

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 61,000 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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Career in graphic design is on the horizon

Viterbo University student Haylea Halverson took her father's advice when deciding on a major in college.

"He told me to do something I love to do if I was going to do it for the rest of my life," says Haylea, a senior majoring in visual communications with an emphasis in graphic design.

It's proven to be excellent advice so far. Haylea is very



Haylea Halverson, of La Crosse, a student at Viterbo University

confident in her future career choice and is looking forward to a career in the industry.

with faculty members at Viterbo have greatly enhanced her education, she says.

continued on page 2

Battle with cancer strengthens resolve

Crystal Brunner became a student at Bellin College because she wanted to stay close to her friends and family. She was excited because the college's direct entry program enabled her to get started on her nursing degree right away. As a freshman, Crystal was—like so many new students—unsure and overwhelmed but ready to work hard.

After only one year of pursuing her nursing degree, Crystal's life completely changed. In February of



Crystal Brunner (left), of Denmark, WI, a student at Bellin College, and some of her supporters

2011, Crystal went to the eye doctor to get a piece of dirt out from underneath her eyelid. The specialist at the eye clinic found abnormal tissue growth on

the outside of both of her eyes and immediately ordered a biopsy. The next week, the results were in: Crystal was diagnosed with Stage 2 Mucosal Associated Lymphoma Tissue Cancer (MALT). This type of cancer is mostly found in the middle aged

to elderly population and is typically associated with an infection in the stomach. According to the doctor, she was a one-of-a-kind case.

continued on page 2

Haylea Halverson continued from page 1

The Wisconsin Tuition Grant and other financial aid made her college education possible, Halverson said. She is the oldest of three children, and her younger siblings will soon be attending college, increasing the financial burden on her family. Haylea has worked each summer to help support her education and living expenses. She also secured a paid internship during the 2012–13 academic year and served as the graphic designer for Viterbo’s literary and art magazine.

“Haylea has done an exceptional job as an intern in the Viterbo communications and marketing office,” says Pat Kerrigan, Viterbo’s vice president for communications and marketing. “Employers will be lucky to have her. She is very creative and has a strong work ethic. I would anticipate that she will be very successful in whatever she chooses to do.”

Choosing Viterbo also afforded Halverson the opportunity to participate in another lifelong favorite of hers, basketball. A three-year member of the basketball team, she played guard and forward and was an important member of the team.

“I really enjoyed playing basketball,” says Haylea, mentioning the benefits of hard work, getting along with others, developing friendships, and teamwork. “Being a student athlete is challenging, but I’m used to it because I was a multi-sport athlete in high school. I’ve learned time management and how to prioritize.”

Haylea is looking forward to graduation and landing her first job in the graphic design industry.



Twenty-six percent of new students at WAICU-member colleges and universities have transferred from other colleges and universities.

Source: IPEDS 2012 Fall Enrollment Survey

Crystal Brunner continued from page 1

“It really hit me hard that I had cancer. It was strange for me to become the patient instead of being the healthcare provider.” Crystal went through a cycle of radiation treatments and experienced many of the side effects; excessive fatigue, sensitive skin, and sensitivity to light. The radiation killed the tear production in both eyes and left her with horrible migraines. She was then referred to a specialist who reiterated that Crystal’s case was very rare and that he had never seen a case where the cancer tissue was visibly growing. The specialist placed her on numerous medications to try to combat

the side effects of the radiation, but most ended up causing her more discomfort.

After her diagnosis, Bellin became Crystal’s escape from what was going on in her personal life. She became a member of the Student Senate, Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Open School, and the Ambassador Club. The Wisconsin Tuition Grant was instrumental in Crystal’s ability to continue attending college during her battle with cancer. Between her medical bills and tuition, Crystal says she was not sure she would be able to stay enrolled, but it

was through the determination of the Bellin College faculty and staff, generous donations given toward scholarships, and the Wisconsin Tuition Grant that made it all possible. Today, Crystal is cancer free and a recent graduate from Bellin with a degree in nursing. She is currently working as a clinical assistant and will be taking the state board licensure exam to become a registered nurse in a few weeks.

“I can tell you that I am living proof that I believe in what I say, ‘You literally can make it through anything, if you try and never give up.’”

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*
 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*

