

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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Nursing major Nolan Wright transfers to Stritch to pursue dream career

After graduating from high school in 2016, Nolan Wright headed to a public university to pursue a degree in business and play on that university's basketball team. He completed two seasons, during which time he switched his major to biology. He knew he wanted to do something in health, but was not certain what career path he would ultimately choose.

After his junior year at the public university, he returned to Milwaukee for the summer and participated in the Clinical & Translational Science Institute 500 Stars Summer Internship program at the Froedert & the Medical College of Wisconsin. During this hands-on experience, he had the opportunity to work with faculty researchers and research teams conducting real-life studies. Nolan "fell in love with nursing." He shadowed a nurse practitioner for eight weeks doing rounds and visiting patients, and he even had the opportunity to be in the operating room during a surgery. Nolan's research focused on the transition from acute to chronic pain, and he worked with staff from Froedert's Trauma Quality of Life Clinic, which aims to improve patient health after discharge from the hospital.



Nolan Wright

Nolan began searching for a new college or university to call home and pursue a nursing degree. He felt Cardinal Stritch University was the best fit for a number of reasons.

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Beginning, middle and end – Marian University student Jaime Faz has it all figured out

A five-year plan? Try more like a 50-year plan.

Marian University junior Jaime Faz has never been focused on having his story be just about finding an occupation he is passionate about, but also how he could make a difference afterward. That is why, when you ask the Racine native what he intends to do after college, there is always an "and" – become a nurse AND teach music.

Marian University has an amazing collection of nursing students, but this particular Sabre has become a well-known one because of his minors in Spanish and music.

"I really just want to be able to help out the Latino community by being able to speak with them as a nurse and being able to serve as their advocate," said Jaime, whose grandfather and parents came to the U.S. from Mexico. "And, when I'm done, I'd love to be able to share my passion for music with others."

With an older sister and younger brother also considering college, Jaime felt somewhat intimidated. Only his uncle had ever pursued a college education, and that was 15 years ago. Still, Jaime wanted to be a physician and knew college was the only path to becoming one.

Then, as a student at William Horlick High School and a member of its choir, he earned his CNA. He worked at a nursing home, discovering he was more passionate about helping others by caring for them than by giving them direct medical treatment.

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Jaime Faz

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“The Stritch transfer counselors helped with the process and made sure I could get right into nursing courses when I transferred,” said Nolan. “I also was fortunate to receive a scholarship available exclusively to transfer students.”

Upon arriving at Stritch, he enrolled in courses in the Ruth S. Coleman College of Nursing and Health Sciences and began his first clinical in a chronic care environment at Lasata Senior Living Campus under the direction of assistant professor Jennifer Niggemeier.

Nolan is currently working as a Certified Nursing Assistant in a Gastroenterology (GI)/ Internal Medicine unit at Froedtert Hospital. During the Spring semester he will complete a medical/surgical clinical at Froedtert West Bend.

“I have enjoyed my Stritch experience very much,” said the Milwaukee native. “The professors want you to do well and make time for you. The faith-based aspect of the education really adds to the character of being a nurse.”

Preparing for a nursing career during a global pandemic helped Nolan understand that situations like COVID-19 are part of the profession and did not cause him to change his career path. He intends to pursue a position as a trauma nurse before continuing on toward the goal of becoming a nurse practitioner. After Thanksgiving, the COVID census within his Froedtert unit was high, which resulted in that unit being converted into a COVID unit for about two months. Nolan cared for COVID patients who were symptomatic.

“Being on the frontline is humbling and grants me an opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of others,” he said.

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“I’m thankful for all the opportunities and diversity I experienced in high school,” Jaime said. “I’ve lived my entire life in Racine, and I still find great things about it.”

But as the end of high school neared, Jaime knew he would need financial assistance to pursue higher education. Without the help of a Wisconsin Grant and Marian University’s financial aid offerings, he doubts if he could have even started the journey to become a first-generation college graduate.

“No one in my family really knew how to file the FAFSA, apply for scholarships, or even enroll, so early on, the idea of college was intimidating,” Jaime said. “But Marian has helped me a lot financially, getting me scholarships and grants, and without those, I wouldn’t have been able to attend.”

And without Jaime, Marian University also would be without one of its most notable resident assistants. In his second year, Jaime has utilized the role for career development and to make friends.

“It’s helped me grow professionally and opened my eyes to all the great people at this school,” Jaime said. “I’ve enjoyed being able to play a role in boosting morale and being there for others when they need it.”

And Jaime plans to be there for others well after graduation – aspiring to work as a nurse in Milwaukee, he then hopes to retire and become a music teacher in the area. But for now, he is assisting his fellow Sabres and members of the Fond du Lac community, which all began with the drive to help others and the financial assistance he needed to do it.

FACT OF THE MONTH

WAICU-member institutions produce 51 percent of the nursing (BSN) degrees in Wisconsin.

Source: IPEDS, 2018-19



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