

# WTG Achievers

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## About the WTG

*The twenty private, or independent, colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 57,000 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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## WTG helps future nurse at Edgewood College



*Benina Ramic of Janesville, a freshman at Edgewood College*

Edgewood College freshman Benina Ramic considers herself a natural caregiver who wants to make a career of helping others. She has worked in a

nursing home since she was 15 and always enjoyed the health field, so her decision to pursue nursing was not a difficult one.

Benina was interested in Edgewood College not just because of its strong nursing program and small campus size, but also because she had heard good things from her friends who were already attending the college. When Benina toured the campus, she immediately felt welcome and as though everyone on campus cared she was there.

It is not only Edgewood's students who care; Benina's

professors do as well. Her science courses can be stressful at times, but Benina's professors have always been willing to take the time to help her in any way she needs. From e-mails to one-to-one meetings, Benina says, "they care beyond what they need to do." She was impressed that one professor even took the time to meet with her just to calm her nerves about an upcoming exam.

When not busy with studying, Benina works in the Financial Aid office helping students who may come in with questions and assisting the financial

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## Education major appreciates the sense of community at Marian College



*Kathleen Oltesvig of Poysippi, a freshman at Marian College*

Kathleen Oltesvig of Poysippi had a high school résumé that would interest any college.

The Berlin High School graduate was vice president of Berlin's Student Council, the editor of the high school's Red and Green newspaper, and a member of the Berlin girls cross country and soccer teams. She attended Badger Girls State after her junior year.

The National Honor Society member could have chosen practically any college to attend. In fact, she was admitted to a large public university.

Ultimately, though, she chose Marian College in Fond du Lac.

"When I was deciding, the public university's undergraduate population was 30,000 — that's six times the size of my town," she says. "It was just too big — I came to Marian for a visit and decided to come here. You can talk to people here."

Marian's manageable size was just one factor that attracted Kathleen; the other was the individual attention she received. It didn't hurt that Stacey Akey, Marian's vice president for enrollment management and a friend of Kathleen's parents, personally recruited her.

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**BENINA RAMIC** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

aid counselors. She also volunteers her time as a Student Ambassador, helping at Edgewood College special events and activities such as Preview Day, when prospective freshmen and their parents can visit the college, meet professors and faculty, learn about admissions and financial aid, and ask questions of current Edgewood College students.

One of her favorite parts of being a Student Ambassador is giving tours to prospective freshmen. Benina likes spending time with the high school students and their parents as she gets to take them around the campus and “brag about Edgewood.”

While Benina knows she still has much hard work ahead of her, she is looking forward to becoming a part of Edgewood College’s nursing program and gaining real-world experience inside a hospital. After she receives her RN, she wants to

continue her education for a few more years and become licensed in anesthesiology.

Benina is excited for her career inside the hospital, but also has dreams of extending her work to the wider community. She hopes to someday be able to start some kind of social service organization, such as a homeless shelter.

Benina is very grateful that she could receive a Wisconsin Tuition Grant to help her get to Edgewood College. She says, “My mom is a single parent and the WTG helped a lot. It’s nice to know the State of Wisconsin offers that.”

As a freshman, Benina’s hardest lesson so far has been leaving her mother and living on her own, but she says everyone at Edgewood College has made her feel comfortable. She feels her new independence has already made her more prepared for whatever the future brings.

**FACT OF THE MONTH**

The earnings of those with a high school diploma decreased by \$5,600 between 1980 and 2005, while the earnings of those with a bachelor’s or higher degree increased by \$2,300.

*National Center for Education Statistics, "The Condition of Education 2007"*

**KATHLEEN OLTESVIG** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kathleen appreciates the fact that “you can email a professor, and they know what student you are and who you are — that you’re not just another kid in the class. It’s a small campus; it doesn’t take you forever to get to class. It’s the sense of community here.”

She is the first person in her family to attend college, but her parents “always talked about how we should go to college so you can make your life better than theirs was. I was always a good student, so it was kind of expected.”

So far, Marian seems to agree with Kathleen. She earned a 4.0 grade point average in her first semester, majoring in middle–secondary education with a biology emphasis, with minors in environmental science and Spanish. Outside of class, she’s an active member of the Marian Student Education Association, the student affiliate of national, state and local education associations.

She is, interestingly, one of two students attending Marian who were selected for Badger Girls State the same year.

The Wisconsin Tuition Grant made it possible for Kathleen to attend Marian College, for which she is very grateful. She says she appreciates the fact that the grant helps her to pay for tuition so the college she wants is affordable.

Kathleen wants to study abroad at some point, with Spain or Italy on the top of her list. And after graduation? “I’ve always known that I wanted to teach,” she says. “I had great teachers in high school who influenced me. It’s something I feel passionate about.”

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

