

September 13, 2021

A whole new hemisphere

UW-Superior basketball player makes the trek from New Zealand

Students just starting their college careers face countless changes, from meeting new people to learning how to get around campus. Some must even adjust to living in a time zone that's one or two hours different from home — or in Rachel Pike's case, 17 hours.

Pike, who will play basketball and major in biology this fall at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, was born in Burnsville, Minnesota, but moved with her family to New Zealand when she was just two years old.



"We moved here because my parents wanted my brothers and me to have a global experience from a young age," Pike said. She has dual citizenship in the United States and New Zealand, and grew up in Raumati Beach on the Tasman Sea, a suburb of Wellington on the country's north island. Her extended family members live around the country in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Wyoming and California, so prior to the pandemic she was able to visit the U.S. almost every year.

Hooked on basketball

Pike started playing basketball at about age ten. She was hooked, and became more and more serious about the sport as the years passed. She eventually attracted the attention of Lead Scholarships, a non-profit recruiting agency in New Zealand, and her athletic talents caught the eye of more than 65 schools. UW-Superior quickly rose to the top of her list.



"I chose UWS initially because of the comfort I felt from the connection I formed with [head coach] Zach Otto-Fisher, but also due to the UWS location being surrounded by nature and close to Minnesota, near the majority of my extended family members," Pike said. "I'm also a very hands-on learner, so the small class sizes along with the many course offerings really drew me in."

Scholarship lifts financial burden

In addition to being recruited for the basketball team, Pike also won the prestigious [Swenson Scholarship](#). It's awarded annually to ten incoming freshmen of academic merit and financial need who will study chemistry, biology, math or computer science. As an international student with added travel expenses, the scholarship lifted a heavy weight from her shoulders.

"Receiving the Swenson Scholarship brings so much relief to my family and myself," Pike said. "Words cannot describe the gratitude I have for this scholarship!"

Pike is looking forward to continuing to play the sport she loves at a higher intensity college level. She's also excited about experiencing a new culture, exploring Wisconsin's outdoor opportunities and being closer to much of her extended family. And coming from a region that doesn't get snow except in the mountains, she's eagerly anticipating her first northern Wisconsin winter.

"I'm excited to experience living in the snow and experiencing a real 'White Christmas,' as New Zealand's Christmas is in summer!" she said.

Departments/Offices

[Natural Sciences Department](#)
[UW-Superior Foundation](#)

Majors/Minors

[Biology](#)

Categories

[Academic](#)

The University of Wisconsin-Superior [biology program](#) offers a small, supportive environment with access to invest opportunities in the classroom, field lab that are often only found at larger research institutions. Students have hands-on research opportunities beginning their first year, and develop meaningful connections with faculty and fellow students. The following are focus areas available: cell/molecular biology, aquatic biology, fisheries and plant sciences, and pre-med/health.

A world of opportunities

When she's not exploring her new home or practicing her free throws, Pike will be spending her time [studying biology](#). She has yet to narrow down her career focus, but realizes that an academic grounding in biology will open up a wide variety of possibilities.

"I would like to either work with plants to find new medications or sources of healing; work with plants to help our climate crisis; or be a rehab therapist for those who have spinal/brain or sports-related injuries," Pike said.

She's also open to exploring where her basketball career might take her.

"I'm inspired by my coach Jacinta Beckley, who played professionally in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand," Pike said. "I think basketball would be a great pathway to go down while I'm in the body I'm in, then go down a new pathway in the medical field later on."


Wherever Pike's journey takes her next, Yellowjackets basketball fans will have [plenty of chances](#) to cheer her on in the meantime.

RELATED NEWS



St. Louis River Summit links climate, landscape and community

Feb 28, 2017 in [Events](#), [Research](#)

 Brittany Laehn awarded scholarship to study in Costa Rica

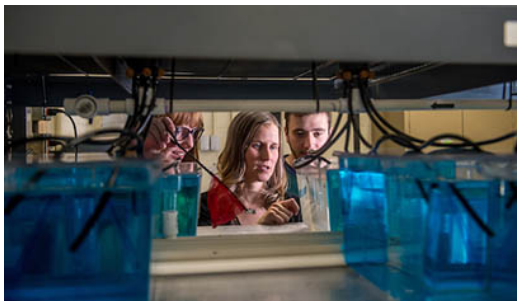
Brittany Laehn awarded scholarship to study in Costa Rica

May 18, 2017 in [Awards and Recognition](#)



UW-Superior named among Top Public Sch U.S. News

Sep 13, 2017 in [Academic](#)



Cancer research project provides students with hands-on experience

Feb 26, 2018 in [Academic](#), [Research](#)



The science of success

Apr 18, 2018 in [Community Involvement](#), [Events](#), [Research](#)



UW-Superior to hold commencement May Siinto S. Wessman Arena

May 8, 2018 in [Awards and Recognition](#)

GET UW-SUPERIOR NEWS IN YOUR INBOX

You can unsubscribe at anytime

OTHER UW-SUPERIOR NEWS



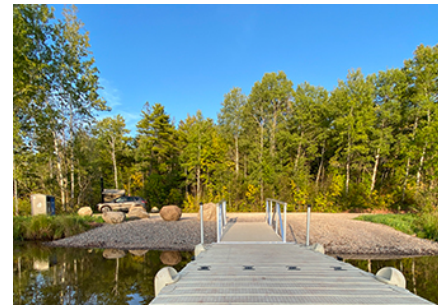
U.S. News & World Report names UW-Superior among best colleges

Sep 13, 2021 in [Awards and Recognition](#), [Press Release](#)



Speaker to discuss issues of data, privacy

Sep 7, 2021 in [Community Involvement](#), [Events](#), [Press Release](#)



New boat launch celebrated at Pokegama F ribbon cutting in the Superior Municipal Fo

Sep 13, 2021 in [Community Involvement](#), [Events](#), [Pr Release](#)



Pruitt Center for Mindfulness & Well-Being virtual fall speaker series begins September 21

Sep 8, 2021 in [Community Involvement](#), [Events](#), [Press Release](#)



Chancellor Wachter appointed to Division III Presidents/Chancellors Advisory Group

Aug 2, 2021 in [Awards and Recognition](#), [Press Release](#)



UW-Superior and Michigan Tech host 11th Intermodal Summer Youth Program

Aug 19, 2021 in [Events](#)

SEARCH AND FILTER NEWS

Enter Keywords...

Categories +

Audience

SUBMIT

IN THE MEDIA

[Green Infrastructure tour on Barker's Island](#) ↗
Sep 14, 2021 - wdio.com

[Tour celebrates green infrastructure growth on Barker's Island](#) ↗
Sep 14, 2021 - kbjr6.com

[Niya Wilson among three Yellowjackets to earn UMAC weekly honors](#) ↗
Sep 13, 2021 - wdio.com

[Superior Fire, Police remember lives lost, first responders' ultimate sacrifice on 9/11](#) ↗
Sep 12, 2021 - fox21online.com

[+ MORE NEWS FROM THE MEDIA](#)

AROUND CAMPUS

[Right at home](#)
September 13, 2021

[Giving back along the way](#)
September 13, 2021


[A whole new hemisphere](#)
September 13, 2021


[UW-Superior to host Bayside Sounds Concert featuring GB Leighton](#)
August 31, 2021

[Music student and alumni place in top five at Old-Time Fiddle Contest](#)
August 19, 2021


[+ MORE NEWS](#)

FOR JOURNALISTS

 [Press Releases](#)

 [Maps and Directions](#)

 [Fact Book](#)

 [Campus Photos](#) ↗

 [Contact](#)