

# Wisconsin Achievers

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## 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 53,000 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 sophomore studying to make life easier for those with disabilities

Sierra Andrews, a sophomore at Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE), chose to double major in biomedical engineering and computer science because she is determined to make life easier for those with disabilities. "I hope to use both degrees to get a master's degree or doctorate in neurological engineering, to hopefully help lessen the pain people with nerve damage experience on a daily basis," says Sierra.

In summer 2022 she put her skillsets to the test while attending a 10-week program at Rehabilitation Engineering at Cleveland State University (RE@CSU). There she worked with a team on research projects that aim to improve the lives of people with movement disabilities. This is especially close to Sierra's heart as her spinal cord was severed in a car crash during her senior year of high school. Sierra, now a wheelchair user, is determined to make a difference in the lives of others.

"The research project I worked on involved bringing self-care robots into everyday homes to help people with disabilities complete everyday tasks," explains Sierra. "As someone who is part of the paraplegic community, I was particularly excited for this research."

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Sierra Andrews

## Viterbo University senior looks forward to career in field he loves

Damon Lukaszewski has always loved sports, especially baseball. Fortunately, at Viterbo University, he has been able to follow his passions as a sports management and leadership major with a minor in marketing. In addition, he is a pitcher on the V-Hawks baseball team.

"As a student, I've learned about the other aspects of sports and sports business, and it's really piqued my interest," says Damon, a senior from Cashton, Wisconsin. "Eventually I would love to work in social media for a Major League Baseball team. After graduation, I plan to start in the minor leagues, if that's what it takes, and work my way up. That's my dream right now."

Damon was very familiar with Viterbo when deciding which college to attend. The university is located only a half hour from his hometown. Both his parents are alumni of the university and loved their experiences as students. Damon also received a scholarship from the university. Enrolling at Viterbo gave him the opportunity to realize his goal of playing collegiate baseball.

The Wisconsin Grant and other financial aid helps to make Damon's education possible and ensures he'll graduate with a modest and manageable amount of student loan debt. He also is working to finance his education, both as a Viterbo tour guide and at a retailer off campus.

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Damon Lukaszewski

## Sierra Andrews continued from page 1

People with any sort of paralysis commonly have difficulty doing everyday tasks, which is incredibly disheartening. The possibility of helping create something that lessens the number of tasks is an amazing opportunity and incredibly important to me.”

The everyday tasks Sierra’s group focused on included brushing teeth and eating. CSU developed a system that allows people to use their eye and head movements to select objects identified by computer vision software and then have a robot interact with a selected object. Sierra’s group worked on transitioning this system from a controlled laboratory environment to a less predictable home environment.

Coming from Nekoosa, Wisconsin, and a high school class of 60 students, MSOE felt like the perfect fit for Sierra because of the people, small classes, and the accessibility the university offers. “My favorite part of MSOE is by far the people I’ve met. I get to meet so many people with many different interests, lifestyles, beliefs, and much more. Even with these differences, it’s easy to connect with others, build relationships with them, and overall, just create a fun and enriching experience at MSOE.”

Sierra’s journey to MSOE was made possible thanks to the Wisconsin Grant. “This grant has allowed me to attend MSOE without taking out any student loans for the second year in a row and is a gift for which I am incredibly grateful.”

## FACT OF THE MONTH

**Thirty-one percent of WAICU undergraduates are eligible for federal Pell Grants, compared to 24 percent at four-year public institutions in Wisconsin**

Source: IPEDS, 2018-2019

## Damon Lukaszewski continued from page 1

“I usually do the tours for the prospective students interested in playing baseball,” he says. “That’s fun, and I speak their language.” Damon is very happy with his Viterbo education. The university experience continues to run strong in his family, as his father also is currently a student in the Master of Arts in Education graduate program. His father is employed as a teacher and his mother works in healthcare.

In his spare time, Damon enjoys spending time with his girlfriend and following his favorite team, the Milwaukee Brewers. His favorite Brewers of all time are retired catcher Jonathon Lucroy and current star pitcher and 2021 Cy Young Award winner Corbin Burnes.

Viterbo University business faculty member Kwangho Park knows Damon well and is very confident he has as a bright future. “Damon is always well-prepared and enthusiastically involved in class,” Park said. “He is a student-athlete, and not afraid of hard work or the challenges faced in my classes. I have absolutely no doubt he will be successful in a sport-related business field.”



*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