

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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MSOE student pursues his dreams through computer science

Jonathan Phung believes artificial intelligence (AI) is the future, which is what inspired him to pursue a degree in computer science from Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE).

“My favorite part about computer science is its applications to artificial intelligence and machine learning, which I wholeheartedly believe is the future of the world if applied properly,” said Jonathan, who will graduate in 2024.

Jonathan, an Oak Creek, Wisconsin native, put his computer science course work into practice at his summer internship with Direct Supply. Here he worked with the reporting services team and developed a specialized piece of software for his summer project. “It was a project that had never been done before at the company, and my team and I were glad that I was able to research, experiment and get it working. It still amazes me that my code is out there, actually being used by a company.”



Jonathan Phung

continued on page 2

Personal experiences inspired Herzing nursing student

Sometimes a little help can go a long way. Miranda Stanich has been supported by family, friends, and strangers on her journey from growing up in a single-parent household to midway through her pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at Herzing University's Kenosha, Wisconsin campus. Along the way there were difficult times, as well as uncertainties and pain.

Five years ago, Miranda was extremely sick and found herself in and out of the hospital regularly. That's when she met her angels — nurses who exemplified the type of person she wanted to be for others.

“The nurses are the ones who inspired me. They showed they cared and not just about doing the job but about the people,” Miranda said. “They would sit with me and talk to me. I was more than just a name on a chart or a patient in a bed. I was a person they were there to help. That helped me decide who I wanted to be. I wanted to be that person for someone else.”

She started working as a medical assistant to pursue her dream to be a nurse. Herzing's Kenosha campus was right down the road and both her husband's relative and nurses she trusted were impressed with their experiences there. Going back to school isn't easy and it's not always affordable. That's when she was given a valuable gift in the form of the Wisconsin Grant.

“Receiving the Wisconsin Grant meant a lot. Without it, I may not have been able to continue going to school,” Miranda explained. “This grant helped me to keep going by opening a door that might not have been there otherwise.”



Miranda Stanich

continued on page 2

Jonathan Phung continued from page 1

Next summer Jonathan will be interning at Milwaukee Tool as an electrical engineering intern doing work more focused on machine learning and data science. His internships and hands-on learning at MSOE are propelling him toward his dream job, which is to either be in game development or data science.

“Video games were a large part of my formative years, and to develop a game that brings even a tiny fraction of the joy they have already brought to me would be my dream. I would also love to be a part of bringing AI to the frontier of society and civilization. I dream of improving society, at least in my own way.”

Jonathan was drawn to MSOE because of its small school atmosphere. He says he greatly values the one-to-one personal support he receives from professors. In addition to his internships, he stays busy as a resident assistant (RA), academic tutor, and mentor for local K-12 robotics teams. Jonathan is also a member of MSOE’s Fencing Club and the University Scholars Honors Program. The University Scholars Honors Program exposes students to a curriculum that combines experiential learning, real-world projects, and community service.

By being a Wisconsin Grant recipient, Jonathan was able to achieve his dreams of attending MSOE and living on campus. He is extremely grateful for the Wisconsin Grant and for the hard work his family has done to help get him where he is today.

“It felt great to be awarded the Wisconsin Grant. It helped me be able to afford to live on campus and gain from the experience of doing so. I remember back in my senior year of high school, being invited to a meeting with a counselor and being informed I would be receiving the grant. My hard work had finally paid off, and I know my parents and grandparents are smiling today.”

Miranda Stanich continued from page 1

Thanks to the Wisconsin Grant, she is slated to graduate at the beginning of 2023 and is now focusing full-time — as much as a mother of two can — on clinicals and completing her degree. There are still challenges; she battles health issues daily and recently lost her father, but she keeps her head high and never gives up.

She is ready to be a nurse, and she also plans to continue the educational opportunity afforded to her through the support of others. Her eventual goals are two-fold: to return to Herzing after time spent working to obtain her master’s degree and become a nurse practitioner; and she wants to pass forward the support she’s received to others.

“No matter what you are going through, keep getting up,” Miranda advised. “There’s no rush to decide what you want to be. You can start at 20, 30, or 40; there’s no deadline to get where you want to go as long as you don’t stop.”

FACT OF THE MONTH

Twenty-nine percent of all WAICU undergraduate students are first-generation students.

Source: WAICU Institutional Survey, 2020-21



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