



JILL BILLINGS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 15, 2024

Contact: Rep. Jill Billings
608-266-5780

Rep. Billings Honors Hometown Heroes

Madison-Today, Representative Billings honored longtime La Crosse theater instructors Joe Anderson and Mary Leonard Anderson with Assembly Hometown Hero awards. Representative Billings had nominated Joe and Mary for this award.

“I have long believed that teachers are heroes. I was thrilled to welcome Joe Anderson and Mary Leonard Anderson to the Assembly Chamber in the State Capitol to present them with the Hometown Hero Award. Their contributions to UWL and our entire community have been truly remarkable. My life and the lives of our students and many of my neighbors in the 95th district have been enriched by their work and their passion for the performing arts,” said Rep. Billings.

In her speech, Mary said, “Throughout my 32 year career I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power that theater has had on students, audiences, and community. It is so much more than entertainment. I have seen people of all ages find their voices and believe in themselves.”

“It is my long-held belief that many students are just waiting for someone to tell them, ‘You know, you’re really good at this. You could do this in the world if you wanted to.’ They’re simply looking for permission to follow their dreams and passions. I wanted to be a person who could give them that permission,” said Joe.

Joe and Mary delivered inspiring and thought-provoking remarks at the Assembly and hopefully their words have reminded members of the Assembly of the importance of the arts in our communities.

