

# Wisconsin Achievers

Vol. 16, No. 5

December 2015

## About Wisconsin Grants

The twenty-four private, or independent, nonprofit colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating nearly 60,000 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. Fully one-third of the low-income students who apply for the Wisconsin Grants are turned away every year for lack of funds. 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.

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## Northland student channels love of outdoors into college focus

Growing up in Minocqua, Kert Wuestenhagen embraced the full array of year round outdoor activities that are so prominent in this Northwoods community.

Kert first heard about Northland College at his high school's college fair and realized that Northland's environmental focus provided the perfect chance to combine his love of outdoor recreation with a degree in the natural sciences.

Kert's family situation meant no financial support for college, motivating him to strive for excellence in

his high school academic performance. Kert's efforts paid off, with a grade point average that was the tenth highest that year at Lakeland Union High School. In



Northland senior Kert Wuestenhagen enjoys time outdoors.

recognition of his efforts, Kert was awarded the most local scholarships of any area

high school senior in 2012. Support from the Wisconsin Grant filled the critical gap that made Kert's dreams of a college education possible.

"Without all the scholarships and other financial help I have received throughout my undergraduate years, I would not be where I am today," Kert says, explaining that he has avoided possible stress from juggling an excessive workload and his studies by finding scholarships and grants.

Now a senior, Kert has taken advantage of the countless opportunities that have

continued on page 2

## International business major builds big dreams

Kalimah Al-Mujaahid chose Alverno after her father encouraged her to visit. He had worked with a lot of Alverno alumnae, and they all stood out as confident, independent leaders. Kalimah knew she wanted a community that would fuel her independent spirit, and she found that at Alverno. Beyond that, she found a community unlike any other, where women work together to collaborate and support each other.

Now, she's a sophomore majoring in International Business, minoring in Global Studies & International

Affairs and Sociology. With a passion for travel and learning about other cultures, she's planning—with Alverno's guidance—to study abroad, somewhere in Europe or East Asia.

As a recipient of the Wisconsin Grant, Kalimah has been able to pursue opportunities she otherwise would have had to forego. Alverno's broad array of course offerings have expanded Kalimah's vision for her major, which has been

enriched through all of the opportunities for on-campus involvement. This year, she's been able to benefit from the



Kalimah leads a campus tour for a group of prospective students and their families.

residential experience and move onto campus rather than commuting, as she did during her freshman year.

continued on page 2

## Kert Wuestenhagen

continued from page 1

come his way. Not only did Northland College connect him with job experience and internships through the Wisconsin DNR and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, but it also provided a “small school, small town culture” that appealed to him. Northland’s strong connections with Ashland and the greater Lake Superior community provided the ideal learning context for understanding the role of the environment and natural resources.

Kert has honed his professional skills as equipment coordinator with the Northland College Outdoor Orientation, a program for incoming freshmen, and the Outpost—a service that supplies outdoor gear to campus. “The experiences, memories, friends, teachings, and places I have traveled as part of the Orientation program and the Outpost have greatly

contributed to my fondest memories,” he said. A passionately dedicated soccer player, Kert was encouraged to join the Northland College men’s soccer team his freshman year. Kert has continued with the team into his senior year and was elected this past year to be team co-captain. Having “played soccer ever since [he] could run,” Kert looks back on his collegiate soccer career as an opportunity to learn leadership skills. He is “grateful for the experience of taking on a leadership role with such a great group of friends.”

After graduation, Kert intends on continuing work with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, hoping to focus on habitat restoration, genetic variation, and population management. “Without a doubt, Northland College was the right choice for me,” he said.

## Kalimah Al-Mujaahid

continued from page 1

Kalimah knows that she wouldn’t be able to do many of the things that have been so valuable in her education, were it not for the assistance from the Wisconsin Grant and support from Alverno.

“People here are always smiling and supportive of each other. The community is really strong,” Kalimah explains. The close-knit feel of Alverno has helped Kalimah dive into school and discover what area of study excites her most. She’s also found success with Alverno’s hands-on learning style and emphasis on collaborative, group learning. “Learning here doesn’t just happen with a textbook – it’s with the people around you,” Kalimah says. “We connect our learning with the perspectives of our classmates.”

With a 10:1 student to faculty ratio, Alverno students make lasting connections with their professors. “It’s like having extra family members and friends,” Kalimah says. “They’re so easy to approach and talk to.” Plus, Alverno professors get to know their students and their interests, which keeps the students engaged in the community on a personal level. For example, one of Kalimah’s professors knew she was interested in dance and connected her with a choreographer who could guide Kalimah’s interests. As Kalimah says, “It’s not just about this class, or academics...but about the whole person.”

Outside of classes, Kalimah works as a student ambassador in Admissions, serves

as a peer tutor, and is an active member of the Student Activities Board. Her on-campus involvement has helped expand her perspectives, especially from meeting the unique performing artists brought in by the Student Activities Board. “I love learning from other professionals, and connecting their journeys to mine,” Kalimah says.

Kalimah sees herself traveling the world someday, ultimately working in international affairs dealing with imports and exports. With the skills, confidence, and experience she’s building at Alverno – there’s no doubt she’ll go on to realize her dream.

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

### Wisconsin's Private Nonprofit Colleges and Universities

Edgewood College Madison  
Lakeland College 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  
Nashotah House Nashotah  
Northland College Ashland  
Ripon College Ripon  
St. Norbert College De Pere  
Silver Lake College Manitowoc  
Viterbo University La Crosse  
Wisconsin Lutheran College Milwaukee

### FACT OF THE MONTH

**WAICU is a state leader in healthcare education. WAICU colleges and universities produce 100% of dentistry graduates, 58% of medical doctors, 52% of physician assistants, and 53% of nurses.**

**WAICU 2016 Guide to Admission & Financial Aid**