



SL BROWN
FOUNDATION

FORMING PEOPLE. SHAPING IDEAS.
Celebrating a Decade of On-Campus Presence | 2015 - 2025



JOHN TERRILL
Executive Director
Stephen & Laurel Brown Foundation

WE ARE EXCITED...

to celebrate Upper House's 10th anniversary at the Stephen & Laurel Brown Foundation and your part in our incredible journey.

Our on-campus ministry started with Steve's early vision of creating a place where students, staff, faculty, and community members could wrestle with life's big spiritual questions. Steve and Laurel's shared Christian faith, love for the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and commitment to warm hospitality have shaped all our work, which now includes five distinct initiatives: Upper House Commons, Lumen Center, Upper House Fellows, New College Madison, and our Studio. In this celebratory brochure, we highlight these evolving initiatives and their potential reach.

Partnering with you, we seek to chart a new and expanded pathway for Christian formation at UW-Madison and other colleges and universities. We desire renewal in higher education in which all learn and serve to create a more virtuous world. Reflecting on the last ten years, I am most proud of the team God has led us to assemble.

From a staff of one to a team of thirty, we've developed a deep bench of competent, high-integrity leaders I am inspired to work alongside daily. You—our campus ministry, church, and community partners—add strength and resilience and point us regularly to God's limitless wisdom, grace, and goodness. As we mark this significant date, please know how grateful we are for you. From day one to day 3,650, this has been a collective effort. As Hebrews 10:24 urges us, in our next decade, let's continue to "spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Terrill".

CELEBRATING OUR BEGINNINGS



"This unique intersection around the arts is enhanced by a signature Midwestern ethos of hospitality."

MITALI PERKINS: author



On East Campus Mall in Madison, Wisconsin, Stephen and Laurel Brown transformed an abandoned food court into a nationally-recognized Christian study center, Upper House — 16,500 square feet of light, learning, and ministry. On prairie land south of the city, the Browns transformed a former legal office into a retreat center known as Dottie's Ranch. Both spaces are dedicated to develop Christian thought in ways that will shape the University of Wisconsin community and beyond.





ADVANCING IN PARTNERSHIP

Drawn by a vision to equip leaders and scholars to better engage the world at large and ministry at home, Upper House hosts cutting-edge events for the campus, church, and community.



BUILDING

STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Generous grants awarded by partner foundations who share our commitment to human and moral development seeded our engagement with the university and church. These collaborations have enlarged our local and national networks and supported new forums for dialogue, both locally and globally, at the intersection of Christianity and culture.



"A beautiful facility, warm people; everything is first class at Upper House."

NED BUSTARD:
Writer, printmaker and children's book illustrator





UPLIFTING

MINISTRY ALLIES



On campus, student ministries regard Upper House as a generous ally. Ministries large and small gather international students, undergraduate, and graduate students in our space. Churches use our facilities to serve their university-related audiences, and Blackhawk Church Downtown serves both students and local community members every Sunday as Upper House's Church-in-Residence.

NURTURING

AT THE NEXUS

For several reasons, different publics—the city, church, and academy—and their leaders often function in silos. Upper House brings these communities together to nurture lasting partnerships that advance the common good in practical ways. The Foundation's partnership with Awaken Dane, a Lilly Endowment Project, is one shining example.





"Being part of the Upper House Fellows Program has given me a better awareness of the relationship between my life as a Christian and my path to an academic profession. I now have a deeper understanding of how serving Jesus Christ is reflected through my career and vocation."

HELEN:
Graduate Student, Pharmacy



EXPANDING REACH

Upper House is a laboratory that seeks creative ways to advance the SL Brown Foundation's mission. Every new effort is the subject of prayer. We seek the best for all the staff, students, community members, and other guests touched by our work.

ELEVATING CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

With PhD-level staff and researchers, the SL Brown Foundation designed and won a grant from the John Templeton Foundation (JTF) to conduct original research concerning the University of Wisconsin's spiritual history and to advance new work at partner Christian study centers. The results of this research and outreach continue to bear fruit in our local setting as well as the larger movement of Christian study centers around the U.S.





PRACTICING HOSPITALITY

Every Foundation gathering is marked by hospitality. The heart of this warm welcome is a safe environment where we sponsor reflective, sometimes challenging, conversations along with some good food. We celebrate every opportunity to make spiritual, relational, and intellectual connections with all who enter our space.



SERVING STUDENTS

HOLISTICALLY

"...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

MATTHEW 14:16



Students are central to our vision. Thoughtful student programming and community-building strengthen students intellectually and spiritually, equipping them to engage the big ideas that arise at the nexus of culture, vocation, and theology. Our Foundation seeks to cultivate in every student a deeper awareness of God's care for them and, in turn, a greater grasp of the shaping power of God's gospel in the world.



PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Upper House is a place in motion. With thousands of students in and out of our doors each semester, a growing Fellows Program, and new classes on the drawing board, the SL Brown Foundation is a dynamic organization. While we believe our initiatives will herald a new era in mission with local, regional, and national influence, amid all of this innovation, some commitments never change: our dependence on prayer, our gratitude for co-laborers, and above all, our reliance on God's faithfulness.

THE MISSION

Leading Christian thought and formation to shape the University of Wisconsin community.

THE VISION

Renewed Christian presence in the pluralistic university where all are learning and serving to create a more virtuous world.

FOUNDATION
INITIATIVES

LUMEN
CENTER

NEW COLLEGE
MADISON

UPPER¹HOUSE
COMMONS

UPPER¹HOUSE
FELLOWS

STUDIO



Thank you for supporting our Christian presence on campus.
The Foundation's deepest desire is to serve the university and
church and to equip students of all ages through programming
and media that powerfully shape how we learn and serve.
Together, let's create a more virtuous world.

Here's to the next 10 years!

SL BROWN
FOUNDATION

365 East Campus Mall, Suite 200 | Madison, WI 53715
(608) 237-2929 | info@slbrownfoundation.org | slbf.org