

About Wisconsin Grants

The twenty-four 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 56,000 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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122 W. Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53703-2723;
608.256.7761;
mail@waicu.org.

Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Rebecca Larson
Senior VP for Advocacy

Cassandra Krause
Director of Communications
and Marketing, Editor

Edgewood College student determined to beat the odds

Alexis Souksavath, a biology major and chemistry minor from Beaver Dam, was drawn to Edgewood College because of its small class sizes and the opportunity to build relationships with her professors. She knew that a tight-knit campus would be the right environment for her to focus on her studies and master the material in her courses.

Alexis and her older sister are the first in their family to pursue higher education. Coming from a low-income family, Alexis aimed to do well in school, so that she would qualify for financial aid to attend college. She sought scholarships, grants, and low-interest loans to achieve her goals. Her dad works double and even triple shifts to help her pay for her education. Student aid has given her the financial boost needed to be able to attend college.

The support Alexis receives from Edgewood College and other sources, including the Wisconsin Grant, means that she can put her energy into her studies rather than worry about her debt load. She looked into attending a larger university but found that, thanks to her financial aid package, she would have to pay at least twice as much as she pays at Edgewood College.



Alexis Souksavath

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Bellin College student finds perfect mix for future career

Christina Maser of Manitowoc will be graduating next May from Bellin College with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree but arrived at this point in a roundabout way.

As a child, Christina found herself confused with what she wanted to do with her life. The ideas ranged from teaching to acting or becoming a doctor.

“Desperate, my mom and I took to the internet where my mom typed in my personality traits trying to find which jobs were most compatible with me,” she said. “That’s when we found nursing. Nursing embodied all I have ever wanted in a career. I wanted to be a teacher, and nursing involves lifelong learning and using what I’ve learned to properly educate my future patients and to prepare them for discharge. I wanted to be an actress, and nursing enables me to utilize my fun-loving personality to make meaningful connections with my patients and their families. I wanted to be a lawyer, and nursing allows me to use my stubborn and honest moral standards to advocate for what is right in all situations. Lastly, I wanted to be a doctor. I realized that nursing was more properly aligned with what I was looking for in a career, and, of course, nursing is a highly respected healthcare profession.”



Christina Maser

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Alexis Souksavath continued from page 1

Alexis's parents did not attend college, and she grew up with very little money. She is a minority student who was told countless times that "college isn't for everyone." Despite the hurdles, Alexis was determined to earn her degree at a four-year college.

"A college degree will be the proof that I have beaten the odds," said Alexis. "Receiving my college degree at the end of my experience here at Edgewood College would mean the absolute world to me."

That world is about to get bigger: in May 2019, she left for basic training in the Wisconsin Army National Guard, and will take one semester off to complete that work. She'll return for her final semester in Spring 2020.

Alexis said that her experience at Edgewood College has changed her way of thinking for the better and has made her a more compassionate person. She greatly appreciates the capacities that people have and wants to do her part to take care of others. After graduation, Alexis plans to pursue Officer Candidate School, and then go on to medical school. After taking classes that further exposed her to the medical field, her desire to pursue a career in the field grew.

"I realized how important having diversity and passion in the medical field is," said Alexis. "I now appreciate even more what I am able to bring to the field."

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At Bellin College, Christina has been a part of Student Senate, Bellin College's Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) chapter, the Bellin College chapter of American Association of Men in Nursing (BAAMN), and the Student Ambassador club. Through these student organizations at Bellin College, Christina has had many volunteer opportunities as well. She has volunteered at the Bellevue Fire Active Incident, Paul's Pantry, the Bellin Run, Unity Hospice, and the WEE Winners Wear Helmets event.

During her time at Bellin College, the staff and faculty at the institution have had an impact on Christina in many ways.

"I really enjoy the standards that Bellin College students are held to because I think that is ultimately what differentiates us from other students across the state," she said. "There are so many professors I have spent time with and grown close to. There are so many other incredible employees at Bellin College who will leave an indelible impact on my life as well."

After graduating from college, Christina plans to marry her high school sweetheart and start work with children in some capacity.

"I want to make children feel comfortable and associate hospitals and clinics with positives thoughts and experiences."

Christina declares that she won't end her education on graduation day, as nursing is a career of lifelong learning. Specifically, she plans to further her education with a master's degree.

This dream wouldn't be possible if not for scholarships and grants including the Wisconsin Grants program.

FACT OF THE MONTH

The return on investment of a college education is nearly 14 percent, exceeding investment benchmarks such as the long-term return on stocks (7 percent) or bonds (3 percent).

Source:
Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019



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*
 Neshotah House *Neshotah*
 Northland College *Ashland*
 Ripon College *Ripon*
 St. Norbert College *De Pere*
 Silver Lake College of the Holy Family *Manitowoc*
 Viterbo University *La Crosse*
 Wisconsin Lutheran College *Milwaukee*