

About the WTG

The twenty-three private, or independent, nonprofit colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 60,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need financial help to attend the college of their choice.

The State of Wisconsin created the Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) in 1965 to help qualified Wisconsin citizens to succeed. Fully one-third of the low-income students who apply for the WTG are turned away every year for lack of funds. Each month WTG Achievers brings you success stories of Wisconsinites for whom the WTG has made a significant difference.

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Aspiring engineer keeps busy in and out of the classroom

"Ripon College may be considered a small school in a small town, but it is really easy to get involved in anything," says Cameron Plantz. "Everything that I have gotten involved in at Ripon has given me opportunities to build leadership skills and meet a diverse community of students."

To say Cameron is an involved student outside of the classroom would be



Cameron Plantz (left), originally from Berlin, WI, enjoys out-of-classroom experiences available in Ripon.

an understatement. For two years, Cameron was a goalkeeper on the men's soccer team. Now, as he

prepares to enter his junior year at Ripon, he spends his time as the vice president of the Society of Physics Students, an active brother of Sigma Chi fraternity, a captain of the Ripon lacrosse team, and a frequent intramural sports participant.

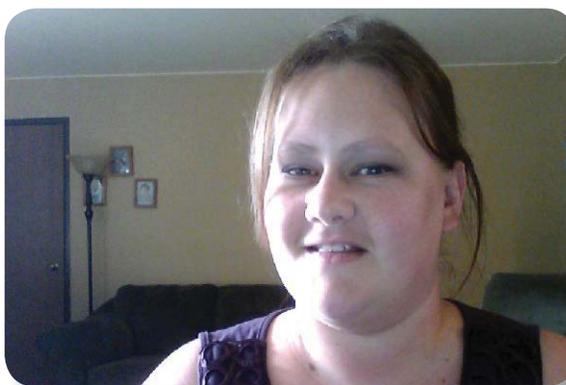
Still, his primary focus

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Sorrow turns to inspiration and a new career

Debbie Kapp is a sophomore at Marian University. Debbie heard about the Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) from Marian's financial aid office, and she has been able to pursue her dream of a career that makes a difference because of the WTG.

"Nursing is something that I never thought I could do," Debbie says. "The thought of needles and blood always made me uneasy. But then my grandmother was diagnosed



Debbie Kapp, of Fond du Lac, was recently inspired to return to college to become a nurse.

with a brain tumor and given three months to live."

Debbie's grandmother was taken to Fond du Lac's Hospice Home of Hope,

where Debbie and her family were impressed with the caring and patience of the nursing staff towards the entire family.

"As strange as this sounds, the nursing staff helped us realize it was not about us holding on to her, but seeing

her at peace and letting go," Debbie says. "After she passed away, the nurses still kept in contact with my family to see how we were

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remains dialed in on his studies. A physics major, Cameron also is pursuing three minors—mathematics, chemistry, and Spanish. He consistently achieves academic success, evidenced by his habitual dean’s list appearances.

The Wisconsin Tuition Grant plays an important role in all aspects of Cameron’s college life. Receiving the grant means Cameron can make a significant contribution in the community and in the classroom.

Working with assistant professor of physics Sarah Desotell, Cameron recently completed an independent study in advanced laboratory and computational physics. He investigated complex physical systems while learning how to use intricate lab equipment and new data analysis techniques. Cameron says that the personal attention and care he receives in all of his classes

are among his favorite things about Ripon.

“I really enjoy Dr. Desotell’s encouraging approach to teaching and high expectations of her students,” says Cameron. And, he says, as a result of Ripon’s small class sizes, he has been able to get to know Desotell and other professors on a more personal level. “That has been beneficial to my development as a student,” says Cameron.

Those relationships have led to valuable internship opportunities. Cameron has spent his summers working at Magnum Power Products and Hover Shuttle LLC, both in nearby Berlin, WI. In turn, those internships have reinforced Cameron’s career path.

After Ripon, Cameron plans to get a master’s degree in electrical or mechanical engineering.



Students with significant financial need constitute a higher percentage of enrolled students at Wisconsin private, nonprofit colleges and universities (31 percent) than at 4-year UW System institutions (26 percent).

Source: U.S. Department of Education

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doing, and you could see they genuinely cared about us and our well-being.”

Largely because of this experience, Debbie decided to pursue a career in nursing, and now hopes to one day provide hospice care of the quality provided by the nurses who inspired her.

While she already had a job, the mother of two felt strongly that the skills she would learn in nursing would carry over into her and her family’s lives. The Wisconsin Tuition Grant made this ambition a reality.

“This grant has been beneficial for my children and me,” Debbie says. “It is quite hard leaving my previous employer and a regular paycheck to pursue my education in nursing. Most people in my life thought I was crazy to leave a job while raising two children on my own. However, I never felt as though I was making a real difference in that other job. Being a nurse will give me the sense of doing just that, making a positive difference in the lives of the people I serve.”

Debbie looks forward to the day she can enter the workforce and explore the many

career options in the nursing field, but in the meantime she continues to be inspired by what drives her to complete her education—her children.

“I look forward to going to class every day to learn and discover new experiences that I never thought I could have,” Debbie says. “My children give me the drive to be the best mom I can be and make me proud of my decision to return to school at my age. Whenever I even begin to question my decision I just look at my children and know that I have made the best college and career choices for my family.”

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 College *Milwaukee*
 Northland College *Ashland*
 Ripon College *Ripon*
 St. Norbert College *De Pere*
 Silver Lake College of the Holy Family *Manitowoc*
 Viterbo University *La Crosse*
 Wisconsin Lutheran College *Milwaukee*

