

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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MIAD student and veteran soars as NASA intern, creative problem-solver

David Gabriel does not fit the mold. He is a veteran, husband, and full-time Industrial Design student at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD). He also interned at NASA.

As a kid, David dreamed of becoming an inventor working with planes and spaceships. After high school, he served in the Army and deployed twice to Afghanistan. During his time there, David was challenged to connect two communities so they could work together in times of crisis. Using only parachutes, rope, and pallets that had been dropped from helicopters in the night, David and his team built a bridge over the water between the two. This experience taught him that people are at the center of the solution, and led him to pursue a career in industrial design.

When David first visited MIAD, he was impressed by the student work he saw and by the world-class industrial design faculty. He also was excited by MIAD's professional partnerships with General Motors, Milwaukee Tool, Harley-Davidson, and so many more. He said, "I couldn't believe that this rather small college had so much to offer."



David Gabriel

continued on page 2

Ripon College communications student builds resume

Ripon College sophomore Zoe Hazel of Friendship, Wisconsin faced challenges as she sought to fulfill her dream of higher education. As a first-generation student, finances were a main concern, and navigating the college and financial aid applications was a daunting task.

"My parents didn't know how much tuition typically was or which scholarships were available, so I have pretty much been figuring it out on my own and with help from friends," she says.

With a lot of hard work, perseverance, and help along the way, Zoe is fulfilling her dreams. The Wisconsin Grant is part of her financial aid package at Ripon College that is helping.

Zoe is majoring in communication at Ripon College. She plans to work in public relations after graduation, either internally or externally for a company, and she already is gaining experience in the field.

This past fall, Zoe was selected for a competitive, elite internship with the apparel company Vans and spent a week in California working on projects for the brand.



Zoe Hazel

continued on page 2

David Gabriel continued from page 1

Last summer, David interned at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, working with the Human Factors Engineering Team. He worked on redesigning the kitchen area for Project Gateway, which is the space station that supports human exploration of the moon.

For his senior capstone project, he planned to design and build a full-scale interior of a lunar habitat, under the mentorship of NASA engineers and space architects. "It's based on human factors and design research. It's such an exciting thing to work on because there has never been a moon base before; this is all uncharted territory."

Then COVID-19 changed the world. MIAD's senior exhibition became virtual, and all of his plans had to change. "I taught myself how to bring my designs into virtual reality. I learned that creative problem solving is the ability to keep moving forward in less than ideal conditions," he said.

David is very appreciative for scholarships, the Wisconsin Grant, and other financial aid that have helped him to attend MIAD and soar to new heights, just like the projects he is creating.

"I've been really fortunate to be able to focus on school, and not worry as much about finances," David said.

He added, "The mentorship and education at MIAD empowered me to reach for things I never thought possible."

FACT OF THE MONTH

WAICU-member institutions estimate combined losses for Spring, Summer, and Fall 2020 to be \$245 million due to COVID-19.

Source: WAICU, May 2020

Zoe Hazel continued from page 1

On campus, she works in the Office of Marketing and Communications and for the Department of Communication. She also holds many leadership positions in campus organizations. She currently is vice president and public relations chair of Ripon College Feminists. She also is a member of the Ripon Engagement Division; public relations chair of Greek Council; vice president-public relations for Kappa Delta sorority; and the 2022 class representative of COMMunity, Ripon College's communication club. She also works off campus at Kwik Trip.

"The connections I've made with both students and professors have really surprised me, in a good way," Zoe says. "I have made so many new friends, joined a sorority, and gotten to know my professors as well.

"The people I know have helped me both academically and emotionally, and I feel that they have made me a better student and a better person."

Relying on a strong financial package reduces the stress for Hazel, and this allows her to make the most out of her Ripon College experience. "I have a seasonal job, a year-round job, and an on-campus job, yet sometimes that still isn't enough to cover the entirety of tuition," she notes.

Sources like the Wisconsin Grant, that don't have to be repaid, are key for her. "The Wisconsin Grant helps keep me in school to get the education that I need while being in a place that I love," Zoe says.

"If I wasn't receiving this grant, I wouldn't be able to continue my education at Ripon College. My goal since I was little has been to graduate with a four-year degree, and I will be the first in my family to do so. Receiving the Wisconsin Grant means so much to me because it is helping me build a better future for myself and my family."



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
 Holy Family College - Manitowoc
 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