

WTG *Achievers*

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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 56,000 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 financially needy Wisconsin citizens to succeed. Fully one-third of the needy 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 difference.

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Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D.
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WTG helps student focus on learning at MSOE



Eric Evenson from Pepin, a senior at MSOE

Between his junior and senior years, Eric Evenson, a senior in mechanical engineering at Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE), spent the summer a long way from home—in Shanghai, China.

Through an internship, Eric was hired by Milwaukee-based Jason Inc. and sent to Shanghai. “I helped to develop a spreadsheet listing goals and progress, and obstacles and how they were resolved.”

The experience helped familiarize Eric with the manufacturing process and equipment. “On one project, we had an idea for a design from a U.S. engineer, and I helped to make the final drawings and have a supplier in China make the parts.”

The international experience is just one of the great

opportunities provided to Eric by MSOE and the Wisconsin Tuition Grant.

From Pepin, Wisconsin, Eric grew up on a dairy farm, the eldest of three siblings. His interest in machinery and engineering stems from those roots. “I was always around machinery; so that was my first interest.”

That interest was further piqued during his junior year of high school when he competed in the Rube Goldberg Machine Competition. Educated in

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Mount Mary student realizes dream of becoming occupational therapist, thanks to WTG



Kim Berndt from Pickett, a senior at Mount Mary College

Kim Berndt knew early in high school that she wanted to be an occupational therapist. She researched schools offering OT degrees and chose Mount Mary College on the basis of its strong, well-respected program and the

size of the school, which she described as “small enough to let me be an individual and not a number.” She also liked the fact that she would be just 80 miles from her hometown of Pickett, Wisconsin.

As a traditional-age resident student, Kim appreciates that “Mount Mary is like being part of a family. It is a beautiful place to live and learn. People on this campus reached out to me, supported me, and helped me to succeed.”

Kim’s path to success has

included active participation in the college community as a member of the Madrigal Singers, the Mount Mary Programming and Activities Council, and the Student OT Association. She was a student ambassador and participated in the New Student Orientation Program and the First-Year Student Mentor Program.

She also is a Caroline Scholar, which calls for a commitment of 350 hours of volunteer work per year in the

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ERIC EVENSON *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

engineering, Rube Goldberg was a well-known cartoonist who designed laughably complicated machines to perform simple tasks. “Our task was to pick, wash, and peel an apple and we had to have at least 25 steps. Each step had to trigger the next step, so we had a lot of marbles and waterwheels. It was a fun experience that gave me a connection to engineering and what it’s really about.” Eric adds proudly, “We were one of the finalists in the state of Wisconsin.”

On the MSOE campus, Eric finds a comforting mixture of big-city availability and close-knit community. “When I came to Milwaukee, I liked the big-city feel, something different than I was used to.”

With 60 student organizations to choose from, Eric, like other students, finds plenty of ways to get involved.

“The students are go-getters and achievers.

They get involved in a lot and take on a lot. They are hard workers,” Eric says. Eric is involved on campus in the Society of Automotive Engineers, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, and IntersVarsity Christian Fellowship as the prayer coordinator.

He says that the students, especially those living in the residence halls, form a support group. “There are plenty of people you can go to for help and go to for a good time.”

Eric finds the faculty equally accessible and helpful. “They’ve helped me look for jobs, and they are curious about what I am interested in. I’m really fond of them. There is a great faculty here at MSOE.”

Thankful for WTG and the way it cuts down on his worries, Eric adds, “WTG helps me be able to focus on school.”

FACT OF THE MONTH

“A decade ago, 30 of every 100 people age 18 to 24 from minority ethnic groups in Wisconsin were enrolled in college; now only 16 of 100 are.”

Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, September 2004.

KIM BERNDT *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

community; Kim fulfills that requirement at Badger Association of the Blind and at Children’s Hospital. Specifically, she has acted as a volunteer for the Special Needs Family Center at the hospital, assisting families and patients to obtain resources and support pertaining to specific diagnoses. She has acted as a weekly craft instructor at the Badger Association, assisting adults with varying degrees of vision loss to explore social and creative outlets available to them. “My volunteer work has been very rewarding and educational,” she says. “It is something I am thankful I am able to pursue.

“I have grown academically and spiritually at Mount Mary,” Kim says. “I have developed leadership skills. I’ve traveled to Ireland. I’ve acquired the skills and knowledge I need to be a successful occupational therapist.”

Following graduation, Kim plans to pursue a master’s degree in OT. She says she will “leave Mount Mary with a better sense of who I am and what I am capable of doing. Mount Mary has given me the confidence to succeed. If Wisconsin Tuition Grant funds had not been available to me, I would not have

been able to take full advantage of the academic opportunities I have had.

“Because of the grant, I have been able to participate fully in my campus and community, and I am far better prepared to reach my goals, which are to achieve academic and personal success; to continue a life that includes service, because I feel an obligation to give back what has been given to me; to become a respected practitioner in my chosen career of occupational therapy; and to live, work, and eventually raise a family in Wisconsin.”

Wisconsin’s Private Colleges and Universities

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

Lakeland College *Sheboygan*
 Lawrence University *Appleton*
 Marian College *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*

