

WTG *Achievers*

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About WTG

The 21 private, or independent, colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to Wisconsin, educating over 50,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need help to attend the college of their choice.

The State of Wisconsin created the Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) in 1965. Its goal is to help financially needy Wisconsin citizens to succeed. There are only enough funds allocated to WTG to cover about half of the needy students who apply every year. Each month WTG Achievers brings you success stories of Wisconsinites for whom WTG has made a difference.

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The Wisconsin Tuition Grant: Strengthening Wisconsin

By Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Each year Wisconsin's 21 private colleges and universities educate more than 50,000 students and confer approximately 10,000 degrees. Although these nonprofit institutions receive no direct monetary support from the taxpayers, they nevertheless serve an important public purpose. They undergird the state's economic vitality through the billions in earnings of their alumni employed all across Wisconsin, and they contribute to an enhanced quality of civic life through the ethic of

voluntary service instilled in their students, faculty, and staff.

The Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) was created in 1965 because legislators wanted needy Wisconsin citizens to be able to attend the college of their choice. Each year approximately 20,000 students apply for WTG grants. These are Wisconsin students looking to the future at Wisconsin colleges and universities. However, the current appropriation for WTG allows only one-half of

eligible students to be funded. Legislators can rest assured that students who do receive grants are extremely thankful for the help. And Wisconsin's private colleges and universities are also grateful on their students' behalf.

Wisconsin students receiving WTG are proving to be leaders in their colleges and universities and in their communities. The first year's issues of *WTG Achievers* provide a sampling of their stories.

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Mount Mary Student Ready to Share Global Outlook



Fioralba Giacomantonio of Milwaukee, a senior at Mount Mary College

Wisconsin's economic future is closely tied to the degree to which we reach out to other cultures and other lands. This

month we feature a multilingual student who chose Wisconsin as her home, who is highly motivated to work on international issues, and who has benefited from a state investment through the Wisconsin Tuition Grant. This investment will pay dividends for years to come.

Fioralba Giacomantonio, nicknamed "Fio," has just finished her junior year at Mount Mary College, majoring in business administration with a specialty in international commerce. Her ethnic background is half Hispanic and half Italian, and

she speaks Spanish, Italian, and English fluently.

Fio left her native Peru seven years ago and arrived in Wisconsin shortly thereafter. "I'm a rule breaker," she said. "In our culture, it is not customary for women to leave their families, but I wanted to better myself, so I did." She married and had a daughter. The marriage failed, and Fio had to send her little girl, who is now five years old, back to her family in Peru. "I could not take care of her and go to school and work at the same time," she explained with tears

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STRENGTHENING WISCONSIN *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

The 21 private colleges and universities of Wisconsin are so committed to providing high-quality education for the citizens of the state that they devote a growing share of their own resources to aiding students. In 1998-99, for instance, Wisconsin's 21 private colleges and universities gave \$138.7 million in grant aid to their students. In that same year, the Wisconsin Tuition Grant distributed \$18 million to students attending those institutions. In other words, these colleges and universities raised over \$7 for each \$1 received by students in WTG funds. This ratio of more than 7 to 1 shows that Wisconsin's nonprofit higher educational sector leads by example.

The mission of these nonprofit institutions is to educate and to make higher education affordable. The funds they raise come from private sources – from people who believe in small class sizes, individual attention, and

educational opportunity – so that all qualified students can attend the college or university that best fits their needs. To that end, the private colleges and universities of Wisconsin build financial-aid packages for each individual student. Almost one-quarter of the grant aid given to students comes from the state and federal governments – but more than three-quarters of the grant aid comes from the colleges themselves.

The Wisconsin Tuition Grant helps state citizens remain in Wisconsin by allowing them to attend the college or university that will best prepare them for future success. The Legislature can help ensure this opportunity by strengthening the Wisconsin Tuition Grant program so that all eligible applicants can be accommodated. When all students in the state are able to fulfill their educational promise, Wisconsin will be strong indeed.

**FACT
OF THE
MONTH**

Private colleges and universities nationwide are expected to grow at a faster rate than public institutions. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that private college enrollments should rise 16 percent by 2010, compared to 15 percent at public institutions.

FIO GIACOMANTONIO *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

in her eyes, “so I had to send her to people who could care for her. I am very anxious to bring her back as soon as I can.”

Mount Mary College was Fio's choice for higher education because friends advised her that single-sex education would be right for her. She does not regret her choice. “I have never been as happy any place as I am at Mount Mary,” she said. “Here I am getting education for life. I am learning not only academic subjects but also skills like time management and how to focus my energies. I am becoming an educated person. The

teachers are wonderful. This is a great environment for serious students.”

In addition to carrying a heavy load of 18 academic credits, Fio works nights at a restaurant in Brookfield. She also tutors other students in Spanish and is a member of OLAW, the Organization for Latin American Women. She was instrumental in OLAW's decision to direct its fundraising efforts toward a Mount Mary Scholarship for Hispanic women.

Her goal after graduation, besides bringing her little girl home, is to find a job at a growing Wisconsin company with

global ties, so she can use her languages and her business degree. She is currently watching several companies that seem to offer those opportunities, keeping track of those where she might like to work.

Fio depends on every bit of financial aid she gets, and is grateful for the Wisconsin Tuition Grant that is included in her Mount Mary aid package. If she could talk with a Wisconsin legislator, she would say, “Please don't deny help to people who really want to do something with their lives in the best way possible – through education. You're nobody without an education.”

Wisconsin's Private Colleges and Universities

Alverno College *Milwaukee*
Beloit College *Beloit*
Cardinal Stritch University *Milwaukee*
Carroll College *Waukesha*
Carthage College *Kenosha*
Concordia University *Mequon*
Edgewood College *Madison*

Lakeland College *Sheboygan*
Lawrence University *Appleton*
Marian College *Fond du Lac*
Marquette University *Milwaukee*
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design *Milwaukee*
Milwaukee School of Engineering *Milwaukee*
Mount Mary College *Milwaukee*

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



From here, you can go anywhere.