

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 58,000 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.

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Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Rebecca Larson
Senior VP for Advocacy

Cassandra Krause
Director of Communications and Marketing, Editor

First-generation student gains confidence at Alverno College

Aneeda Mehar always knew she wanted to be a medical doctor, but the number of obstacles she would need to overcome to achieve her dream was seemingly too great.

Aneeda and her family moved to the United States from Pakistan when she was in fourth grade. Her uncle was living in Milwaukee, and her family decided to move there for better work and educational opportunities. Growing up, Aneeda watched her two older siblings attend college, but eventually drop out. And when it came time for her to think about attending college herself, she wasn't sure how she was going to pay for it. She was determined, however, to pursue her goal.

"I knew that to be in the medical field, I needed to go to college," she said. Aneeda said she was drawn to Alverno College because of its unique curriculum and small class sizes. After applying, she realized that she could get the financial help she needed. The Wisconsin Grant, along with financial support from Alverno, put her college degree within reach.

"If it wasn't for financial aid, it would be hard for me to attend college, get the education I need, and make my dreams come true," said Aneeda, who is slated

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Aneeda Mehar

Accounting student faces loss, finds support at Concordia

As an accounting major and a self-proclaimed lover of all things organizational, Concordia University Wisconsin senior Nate Hasenstein knows down to the cent how much he has in his bank account. He makes his bed every morning (or else he can't concentrate in class), and he is not ashamed to say he can sometimes be overly systematic.

Even Nate could not count on his life going the way he had planned, however.

During his junior year of high school, Nate's mom passed away from cancer, forcing him to make a pivotal life decision without one of his greatest influencers on hand to help guide him through the college search process.

Initially, Nate chose to go to a school in Michigan that specialized in professional golf management, but less than a week in, he knew the school wasn't a good fit. So he changed direction and enrolled at Concordia.

Financial aid made it possible for Nate to attend Concordia, a university his mom had encouraged him to consider before she passed away.

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Nate Hasenstein

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to graduate in December with a Bachelor of Science in Biology degree. She hopes to attend either the Medical College of Wisconsin or the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison after graduation. She is driven by her experiences working with children and plans to pursue a career as a pediatrician.

Alverno also has helped her become more confident about her career goals and as an individual. "I love the environment at Alverno. It's all about strong women and empowering women. When I started at Alverno, I was quiet, but here I feel comfortable and can easily ask questions," said Aneeda.

Her work as a junior counselor in the Admissions Office and her involvement with Alverno College Girls' Academy of Science & Mathematics, an after-school program designed to encourage first-generation minority high school girls to pursue college degrees in the sciences, also has helped her confidence and has affirmed her dream of becoming a doctor. She is also gaining experience in the medical field while giving back to the community through her volunteer work at Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, where she works in the nursery.

"When I graduate in December, I will be the first one in my family to graduate from college," Aneeda said.

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"I knew I needed to be at Concordia because of the faith base," Nate explains. "I saw people come out of the university a better person, ready to take on the world, and set on the right paths with the right people."

At Concordia, Nate met Zoey, the university's on-campus comfort dog with whom Nate quickly developed a special bond. While it was initially difficult for Nate to open up about what he had been through, Zoey helped him through the healing process and even opened up doors to being a confidant for others who were struggling.

Four years into his time at CUW, the connection Nate shares with Zoey has allowed him to step into an unexpected role of comforting others. Nate now regularly takes Zoey to Columbia St. Mary's hospital to work with their behavioral health patients.

"There's a spirituality to working with Zoey," Nate explains. "Whenever you bring Zoey into the group, the patients start petting her and then opening up or crying. Some of them are getting out of bed for the first time in weeks."

As it turns out, the unanticipated change of direction from a university in Michigan to Concordia has been what Nate needed all along, even if it wasn't part of the accounting student's original plan.

"As an accounting major, I'm very conscious about the cost that's involved with my decision to attend Concordia," Nate says. "I'm so thankful though that financial aid has made it possible for me to attend here. This time around, it was the perfect fit."

FACT OF THE MONTH

For the ninth year in a row, the average out-of-pocket tuition at WAICU-member colleges and universities is \$5,500 or less.

Source: IPEDS, 2016

*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 *Plymouth*
 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*