

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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Lakeland University student embraces cooperative education

Lakeland University junior Amanda Brandt is enjoying quite a transformation thanks to her Cooperative Education jobs. Not only has she improved her professional skill set, but she is growing as a person in ways she never dreamed possible.

“I started out as a shy freshman who had no idea what I was doing,” said Amanda, a business administration and marketing double major from Kiel, Wisconsin. “As time went on, I realized that I needed to take chances and step out of my comfort zone. I have grown more confident both personally and professionally, and I have Lakeland to thank for that.”

Throughout college, Amanda has been a services intern at Acuity Insurance and held jobs on campus as a resident assistant and Lakeland admissions team member.

Currently, she serves as the inaugural chief marketing officer (CMO) of Launch: Lakeland Student-
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Amanda Brandt

MSOE student gives back to the community

When Katy Ebert of Genesee, Wisconsin decided to attend the Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE), she was prepared for a prestigious university that would provide her with the skill set she needed to achieve her goals. “I wanted an intense education—and MSOE has certainly delivered.”

Katy graduated from MSOE in May 2021 with her bachelor's and master's in architectural engineering with a structural specialty. She was drawn to architectural engineering because of the impact it has on people's lives.

“I knew how an environment could influence an individual's entire perspective. An inspiring museum, a capitol building, an affordable housing complex. I wanted to be a part of the creation of these types of places because I wanted to help people and encourage them to keep going,” said Katy.

She is already affecting lives with her internship at CSD Structural Engineers where she designs precast concrete planks, panels, connections, and more. Her experience at CSD gives her a new perspective: “When I go into a Meijer now and see their walls, I can honestly say, ‘I can design that,’ and that feeling is remarkable.”

Outside of the classroom and her internship, Katy is the president of the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) organization at MSOE. She also enjoys working on community outreach projects with her fiancé. Her favorite project was a bus stop shelter outside of a pay-what-you-can community café in Milwaukee.



Katy Ebert

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Run Businesses, a role that has her leading marketing efforts for one of Lakeland’s newest ventures.

Launch is in its infancy, and Amanda is a pioneer who is helping the program take shape. As CMO, she is responsible for successfully developing and implementing marketing strategies to help achieve its objectives. It is a mix of research and writing that fills her time alongside her coursework.

“As soon as I heard that I could be a student executive in a new startup that would grant me unparalleled experience in my field, I knew I had to go for it,” Amanda said.

A key to her success has been the resources available at Lakeland, including the Cooperative Education & Career Readiness team and Lakeland faculty members.

Amanda is further involved on campus as a member of the Pi Kappa Gamma Sorority, serving as Historian and Inter-Greek Council Representative, and she has been part of the Spanish Club and an entrepreneurship club.

She attended Lakeland because it was close to home, offered the majors she had in mind, and was similar in size to her high school. “I also chose Lakeland because of the opportunities the Co-Op program granted me, and the many great businesses that surround Lakeland,” said Amanda, noting that the university was familiar because her uncle and her cousin also attended Lakeland.

Thanks to the financial benefits of Co-Op and support from the Wisconsin Grant, Amanda will only have a small loan to pay off after graduation.

After graduation, Amanda hopes to work for a local nonprofit or return to Acuity in a marketing or communications role, eventually elevating into a management position.

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“Before the bus stop was installed, there was a woman who had to wait in the rain, sun, or snow every weekday to get to work for over 30 years. Now she has some shelter,” shared Katy.

The Wisconsin Grant enabled Katy to dedicate more time to studying and achieving her goals. “In short, the Wisconsin Grant allowed me to go to school,” said Katy. “Without this money, I would need to work many more hours than I currently do or have in the past, which takes away a lot of valuable studying time. Scholarships and grants make goals that were otherwise unthinkable a little more within reach.”

Equipped with the rigor of her MSOE education, Katy feels more than ready to take on post-graduation challenges and hopes to eventually start her own company specializing in custom projects. “I am definitely over-prepared for anything that comes at me in the ‘real world.’”

FACT OF THE MONTH

WAICU members produce 24 percent of all bachelor’s degrees and 35 percent of all advanced degrees in Wisconsin.

Source: IPEDS, Completions Survey, 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