

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 52,000 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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Mount Mary student's education honors her family's legacy, cultural identity

Mount Mary junior Trisha Xiong of Milwaukee has had two lifelong dreams: earning a college degree and helping people.

As a pre-med, biology health science major and psychology minor at Mount Mary University, Trisha is well on her way to achieving her goals. Trisha learned the value of a college education early on. Her father immigrated to the U.S. from Laos, without knowing any English, and later earned a college degree. He stressed the importance of an education with Trisha and her siblings. "He saw an education as an advantage in society, which it is," Trisha said.

Receiving financial aid has helped Trisha make college accessible, she explains. "Financial aid has played a huge role in my college experience. If it had not been for the Wisconsin Grant or the Jewel Scholars program here at Mount Mary, college would have been a lot harder for me," said Trisha. The Jewel Scholars program, named after African-American scientist and educator Jewel Plummer Cobb, provides scholarships and programming to limited-income, academically talented students majoring in biology, chemistry, and food science chemistry.



Trisha Xiong

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Grants allow first-generation Ripon College student to achieve dream of becoming music educator

A dream of becoming a music educator is within sight for Jessica Miles of Lancaster, Wisconsin, a Ripon College senior, thanks to the assistance of a financial aid package that includes the Wisconsin Grant.

Jessica has always had a passion for music and for education. After developing a close bond with a high school band director, combining these passions seemed natural. She knew she would need to pursue higher education to achieve her goals. Despite family financial limitations and having to navigate higher education as a first-generation student, Jessica is moving steadily toward her goal. She is majoring in music education and gearing up to begin student teaching in the spring.

She chose to attend Ripon College because of its small, tight-knit community. Faculty focus on student success was another contributing factor to her decision. "One of my biggest fears going into college was being another face in the crowd and not getting the attention I needed to be successful and continue my education," she says.



Jessica Miles

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Trisha Xiong continued from page 1

Trisha says she chose Mount Mary University for the family-like community, an environment she says she did not find at other universities. “As a result of the smaller class sizes and one-to-one time with professors, your classmates and teachers get to know you on a personal level and not solely academic. I like that everyone knows everyone,” said Trisha. “Mount Mary University is unique in how it not only gave me financial support but also support for my whole person.”

As an Asian-American woman of color, Trisha understands the difference she can make in her community and how she can serve as inspiration for other women of color. “I want to be a leader for Laotian and Asian women; to show them that anything is possible with hard work and dedication,” Trisha said.

After graduation, Trisha plans to attend medical school in the hopes of pursuing a career in obstetrics or working with patients who have dementia. Trisha’s father passed away this April from dementia, a pivotal moment in her life. She feels inspired to help others with the same condition. “I want to be a doctor to help people, one to one. I know my dad would be proud.”

FACT OF THE MONTH

Ninety-seven percent of undergraduates at WAICU-member colleges and universities receive financial aid.

Source: WAICU Institutional Survey, 2017-18

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On campus, Jessica is a member of Kappa Delta Sorority, the National Association for Music Education, and Mu Phi Epsilon Professional Music Fraternity. She performs with various vocal and instrumental music ensembles on campus and regularly volunteers with local school districts to teach students.

“I personally love the friendships and community relationships I have built during my time at Ripon,” she says. “I consider myself an outgoing person and have taken advantage of community involvement and connections outside of the College.”

Jessica will be the first in her family to achieve a college degree, a journey that came with its fair share of challenges. The sticker price for private education also made Jessica nervous, despite some support from home. Fortunately, financial aid has helped make her journey into higher education both feasible and successful.

“Receiving many scholarships and grants like the Wisconsin Grant have made going to Ripon so much simpler,” she says.

As a music education student, Jessica is involved in ensemble rehearsals almost every evening. She says the Wisconsin Grant enables her and students like her to make the most out of their education and the extracurricular activities that are available to them.

“It’s important to get scholarships and grants to make this education possible,” she says. “It is so amazing that there are people and groups who give assistance to students in need who would like a four-year education. Without these grants, I would not be able to attend college or to become a music educator.”



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