting his students with the Wisconsin Idea spirit.

Time and again, Bud Jordahl has demonstrated his commitment to the Wisconsin Idea in deed as well as in word.

- o In August, 1967, President Lyndon Johnson nominated Bud as the alternate federal co-chair of the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission. Forging a federal-state partnership among the states of Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin, Bud brought the Wisconsin Idea into the national and international arenas;
- o In the early 1970s he served on the Governor's Environmental Task Force and the Governor's Land Resources Committee;

- o From 1972-1977 Bud was a member of the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board and was its chairman during 1974-75;
- o In 1974 he was a member of the United Nation's Advisory Panel to Yugoslavia;

And since 1969, Bud has been a professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, UW-Madison. But his classroom continues to be the entire state. He's been intimately involved in the creation of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, the designation of the St. Croix National Wild and Scenic River, and better public management of the Lower Wisconsin River. He's written articles, addressed Congress and the Legislature, presented papers, given speeches, and logged thousands of miles to insure that the people of Wisconsin have a sound environment, and, equally as important, know what they have to do in order to keep it that way.

If I sound like a Bud Jordahl fan, that's because I am. I'm proud to have been associated with Bud over the years, and I'm delighted that the Center for Resource Studies and Programs is presenting him with this award.

I want to close with two final thoughts. The first is that my remarks really haven't done justice to Professor Jordahl and his contributions. That's partly because the list of his's achievements is too darn long and it would take forever to recite!

The second is that if I could, I'd like to clone University professors like Bud Jordahl. We need more people like him who have an enduring commitment to the Wisconsin Idea because it's that type of unselfish dedication that is going to make Wisconsin a better place to live and work.

Bud, they might not remember you very well in McIntosh, Minnesota, but you've etched your name on the map of Wisconsin. And we're all the better for it.