

About the WTG

The twenty-three private, or independent, nonprofit 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.

WTG Achievers is published monthly by the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU), 122 W. Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53703-2723; 608-256-7761; mail@waicu.org.

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Recent graduate is inspired to “make it happen”

With the support of her family, Lauren Senour graduated from St. Norbert College with a 4.0 grade point average and an exhausting, exciting, and inspiring record of volunteer work.

Lauren recalls that, like many of her peers and as a prospective college student in a low-income family, “I was afraid to choose a school that would be too expensive for me to pay for on my own.”



Lauren Senour, originally from Brown Deer, looks forward to helping youth lead active lives.

Her mother, Diane, died in December 2007 after a battle with cancer. Lauren was a senior at Brown Deer

High School. Just before her mother died, “she advised me to stop thinking in dollar signs and encouraged me to go wherever I really wanted to be.

“She then continued to reassure me that, no matter what the price of my education, I would find a way to pay for it and come

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A life of public service in the making

Transfer student and Waunakee native Michael “Indy” Stluka has had quite a year, and it doesn't look like life will slow down any time soon.

In addition to his coursework at Edgewood College, this spring he served as chair for the Mifflin Planning Committee, working on downsizing and making safe the annual ‘Block Party’ event held in Madison. He was quoted often in the news media as the group sought solutions for a decades-



Michael “Indy” Stluka, originally from Waunakee, is an advocate for affordable student housing.

long cycle of assaults and violence that has marred the event. Those efforts were, for this year, successful. It is the latest indicator that this senior Economics major

is just getting started and has a very bright future. And the Wisconsin Tuition Grant is fueling that future.

Actually, “Indy” (his nickname) has been a busy man for the past several years. An internship with a State Senator,

working on economic policy, provided the inspiration and energy for leadership and public service. “As an economics major, that was a

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out ahead,” Lauren says, adding that her mother would say, “Listen to your own motto: ‘Make it happen.’”

Lauren says she is incredibly happy that she received a Wisconsin Tuition Grant, noting, “it took a lot of hard work and determination to receive the scholarship, but I simply could not have attended St. Norbert otherwise.

“I knew that attending a private, nonprofit school would push me to do more, work harder, and make the most out of each and every day.” Lauren is also a recipient of the Rath scholarship administered by WAICU. The Rath together with the WTG allowed her to focus more on getting the most out of college rather than on the costs.

Her high school activities included more than 300 hours of community service. That level of

commitment continued at St. Norbert where Lauren held four jobs; served as co-director of the college radio station, and executive board member of the Colleges Against Cancer program; was a fitness instructor at three locations in Green Bay, including the college’s health and wellness center; was captain of the Relay for Life team in the fight against cancer; and was active with the cerebral palsy telethon. She also volunteers at Milwaukee’s Summerfest.

She has received academic honors in six areas of the college and has been named a St. Norbert College Awards of Distinction recipient.

Lauren intends to get certified for personal training, and has plans for graduate school in an area emphasizing nutrition. “Ultimately, I’d really love to do nonprofit work with youth, helping them to lead active and healthy lives.”



Between 2000-01 and 2010-11, the number of students earning a bachelor’s degree at a Wisconsin private, nonprofit college or university increased 25 percent. During the same time period, the number of students of color earning a bachelor’s degree increased 103 percent.

Source: WAICU Research Archives

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natural fit,” he says. Receiving financial aid like the Wisconsin Tuition Grant is part of what enabled Indy to focus on his classes and career-related internships, rather than worry always and only about money.

The internship also opened some important doors. Indy has been a student-citizen voice, working on affordable housing initiatives in the City of Madison. He’s been appointed to the City of Madison’s Housing Committee. “I try to help create a voice for the students,” he says. “Because too often, students may not pay attention, and if they don’t pay

attention, they won’t get heard.”

He is passionate about student housing.

“Affordable housing (for students) is a really major issue in the city of Madison,” he says. “I’ve been trying to advocate for more affordable student housing districts, instead of high-density, high-rise towers that usually run a student six or seven hundred dollars a room, which can ‘price’ students out of the city.”

The experiences of working in the State Capitol, and of serving in official roles

for the City of Madison, have whetted his appetite for public service and public life. He will pursue a law degree after graduation from Edgewood, and he looks forward to working on public policy and public interest issues in the future.

This fall, he will serve as a resident assistant, and will continue his work on-campus job assisting in the Alumni Office. “I get to hear stories from alumni, and it inspires me to represent the college well,” Indy says. “I can look forward to doing that in the future, too.”

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*
- Columbia College of Nursing *Milwaukee*
- Concordia University Wisconsin *Mequon*

- Edgewood College *Madison*
- Lakeland College *Sheboygan*
- 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 College *Milwaukee*
- Northland College *Ashland*
- Ripon College *Ripon*
- St. Norbert College *De Pere*
- Silver Lake College of the Holy Family *Manitowoc*
- Viterbo University *La Crosse*
- Wisconsin Lutheran College *Milwaukee*

