

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 54,000 students a year. Many of Wisconsin's best and brightest need 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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Silver Lake's size, individuality suit family man



Donald Knaus of Green Bay, a junior at Silver Lake College

Every student is an individual; no two are alike. Take Donald Knaus, for example. In addition to managing a full course load at Silver Lake College, Donald also works

for a family-owned business in Green Bay, and is raising two daughters, Celsie, age 10, and Heather, age 4, with his wife, Danni.

Three years ago when Donald Knaus made the decision to pursue a double major in the fields of history and biology, he clearly saw the advantages that private schools, such as Silver Lake College, could offer students in these interrelated areas of study.

"The option to be involved in smaller classes with fewer students was a necessary component for me when conducting my college

search," Donald says. "In working through the complex issues of the sciences and the extensive details that make up the study of history, I really wanted the opportunity to get individual attention and one-to-one help when I needed it."

After an anticipated 2005 graduation from SLC, Donald intends to continue building his educational portfolio by working toward his master's degree and eventually a Ph.D. in chemistry.

"I am taking my undergraduate education very seriously. In order to continue my education

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Lakeland College hospitality major hones skills as innkeeper, student body president



Luke Pfeifer of Sheboygan, a senior at Lakeland College

Some have asked if financial aid recipients who also work end up having the "full college experience." Luke Pfeifer, Lakeland College senior,

shows they do. Pfeifer's dream is to one day own and operate his own resort. And now that he's poised to graduate from college, the experience he has gained at Lakeland has him more than ready to make that dream a reality.

Luke has always had a fascination with the hospitality industry. Growing up, he would often pretend to run his own hotel. When the family took trips and stayed in hotels, he loved watching the action at the front desk.

So, when it was time for this Sheboygan Lutheran High

School graduate to head to college, Lakeland College's hospitality management program was a perfect fit. And thanks to his Wisconsin Tuition Grant, Lakeland was also affordable.

Luke, who has already accepted a job as assistant general manager at the local Holiday Inn Express, tells the story of going to work one day in a pretty foul mood. He encountered a hotel guest who was also having a bad day, and they struck up a conversation. "We talked for about an hour and he said, 'Thanks, you

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DONALD KNAUS *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

and eventually earn my doctorate, I need to first tackle and understand the basics,” Donald says. “Private schools are special in that they take the time. In my view, the staff, administrators, and professors all seem to work together in making it a point to have students grasp the knowledge before graduation. It is a good feeling to know that my educational well-being is a priority,” Donald stresses.

Donald also attributes his academic success to the financial assistance he has received, including the Wisconsin Tuition Grant.

“Without a financial resource such as the Wisconsin Tuition Grant available to me, I would not be here at Silver Lake College and possibly not in college at all,” Donald says. “Attending college and earning a degree is an investment that many potential students are denied solely because they cannot afford it. I

am grateful to have this opportunity.” Donald also adds that he appreciates the fact the private colleges examine each student on an individual basis. “Being a non-traditional-age student, I felt that Silver Lake, and private colleges in general, gave me less hassle about returning to school,” Donald comments. “I felt that the counselors here were really genuine and that they kept my best interests at heart throughout the entire enrollment process.”

Besides learning the concepts of the sciences in the classroom, Donald has applied his knowledge to helping area communities improve their local environment. He is an active member of the local chapter of Tri-Beta National Biology Society, as well as S.O.S. (Save Our Streams), a campus group that voluntarily develops and implements projects to help improve the quality of local rivers and streams.

FACT OF THE MONTH

The “chance for college” in Wisconsin is 44.6 percent. That means for every 100 students who enter 9th grade, about 45 are likely to graduate from high school four years later and enroll in college within a year.

— Education Commission of the States

LUKE PFEIFER *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

really made me feel better.’ I knew then what I wanted to do,” Luke says. “It’s the customer service part of the job. You realize you make such a difference to people.”

Luke has spent his time at Lakeland making a difference both on his personal resume and throughout the campus.

Supplementing his Wisconsin Tuition Grant, Luke has worked several positions (guest services, executive housekeeper, social hour attendant) at the Holiday Inn Express, spent a summer as housekeeping manager with Treasure Island Resort

in Wisconsin Dells, and served as a conference services intern at Marquette University. He’s also in his third year as a resident assistant on campus, helping Lakeland build the sense of community that is a foundation for this campus of 835 students. The sense of community that Luke sees at Lakeland was one of the benefits that attracted him to the college, something that was missing at the other places he visited.

Lakeland allows students to get a taste of their majors in real-life work settings, so they can decide if their career choices really suit them. “Getting experience early

gives you the confidence to interview for jobs,” Luke says. “Lakeland’s program allows students to make mistakes early and learn from those. They’re the same mistakes that others will have to make in their first few years of work.”

When he came to Lakeland, Luke set a goal of becoming student body president, which he achieved in May 2002. Luke has worked as an admissions department student ambassador and a tutor, and has served as vice president and technical manager with the campus activities board, president of Lakeland Media Connect, and campus safety coordinator.

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*



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