

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 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. 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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Wisconsin Grant enables Marian University student to get involved

For Alexis Nelson '17, finding a college that was close to home and offered a variety of ways to get involved was what persuaded her to attend Marian University.



Alexis Nelson is active on campus while studying biology and environmental science.

"Marian was the perfect choice," said Alexis, a biology major and environmental science minor from Amherst. "When I toured Marian, I really enjoyed the small campus size and the variety of opportunities, both in and outside of the classroom. I knew I could succeed here."

Alexis' goal for her college experience was not only to succeed in her academics, but also to get involved on campus through clubs and organizations. Alexis currently serves as a student mentor, president of the Science and Math Association, and is a member

of the honors program and Alpha Xi Delta sorority. She also serves as a tutor in the Writing Center and is a work study student in the Office of Financial Aid and the Center for Academic Support and Excellence.

"I wanted to make the most of my college experience and knew that Marian was the place to do that," said Alexis. "It's really easy to get involved on campus and engage with students as well as the faculty and staff. It's been great to meet new people and expand my worldview. I wouldn't be able to do so much

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Lakeland College graduate appreciates the journey of education

Austin Anderson has always felt a deep connection to passenger trains. "I consider myself an old-fashioned person," says the Lakeland College graduating senior. "I think half the fun of getting somewhere should be in the journey itself, but we've kind of lost that concept with modern travel."



Austin Anderson's interest in passenger trains helped launch his writing career.

A New Holstein native, Austin majored in writing at Lakeland. Ever since he arrived, he has expressed a strong desire to craft a magazine feature article about passenger trains. Now he has achieved that goal.

Austin's article, "A Farewell Tribute to Soo Line 2719," recently appeared in "The Soo," a quarterly magazine published by the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society. Austin has a unique connection to Soo Line 2719.

"I was there when Soo Line 2719 returned to active status in 1998, and I visited the engine on its final day of operation in 2013," says Austin of the train, which was built more than 90 years ago. "I

thought it fitting that I write about Soo Line 2719."

On the day after this past Christmas, Austin received a copy of the magazine in the mail, along with a note

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without the financial assistance I've received here – especially through the Wisconsin Grant.”

Without financial assistance, many students aren't able to make the investment in a college education.

“Working in the Office of Financial Aid, you learn so much about the financial aid process and the challenges that many students – like me – face, both in Wisconsin and across the nation,” said Alexis. “There are a variety of financial resources out there, and I really enjoy working to help others understand just how important financial aid and scholarships are to students.”

“I chose Marian University because I knew about the personal support and financial assistance that was available,” added Alexis. “Marian supports each and every student, and I've never felt like 'just a

number,' whether I'm asking a question about financial aid or out and about on campus. That's why I've been able to take on so many roles here, and embrace my college experience.”

Alexis' passion lies in working with animals, and she is currently applying to summer research internships to expand her classroom knowledge and assist her in her goals following graduation.

“I would love to work with animals, either in a rehabilitation center or in a wildlife management position,” said Alexis. “My Marian experience has definitely opened my eyes to a variety of possibilities and has given me the skills to succeed. As I get closer to graduation, I can reflect on how Marian has played an integral role in achieving my goals, and has helped me to become the person I am today.”

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thanking him for his contribution. His story, which he had sent in more than a year before it was published, is now proudly framed.

“It feels awesome,” Austin says of being published. “The editors at the magazine changed my introduction a little bit, but other than that, it appears just the way I wrote it. That's a really nice feeling.”

Austin attended Lakeland thanks to a financial package that included a Wisconsin Grant. He's written for The Mirror, the college's student media outlet, and has demonstrated an improvement in his skills. “Being at Lakeland has helped me become a better writer,” Austin says.

“My editing skills have also improved thanks to advanced composition and being with The Mirror.”

As Austin's time at Lakeland comes to an end, he reflects fondly on his collegiate experience. Not only did he hone his craft in the writing program – he enjoyed non-fiction the best – he also enjoyed singing in the Lakeland choir for four years.

“It was a phenomenal experience,” he says of his time with in the choir. “I got to learn a variety of new songs and new languages. I'll really miss it.”

Austin's first experience with Lakeland was in middle school, when he attended

summer music camp. Right then, he thought, Lakeland would be a great place to attend. “I'm glad I came here, and I really do love the friendly staff and faculty,” he said. “Everyone is always willing to help me. The classes have perfectly suited my needs. I took my non-fiction and fiction classes, as well as poetry and the other writing classes. But I also enjoyed art, music and the many other classes that fit the bigger cultural picture.”

Austin recently graduated in May and is now working as a correspondent for Tri-County Publications, based in Kiel. He also says of landing his first professional job: half the fun of getting there was in the journey itself.

FACT OF THE MONTH

In the 2014-15 academic year, WAICU colleges and universities gave over \$252 million in institutional student financial aid to undergraduate students from Wisconsin. Since 2010-11, that is an increase of 42 percent.

Source: WI Higher Educational Aids Board - Wisconsin State Student Financial Aid Data for 2010-11 and for 2014-15

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 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*

