

About Wisconsin Grants

The twenty-three private, or independent, nonprofit colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without direct taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 54,000 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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Marquette nursing student leads with service

Makaela Faretra-Gundlach has always wanted to make a difference by helping others.

Inspired by her mother's strength and guidance, as well as her grandmother's career in health care, Makaela chose to follow her dreams to seek an education at Marquette University where she is now a junior in the College of Nursing.

A native of Grafton, Wisconsin, Makaela was initially drawn to Marquette for its direct admit nursing program which allowed her to begin taking nursing-specific classes immediately at the start of her first year.

"I chose to study nursing because, throughout my schooling, I have always been the most interested in science, particularly health sciences," Makaela said. "My first real introduction to the science of the human body was in high school. I took a biomedical science and anatomy class and through these two courses, I realized I had a strong interest in and fascination with the human body — there was so much to learn and understand about how our bodies work and, even though it was difficult, I wanted to learn more. None of my other classes kept my attention as much as science classes."

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Makaela Faretra-Gundlach

First-generation student succeeds in class and on the court

To achieve a well-rounded college experience, junior Alex VanCrete of Green Lake, Wisconsin, has put in the time and effort to succeed both in the classroom and on the basketball court. As a first-generation college student, Alex looked for a school that was affordable and the right fit for him.

While searching for a college, Alex had a list of criteria, and Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) truly met his standards. He said, "I chose WLC because I was looking for a school that had small class sizes, was located in a large city, and allowed me to play college basketball. Out of all the schools with these criteria, WLC was by far the best fit and had the lowest cost."

Alex is grateful for all the scholarship and grant opportunities from WLC that have enabled him to further his education and make his family proud. The Wisconsin Grant has helped him cover some of his costs for college and has allowed him to keep his student loans to a manageable level.



Alex VanCrete

Since his arrival at WLC, Alex has become a leader on the basketball court for the Warriors. After his sophomore season, he earned Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference (NACC) Honorable Mention, finishing second on the team in scoring at 10.8 points per game. He also has been named a NACC Scholar-Athlete each of his first two years. He shared that one of his favorite experiences at WLC

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Makaela also loves how Marquette is a mid-sized school, which makes it possible to build personal relationships with professors and classmates.

So far, Makaela has had two clinical experiences through Marquette that have affirmed her love for nursing. She worked in the labor and delivery and postpartum units at Aurora Sinai Medical Center, where she assisted RNs by taking patient vitals. She observed a cesarean section birth and helped feed newborn babies. She also worked at St. Rafael Catholic School in South Milwaukee, where she gave presentations to students on health topics such as hand washing. Additionally, she helped conduct vision screenings and assisted with a winter coat drive to support disadvantaged students and families.

Second to nursing is Makaela's passion for cheerleading. She started cheering at just five years old. Today she is a proud member of the Marquette Cheer Team, performing during men's and women's basketball games.

Support from the Wisconsin Grant enabled Makaela to pursue nursing and cheer, the two things that bring her the most joy. And she gets to do it all at Marquette, a school she has wanted to attend since her freshman year of high school.

A core goal of Marquette's mission is to graduate students who are transformed by their education and who will transform the world in which they live — and Makaela is doing just that.

After graduation, Makaela hopes to work in the labor and delivery or postpartum units at a hospital in Milwaukee. She plans to eventually get her master's degree in nursing and is considering teaching nursing at the college level.

FACT OF THE MONTH

An estimated 92 percent of graduates from private, nonprofit colleges are employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation.

Source:
NACE First Destination Survey, 2018

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was his 2019-20 basketball season when the Warriors won the regular-season conference title with the whole college cheering them on.

When the time comes to hang up his jersey and cross the stage in his cap and gown, Alex is ready to use what he has learned at WLC in the workplace. An accounting major, he plans to work in accounting or finance and to one day open his own business. But that is not all that WLC has encouraged him to do: "WLC has inspired me to be more than just an employee, but to be a servant leader and explore the different opportunities the world has to offer."

Alex will always remember the support he received from the Wisconsin Grant. "Coming from a family where I would not have a whole lot of financial help for schooling, this grant has been huge in my ability to further my education and attend WLC."



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
Concordia University Wisconsin - Mequon
Edgewood College - Madison

Herzing University - Milwaukee
Lakeland University - Plymouth
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
Viterbo University - La Crosse
Wisconsin Lutheran College - Milwaukee