

History of the UWSA Bike Lab:

The sense of energy and community that was to grow into what would become The UWSA Bike Lab started to build and coalesce around a series of cycling workshops and UWSA student lead programming initiatives over 2007 & 2008. At this time, the idea of the establishment of permanent, easily accessible on-campus maintenance pitstops (with basic tools & supplies needed for quick repairs & adjustments) was suggested by a visiting cycling workshop facilitator, this fueled greater interest and discussion around possible infrastructure and supports for the accelerating cycling culture on campus.

The next key marker in the project's development, and definite flashpoint moment where the idea of The Bike lab really formed and started to gather spirit and momentum toward what would become the program and facility as it is today occurred when UWSA Outreach and Special Projects Coordinator had a discussion with The UW's Campus Sustainability Office Director where the CSO Director spoke of a feasibility study he had worked on that looked at the possibility of developing a series of cycling focused hubs, offering safe weather protected storage and other cycling supportive amenities to be build and housed within re-purposed shipping containers. It was then proposed that one of these hubs might possibly be a UWSA driven cycling education & advocacy programming space: The UWSA Bike Lab. More momentum and community spirit tower the project gathered as the student lead winter cycling team: The Ice Riders formed in the Winter of 2009. Around this time students also successfully lead a campaign to secure a programming levy to ensure program would have sufficient operating funds. After a couple more years of great passion, resiliency and resourcefulness from all involved The UWSA Bike Lab opened during a full day of events in celebration on Oct 21st, 2011.

The value and contribution from the following campus partners in the realization of this project cannot be overstated: The UW Campus Sustainability Office (Mark Burch and Alana Lajoie-O'malley, true sparks of vision and steady inspirational guidance), The President's Office, UW's Dept of Strategic initiatives and UW Physical Plant, Hugh Swan specifically. Equally essential was the generous warmth, inspiration and encouragement always present from Peter Sampson Architecture Studio.

Robin Bryan who worked tirelessly for a few years as the Bike Lab's primary student voice and visionary, and then first coordinator is deeply acknowledged and loved for everything he gave to this project, a true hero.

Anders Swanson and Matt Gemmel should also be singled out and thanked personally for their always generous guidance and support, also two true heroes to this project.

Community partners such as Natural Cycle, The Bike Dump, The WRENCH, The Oriels Bike Cage, Spence Neighborhood Association, Mountain Equipment Co-Op must also be thanked and acknowledged for their support and partnership.

Speaking further of heroes, the amazing, dreaming, people that really insisted that The Bike Lab would take life and energized its path to existence, were, and are, the students that believed in and animated the project along with Board and Executive of The UWSA who heard their passion and shared their dream.

*Ted Turner, June 2012
UWSA Outreach & Special Projects Coordinator*