

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.

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

Aimee Biba
Communications
Coordinator, Editor

Marquette student works to increase diverse representation on campus, and improve the justice system

Samari Price has had a passion for criminology since middle school.

She is a junior at Marquette University double majoring in criminology and social welfare in the Klingler College of Arts and Sciences, working her way to a law degree. Samari is more motivated than ever to make her career dreams a reality.

Criminology appeals to Samari not just because Black women are underrepresented in the field, but also because she happens to have grown up in Milwaukee's 53206 community – the most incarcerated ZIP code in the country.

She said personal experiences with law enforcement have inspired her to help improve the justice system for future generations by becoming the best criminal defense attorney she can be.



Samari Price

continued on page 2

Mount Mary student discovers passion for biology health science

Jaqueline Reyes is a Mount Mary University senior from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, majoring in biology health science.

Originally, she had no idea where she wanted to continue her education and was tentatively planning on attending a technical college. "My high school advisor told me to explore my options, attend a college fair and consider a four-year college," Jaqueline said. "The Mount Mary table (at the college fair) was very welcoming, and I really liked that it was an all-women's institution. The woman in charge of the table really sold me when she said, 'Everyone supports each other.' I also loved that the class environment was small, so there is more of a one-on-one connection with your professors."

As a first-generation student, Jaqueline found the process of applying for financial aid very intimidating because it was new to both herself and her parents. "The financial aid office has been very helpful and gives one-to-one assistance. They really know the terminology and each part of the FAFSA. You can tell that they really want you to succeed," Jaqueline said. "If I had not received financial aid, including the Wisconsin Grant, I would have chosen a different college."

When describing what it means to her to get her college degree, Jaqueline said, "As a first-generation student, getting my degree means I made it. I will be the first in my family to have a degree, so that is a huge accomplishment. The college experience was new and frightening, so the fact that I can say I made it through school is amazing."



Jaqueline Reyes

continued on page 2

Samari Price continued from page 1

“One of the reasons many people spend a lot of time imprisoned is because of the lack of competence from their defense counsel,” Samari said. “When I earn my law degree, I want to do pro bono work in the 53206 area – the community that shaped me into the woman I am today.”

Since starting her college experience at Marquette, Samari was awarded the Wisconsin Grant and Talent Incentive Program Grant as a low-income, first-generation student. Rather than worrying about working more hours to make ends meet, she can give more time to her studies and to serving the community.

Samari has also taken on many leadership roles at Marquette – an endeavor she said she undertook in part to “change the trajectory and college experience for Black students at Marquette” and increase the representation of diverse students on campus. She is the president of Marquette’s NAACP chapter, and is also involved in the Black Student Union, Marquette University Student Government, the Pre-Law Scholars-Program, and much more.

She does it all while maintaining a 3.8 GPA and Dean’s List standing, as well as participating in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).

EOP is a federally funded TRiO academic program at Marquette that motivates and enables low-income and first-generation students whose parents do not have a baccalaureate degree to enter and succeed in higher education. In 1969, Marquette founded the first EOP program in the nation, which has earned a reputation as one of the most distinguished, admired, and respected federal TRiO programs in the country.

“My parents and grandparents influence me the most in my academic career,” Samari said. “I love how they always send me words of encouragement every single day. I am the first person in my family to go to a four-year college so there is a lot of pressure to succeed. Every day my family makes sure to tell me to not let the stress get to me because they will be proud of me no matter what.”

Looking ahead, Samari also wants to create a business that will focus on supporting high school seniors with resources like scholarships and care packages as they pursue higher education.

Jaqueline Reyes continued from page 1

Jaqueline has specifically thrived in the biology department. She recently got a job as a CNA at the Milwaukee Center for Independence in the children’s center. She is working with kids who have heart disease, lung disease, and down syndrome. “The things I have learned in the classroom are applicable to the real world. I know it’s easy to think, ‘Why am I learning this?’, but it is nice that Mount Mary teaches real world skills,” she said.

After graduation Jaqueline plans to take a gap year before attending medical school. She said, “I have an awesome opportunity to have hands on experience at the Milwaukee Center for Independence as a CNA. This will give me time to explore different career paths in my field, shadow doctors, and prepare for the MCAT. Then once I pass the MCAT, I will apply to medical school and begin my next journey to becoming a pediatrician. It will be a long process, but I am looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead of me.”



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

FACT OF THE MONTH

Students over the age of 25 make up 30 percent of all students in WAICU, compared to 19 percent at Wisconsin’s four-year public universities.

Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey, 2019-20