

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 55,000 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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WTG, Stritch make real difference to this 'fighter'



Justina Shaw of Milwaukee, a senior at Cardinal Stritch University

Justina Shaw has always counted on role models to help her through life's difficulties, and, as a result, she has become one herself. Justina, a Wisconsin Tuition Grant recipient, has overcome

a variety of obstacles in life, including a childhood marred by her mother's drug addiction and the heartbreaking news of a favorite teacher's arrest for drug trafficking.

Through it all, Justina displayed a single-minded perseverance to overcome these challenges. Justina is involved in many activities both on and off campus at Stritch, and she received a President's Student Service Award from the White House last year for her varied volunteer efforts. She also recently returned from a study abroad experience in London.

The support came in the form of her teachers, beginning in high school and continuing with her professors at Stritch. "I've never not been a teacher's pet," Justina admits with a smile. "Teachers have always been key. They're also a support system."

Teachers were an integral support system when Justina was a young girl in Milwaukee, due to her mother's battle with drug addiction and mental illness. Justina has a twin sister and two other sisters. One of

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Marquette student makes good use of WTG support to forward an engineering career



Joseph Ribbich of Mukwonago, a junior at Marquette University

Joseph Ribbich and his father like to work on classic cars. "We have a '68 Ford Mustang — our pride and joy — and a 1928 Model A Ford. I enjoy working on both of them with my dad," Joseph says.

It was his love for cars that set Joseph's sights on pursuing an engineering degree and, eventually, designing cars for the automotive industry. "I thought that working for a car company would be a good way to combine something I already like with engineering," he says.

Since Joseph's older brother and uncle attended Marquette University and his older brother had also received Wisconsin Tuition Grant funds to attend college, Joseph gave WTG and Marquette University a close look.

"I applied to Purdue, Michigan State, UW-Platteville, and the Naval Academy, as well as Marquette," Joseph says. "Eventually, I narrowed it down to Purdue and Marquette. I picked Marquette because of the financial aid they made available to me, and because it's a first-rate school."

Joseph, a native of Mukwonago, is now a junior majoring in Marquette's computer and electrical engineering program, with a minor in business

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JUSTINA SHAW *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

her key supporters and confidants during this difficult period was a teacher from the Sarah A. Scott School, but the teacher was later arrested for drug trafficking while Justina was a student at Bay View High School in Milwaukee.

Despite these setbacks, Justina developed an ability to find support and direction from others in her life. “The African-American community is very supportive,” she says. “I’ve always been taken care of by my family. There are little things that can give you a safe place. I was always involved in something.”

It did not take long for Justina to begin to make her mark at Stritch, where she is pursuing a triple major in business, psychology, and sociology. Justina has been involved in Stritch’s Students in Free Enterprise, which provides participants the opportunity to learn, practice, and teach the principles of free enterprise.

Justina was among the first to participate in the Lilly Vocation Fellows program, which affords students an opportunity to receive financial support for the continuation of a theological exploration of vocation while completing their degree.

Justina expresses gratitude for the assistance that the Wisconsin Tuition Grant has provided to her. Justina says the grant “helped me to afford a private education — something that I will always value.”

She says she considers herself a fighter but that she has learned to pick her battles wisely. “If you have a confrontational personality, nobody will approach you,” she says. “I do want to be an activist. I do not back down. Fighting for so much in life, you kind of pick it up. I’ve always been a fighter, but Stritch has pushed me.”

FACT OF THE MONTH

Lower percentages of Wisconsin high school graduates are attending college. Between 1992 and 2002, while national averages of college enrollment increased, Wisconsin’s share of high school graduates enrolling in college actually decreased by 2.6 percent.

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JOSEPH RIBBICH *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

administration. He participates in the engineering department’s Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program, which allows him to integrate classroom work and practical work experience. Students like Joseph alternate between taking courses one semester and working the next semester, with no summers off.

“Co-op is a full-time job, 40 hours a week,” he explains. “It gives me the real-world experience that I wasn’t getting in summer jobs. Plus, it pays money, which really helps out with meals, books, and other expenses.” Joseph is getting his firsthand engineering experience at

Rockwell Automation in Milwaukee, in the company’s Information Platforms business. “I’m on the new products design team,” he says. “I’m currently working on a portable infrared touch screen that allows one person to control 10 machines at a time on a manufacturing floor from one location.”

In addition to carrying an average of 19 credit hours per semester and working at Rockwell Automation, Joseph plays drums in the Marquette University Band and plays on the school’s club football team. Joseph is also active in IEEE, a professional electrical engineers’ society.

“We meet weekly, do activities related to our field, visit companies, and tutor new students,” he says.

Joseph says that receiving the Wisconsin Tuition Grant is what makes his involvement in all these activities possible and enables him to get a quality education at a university that, he says, goes above and beyond. “The WTG takes the pressure off coming up with an extra job to pay for school. Without it, I would have to work more jobs while taking classes. Most of all, the WTG allows me the time I need for my studies. And that’s what we’re all here for, to study.”

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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