



*L-R: Three UWS students with their hosts, St. Scholastica students Nathan Schacht and 2018-19 Student Body President Andrew Bailey.*

# HOSPITALITY IN ACTION

The College hosted about 100 students evacuated from the University of Wisconsin-Superior on April 26 and 27 in the wake of an explosion and fire at the Husky Energy Refinery near the UWS campus.

Because of toxic smoke in the area, much of the Superior, WI, community was evacuated, including UWS residence halls. St. Scholastica's leadership reached out to UWS officials right away to offer help. The local Red Cross activated St. Scholastica's campus as an emergency housing site for up to 800 students. St. Scholastica's leadership and emergency response team worked late into the evening to ensure everything ran smoothly.

All events and athletic practices in Burns Wellness Commons (BWC) were canceled. UWS students were bused in from Superior and arrived on campus to a warm welcome. They enjoyed a dinner in the Greenview Dining Room, where staff members had gone into overdrive to prepare extra food.

Elizabeth Maeshima, who runs an intensive English language program at UWS, came to St. Scholastica to help students get settled in. She said that most of the UWS group were international students with nowhere else to go.

St. Scholastica's well-organized response and welcoming spirit made the best of a bad situation, she said.

"People have been really helpful," Maeshima said. "Students are here to talk to them; Scholastica's been great."

Rooms in BWC were designated for the UWS students to store their backpacks and other personal belongings, to play board games, and to have quiet space.

At about 7 p.m., St. Scholastica staff members put out a call for volunteers willing to share their rooms with UWS guests. They received an overwhelming response.

"Students were arriving [to volunteer] within probably two minutes of that email going out," said Dory Kempf, director of Student Support Services, who helped organize St. Scholastica's response efforts. "To know that you had more hosts than needed is amazing."

St. Scholastica sophomore Mary Rohde, who lives with three other women in Scanlon Hall, took in three UWS students.

"I wouldn't want them to have to sleep on the gym floor, because I know I wouldn't want to do that," she said.

St. Scholastica sophomore Nathan Schacht, who lives in Kerst Hall, also took in three of the evacuees.

"It seemed like the right thing to do, you know? If I had to leave my place, I'd appreciate it. I mean, we're all people."

St. Scholastica staff worked overtime to organize the accommodations and ensure everyone had a comfortable place to sleep. Volunteers bought toiletries and linens at Walmart and Target. By 9:30 p.m., all the UWS students had been paired up with a St. Scholastica host or chosen another space — some preferred to sleep on Red Cross cots in the Somers Hall penthouse and suites.

For the evacuees, the caring shown by St. Scholastica's students was reassuring.

Sophomore Uzman Qaisar said word of the evacuations had