

## About Wisconsin Grants

*The twenty-four private, or independent, nonprofit colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without direct taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 57,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need financial help to attend the college of their choice.*

*The Wisconsin Tuition Grant, now known as Wisconsin Grants, was enacted in 1965 to help qualified Wisconsin citizens to succeed. Each month Wisconsin Achievers brings you success stories of Wisconsinites at WAICU member campuses for whom Wisconsin Grants have made a significant difference.*

*Wisconsin Achievers is published monthly by the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU), 122 W. Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53703-2723; 608-256-7761; mail@waicu.org.*

Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.  
President & CEO  
Rebecca Larson  
Senior VP for Advocacy  
Cassandra Krause  
Director of  
Communications and  
Marketing, Editor

## MSOE student driven for success

A passion for cars and motorcycles is what led Joseph Schwall of Salem, Wisconsin to pursue a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. Small class sizes and high job placement rates are what helped him choose to do it at the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE).

Joseph was a student at Westosha Central High School when he was first introduced to engineering through drafting and metal working classes. He wanted to learn more, so he participated in an MSOE summer program geared toward high school students interested in engineering. "Besides learning about different majors, I got to see what it would be like to attend MSOE," Joseph said.

When it was time to choose a college, Joseph toured his top schools, conducted research, and did the math. Scholarship, financial aid, and grant opportunities were important considerations. "Grants and financial aid are the only way I could have afforded going to college," he said.

Joseph came to MSOE with the values of hard work and determination that he had learned at home. "My father is the most determined, hardworking individual I have ever met," Joseph said. "He works seven days a week, 12-16 hours each day, so he can provide for his family. Seeing my father work so hard has had a huge impact on my life and made me aspire to be as hardworking and determined as he is."

Now a senior, those qualities will be more important than ever as Joseph tackles his capstone project. Joseph is a member of MSOE's Formula Hybrid Competition team—



Joseph Schwall

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## Walk softly and carry a phone

Northland College senior Mikaela Fischer is a quiet, self-possessed student with a strong voice. She's one of those students who is able to take in information, digest it, devise a plan, and execute it.

Mikaela majors in biology and minors in art. She works two jobs—at a bakery and as a social media assistant in the Office of Marketing Communication at Northland College. And she is the captain of the women's cross country team. Mikaela can't pinpoint how or why she fell in love with biology. "I've always been an outdoorsy kid—camping and hiking," she said. Plus, her mom is a nurse. "Biology doesn't gross me out," she laughed.

Mikaela discovered Northland College by chance during a drive north from her hometown of Boyceville, Wisconsin, near Eau Claire. She was on her way to tour a college in Michigan but saw a sign for Northland College, a small liberal arts college near the shore of Lake Superior. She asked her mom to stop, and they toured campus. She was hooked on the college and the location.

Gift aid, including the Wisconsin Grant, covered half of her tuition, making college possible. "I wouldn't have gone here without financial aid," she said. "Scholarships and grants allowed me to go to the place I chose."

She expected to study biology; she didn't expect to study art. But she received a smaller grant requiring she take art classes. She registered for black and white photography and learned to print film in a dark room. "I'm not a people photographer, but I love nature and animals—and the chemistry of printing was an added benefit."



Mikaela Fischer

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**Joseph Schwall** continued from page 1

a group of students in MSOE's Society for Automotive Engineers (SAE) organization who collaboratively design and build a formula-style electric or plug-in hybrid racecar and compete in a series of international events. This educational competition emphasizes drivetrain innovation and fuel efficiency in a high-performance application.

"I am currently working on designing the hybrid control strategy," Joseph said. "The goal is to find the optimal way to run the car to provide the horsepower while also providing the most efficient solution for dynamic events."

While his participation on the Formula Hybrid team may be the pinnacle of his MSOE education, it is only one of many ways Joseph has challenged himself academically. Joseph studied systemic engineering design in Germany during his junior year, through a study abroad program. He will receive both a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from MSOE and the Diplom-Ingenieur from the Lübeck University of Applied Sciences in Lübeck, Germany. Joseph is also an active member of MSOE's InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

Joseph has prepared himself for life after graduation with two summer engineering internships at Rockwell Automation, where he was able to apply what he learned at MSOE in a real-world setting. After graduation, Joseph hopes to obtain either a test engineering or component design position at an automotive or transportation company.

"I am so fortunate to have received scholarships and financial aid like the Wisconsin Grant," Joseph said, "I was able to focus on my studies."

**Mikaela Fischer** continued from page 1

That photography class led her to an internship that further cemented her love for biology and her affinity for the arts. She interned as a photographer at the Minnesota Zoo in the summer of 2015.

She submitted internship photos to a Northland College Instagram campaign asking students about their summer experiences and caught the eye of Ms. Julie Buckles, director of communications.

Mikaela was hired as a social media assistant in September 2015. As social media assistant, she photographs, creates campaigns on Instagram, posts to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, designs prizes for her campaigns, and dabbles in videography. In her biggest project so far, she initiated, planned, directed, edited, and posted a "welcome back to campus" video starring College President Michael Miller.

"Mikaela is the full package, creative, detailed, organized, smart, and reliable," Buckles said. "She has a vision and the confidence to see it through."

Her senior capstone project—a requirement for graduation—is quintessential science meets art. She's cultivating bacteria, isolating the different colors, and then painting them on agar. She will then take those plates and take photographs of them.

After graduation, she's not so sure. "I love bacteria. If I go to graduate school, it will be for microbiology," she said. "Maybe I'll go back and work at the zoo—whatever I do will incorporate biology."

**FACT OF THE MONTH**

Over 60 percent of undergraduates at WAICU-member institutions are from Wisconsin, and about 1/3 of those receive support for their education from the Wisconsin Grant.

*Source: State of Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB), 2014-15*

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*Wisconsin's Private, Nonprofit Colleges and Universities*

Alverno College *Milwaukee*  
 Bellin College *Green Bay*  
 Beloit College *Beloit*  
 Cardinal Stritch University *Milwaukee*  
 Carroll University *Waukesha*  
 Carthage College *Kenosha*  
 Columbia College of Nursing *Milwaukee*  
 Concordia University Wisconsin *Mequon*

Edgewood College *Madison*  
 Lakeland University *Sheboygan*  
 Lawrence University *Appleton*  
 Marian University *Fond du Lac*  
 Marquette University *Milwaukee*  
 Medical College of Wisconsin *Milwaukee*  
 Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design *Milwaukee*  
 Milwaukee School of Engineering *Milwaukee*

Mount Mary University *Milwaukee*  
 Neshotah House *Neshotah*  
 Northland College *Ashland*  
 Ripon College *Ripon*  
 St. Norbert College *De Pere*  
 Silver Lake College *Manitowoc*  
 Viterbo University *La Crosse*  
 Wisconsin Lutheran College *Milwaukee*