



Vol. 24, No. 7
February 2024

WISCONSIN ACHIEVERS

Wisconsin Achievers is published by the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU)

Marquette University Student Blazes Trails for Next Generation

Nineteen-year-old Keyandre Thompson always knew he would attend college—his mom routinely made education a top priority for her son and encouraged him to excel in school.



Keyandre Thompson

"Marquette is known for its academic rigor, and having this grant gives me the freedom to not worry about how I'm going to afford all the costs."

"I just appreciate the constant push from her because not everyone has that," Keyandre explains. "I just know that, without her, I don't think I would be where I'm at today. I see how people struggle without support and I wish that they could have the support that I do."

Today the Milwaukee native is a sophomore at Marquette University majoring in psychology with a focus in pre-med.

"Working in the psychology realm has always been my passion. I want to work with healing the mind," Keyandre says.

Marquette's urban setting was the perfect fit for Keyandre, who grew up about a mile away from campus. As a first-generation student and role model for his three brothers and family, he hopes to set a clear example. "If you can dream it, you can achieve it," he says.

Through the assistance of the Wisconsin Grant Program, some of the financial cost that comes with getting a postsecondary education has been lifted, a blessing that Keyandre knows will help him achieve his goals.

"It helps pay for tuition and allows me to focus on my studies so I can get good grades," he explains.

continued on page 2

Future Genetic Counselor Putting Financial Aid to Good Use

Viterbo University senior Megan Huss plans to become a genetic counselor, a career that combines both scientific fields she loves.

"It's the perfect intersection of biology and psychology," says Megan, a biology major from Appleton. "Plus, I'll be able to work in the medical field and help people."

Genetic counselors provide crucial expertise in oncology, genetically linked diseases, prenatal counseling, and other areas. Megan will graduate in May and has begun to apply to graduate schools to earn the advanced degree required for her to realize her career ambitions.

Megan has always excelled in the sciences. As a high school student, she took third place in Viterbo's prestigious Health Science Scholarship



Megan Huss

"I wouldn't be able to attend college without financial aid. I am very grateful for the grants and scholarships I've received."

competition, earning a \$12,000 scholarship over four years. While at the university, her favorite classes have been cellular and molecular biology, advanced biochemistry, and the Psychology course, motivational interviewing. She was selected for Viterbo's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program, during which she studied "Oncolytic Reovirus

Modulated Angiogenic Inhibition in Breast Cancer." Megan shared her findings at the annual Seven Rivers Research Symposium and earned the award for Best Oral Presentation in Natural Sciences.

continued on page 2

122 W. Washington Avenue
Suite 700
Madison, WI 53703-2723
608.256.7761
editor@waicu.org

Eric W. Fulcomer, PhD
President & CEO

Rebecca Larson
Executive Vice President for External
Relations

Pamela Seelman
Director of Marketing
and Communications

Our Members

Alverno College
Bellin College
Beloit College
Carroll University
Carthage College
Concordia University Wisconsin
Edgewood College
Herzing University
Lakeland University
Lawrence University
Marian University
Marquette University
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design
Milwaukee School of Engineering
Mount Mary University
Nashotah House
Northland College
Ripon College
St. Norbert College
Viterbo University
Wisconsin Lutheran College

The Wisconsin Grant Program

The twenty-two private, nonprofit colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without direct taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 51,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need financial help to attend the college of their choice.

The Wisconsin Grant 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 the Wisconsin Grant Program has made a significant difference.

Keyandre Thompson

"Marquette is known for its academic rigor, and having this grant gives me the freedom to not worry about how I'm going to afford all the costs."

When he goes home to visit, which is often, he enjoys helping his brothers with their homework. Keyandre especially likes reading to his baby brother. It's a way he can encourage his siblings to prioritize the value of lifelong learning.

"I love helping my brothers because they're super smart. My mom always encourages me to help when I can," Keyandre says. "She knows setting an example early in life will ensure they know the benefits of getting an education in the future."

Keyandre hopes to become a psychiatrist one day, focusing on providing mental health services to disadvantaged groups, something that would not be possible without help from the Wisconsin Grant.

Megan Huss

At Viterbo, Megan has appreciated the small class sizes and "the overall environment of student support." She has been very involved on campus as a member of the STEM Club, serving as the secretary of the university's chapter of the Tri-Beta biology honor society, and working as a tour guide in the admissions office. She also completed an internship at the nonprofit Family and Children's Center in LaCrosse as a family advocate, talking with clients about resources ranging from therapy to housing. "It was emotional at times but necessary," she says. "It is very important that someone is there for those kids."

Financial aid has been a critical aspect of Megan's college education. In addition to the Wisconsin Grant and the Viterbo Health Science Scholarship, she also was awarded the Dr. Janice Bahr Biology Scholarship and a need-based grant. "I wouldn't be able to attend college without financial aid," Megan says. "I am very grateful for the grants and scholarships I've received."

FACT OF THE MONTH

28 percent of all WAICU undergraduates are first-generation students.

Source: IPEDS, Fall Enrollment Survey, 2021-2022.