

About the WTG

The twenty private, or independent, colleges and universities of Wisconsin operate without taxpayer support, but provide an invaluable public service to the state, educating more than 60,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need financial help to attend the college of their choice.

The State of Wisconsin created the Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) in 1965 to help qualified Wisconsin citizens to succeed. Fully one-third of the low-income students who apply for the WTG are turned away every year for lack of funds. Each month WTG Achievers brings you success stories of Wisconsinites for whom the WTG has made a significant difference.

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Lawrence student brings hope to children in Haiti

It's a close call as to whose education Oliver Zornow was more involved in during the past four years: his own, or those of children in Haiti.

While juggling the rigors of attending Lawrence University, the Appleton native simultaneously worked tirelessly to establish an elementary school in the poverty-stricken Caribbean nation.

"I went to Haiti in 2006 to experience what life was like



Oliver Zornow (left), of Appleton, meets with teachers and students at School of Grace of Caneille in Haiti.

for people living in extreme poverty," said Oliver. "I never imagined what I saw would affect me the way it did." Oliver knew he had to do

decide. He set about to build a school in rural Caneille, 50

something to change the lives of the children he met. A World Bank report citing education as the single most important determinant of an individual's potential to escape poverty helped him

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Sisters find success at Stritch with help from WTG

It wasn't Beth Streed's intention to follow her sister to Milwaukee's Cardinal Stritch University.

"I've always been known as Michelle's little sister, so I didn't want to go to Stritch at all," said Beth, who is 12 months younger than her older sibling.

However, a weekend visit with Michelle, attending classes and interacting with the Cardinal Stritch community, quickly changed Beth's mind.

"They were so friendly and welcoming," Beth said. "It felt



Sisters Beth and Michelle Streed, of Greendale, found a second home at Cardinal Stritch University.

a lot like home."

Now the sisters are poised to graduate from Stritch in 2011—Michelle in May and Beth in December—but each

has found her own individual path toward success.

A secondary education and English double major, Michelle hopes to teach in an urban school. She has been a resident

assistant, orientation leader, and campus ministry volunteer. Michelle has also traveled to Italy for a

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miles from Port-au-Prince.

Oliver embarked on a series of fundraisers to launch his project. By that fall, as he was entering Lawrence as a freshman, 130 Haitian children were greeted as the first students of Zornow's School of Grace of Caneille. Today the school boasts 150 students in six grades.

Although the school still stood after the earthquake, its situation became precarious due to the overwhelming needs of so many thousands of people around it. Price shocks, not earthquake aftershocks, created more challenges. A refugee camp that sprang up near the school after the quake added 23 new students, straining an already tight budget.

"We are very frugal in our operation," said the government and economics major. "People donate much of what we need, including server space to maintain a website."

While overseeing the school, Oliver often cut back on sleep to support his own educational expenses, working several part-time jobs in addition to his class demands.

"As a first-generation college student, I couldn't have attended Lawrence without the support of programs like the Wisconsin Tuition Grant," said Oliver. "One of the reasons I attended Lawrence was the financial aid I received. The WTG is certainly an important part of that."

With a post-graduation Peace Corps assignment to Africa awaiting, Oliver says School of Grace will remain an integral part of his life.

"This is pretty much a lifetime commitment. I don't see how I could push it off. I hope to always remain involved in some capacity."



In 2009, thirty percent of the people of color who graduated with a bachelor's degree in Wisconsin did so at a private college. In the Milwaukee area, it was nearly sixty percent.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Michelle and Beth Streed continued from page 1

Franciscan Leadership Pilgrimage and New York as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer. In addition, she works in Stritch's admission office.

A biology major, Beth has found her own place at Stritch as she prepares to become a physician's assistant. She is often in the newly renovated science labs or in the admission office, where she handles open houses and campus visit days, serves as a tour guide, and works at the Stritch welcome desk.

Living in their different worlds on the same campus, Beth said she and Michelle are so

busy that they have to actually plan time to see each other, so rarely do their paths cross.

"At first, we were nervous when we both ended up coming here," Michelle said. "Yet we've been able to have our own things happening, so it worked out. And it's not like one is overshadowing or crowding the other."

They know that neither of them could have succeeded at Cardinal Stritch without a generous financial aid package, including the university's Honors Scholarship and the Wisconsin Tuition Grant.

Growing up in a single-parent household, the sisters understand the value of hard work and perseverance, and they are thankful for the financial aid that has allowed them to make the best choice for each of them.

"I'm so grateful for it," said Michelle of the grant. "Without this kind of help with my education, there might have been a lot of things I wouldn't have been able to do—like go to my dream school. Stritch has really helped me grow." Those who know the sisters are confident they are "haven't seen anything yet."

Wisconsin's Private Colleges and Universities

- Alverno College *Milwaukee*
- Beloit College *Beloit*
- Cardinal Stritch University *Milwaukee*
- Carroll University *Waukesha*
- Carthage College *Kenosha*
- Concordia University Wisconsin *Mequon*
- Edgewood College *Madison*

- Lakeland College *Sheboygan*
- Lawrence University *Appleton*
- Marian University *Fond du Lac*
- Marquette University *Milwaukee*
- Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design *Milwaukee*
- Milwaukee School of Engineering *Milwaukee*

- Mount Mary College *Milwaukee*
- Northland College *Ashland*
- Ripon College *Ripon*
- St. Norbert College *De Pere*
- Silver Lake College *Manitowoc*
- Viterbo University *La Crosse*
- Wisconsin Lutheran College *Milwaukee*

