

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.

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WTG helps Mount Mary student pursue radiologic career

Desirae Yang, a first generation American, was born in Milwaukee and raised in an adjoining suburb until she was 16. However, her father decided to follow Hmong tradition and moved the family an hour away to begin farming with her grandparents. The change from a large suburban high school where Yang was very involved in sports and other school activities to the decidedly smaller



Desirae Yang of Milwaukee, a student at Mount Mary University.

atmosphere at Cedar Grove-Belgium High School was not an easy transition for her. However, she soon found that she enjoyed the smaller classes and the consistent

interaction with her teachers.

Because of Yang's eagerness to return to a metropolitan setting, her parents encouraged her to apply to many institutions, both private and public. Yang was invited by a friend to consider Mount Mary University. Her visit convinced her that she had found the best possible fit,

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Ambitious WTG recipient finds early success at MIAD

Coming to the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD) from Germantown High School, junior Kevin Christian says art has played a large role in his life and has always been an important part of who he is and what he does.



Kevin Christian of Germantown, a student at Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design.

According to Christian, even though art was a passion, it was only a couple of months before he graduated from high school that he realized he wanted a career path in the arts. "During my first visit to

MIAD, I knew that this was the school for me. When I met my admissions counselor and saw the inspiring work displayed throughout the school, I just knew I had to apply," Christian says.

Christian decided early in his career at MIAD to major in Integrated Studio Arts with a double minor in Communication Design and Advertising, with the Advertising minor taken through cross-registration in a number of courses locally at Marquette University.

Christian is adding to his experience in many ways. "I have participated in MIAD

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a school in a metropolitan area that offered the small class size and personal attention she needed to flourish.

Her only worry in making the choice for private over public was a concern about how the family could afford it. Now in her second year of a program that will lead to a career in radiologic technology, Yang expresses confidence in her decision to attend Mount Mary and acknowledges the significance that financial aid had in making this university affordable. “The program I’m in is fast-paced and quite intense, requiring summer school sessions,” Yang said. She credits the Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) for her ability to pursue her studies without the burden of additional debt. The WTG has motivated her to work her hardest to show her appreciation to the people of her home state for the support that they provide. Yang also has

participated in Mount Mary’s support program that serves traditionally underserved students, providing supplementary services focused on mitigating the non-academic challenges some students face—daunting challenges that may affect students’ ability to thrive in college.

Yang describes Mount Mary University as a “life-changing experience” and believes that the academic strength is matched by an emphasis on morals and values that are consistent with her Hmong heritage.

Her ties to the Hmong community also have been strengthened by volunteer work that she has done with the Hmong-American Women’s Association, dedicated to addressing the social needs of this population. Yang’s on-campus job in the financial aid office allows her to see the impact that the WTG has on students’ lives.



A greater percentage of WAICU students are considered in financial need than UW system students (32% to 28%).

Source: (IPEDS Financial Aid survey, 2011-12 data)

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Student Government and also serve on the MIAD AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) Student Chapter as secretary,” he explained.

He also secured an internship with the curator at the Museum of Wisconsin Art. “I hope to get a design internship before I graduate,” he adds. Christian showed his work at the museum in a member exhibition.

To practice applying to juried exhibitions, Christian submitted work for consideration in an online international

juried digital art exhibition, “Simply the Best 2,” hosted by Digital Art: California. He was accepted into the show almost immediately, and was one of the youngest participating artists. “I originally submitted work as a means to get feedback,” Christian said. “Being selected into “Simply the Best 2” was truly an inspiring moment and a terrific ending to my freshman year at MIAD.”

Richard Florida’s book, “The Rise of the Creative Class,” shows that students with the gifts, skills and abilities such as Christian’s are essential for a dynamic,

entrepreneurial culture and civil society. WTG will pay dividends for all of us for years to come. Christian has benefitted from a strong support system at MIAD, as well as from inspiring mentors in faculty members. “They help me look inside to understand my creative process and realize my artistic potential,” he said.

Christian hopes to attend Yale or Pratt for his graduate studies. He says the WTG allowed him to pursue his goals and to have these early successes. WTG has been vital for Christian to combine his passion with a lifelong career path.

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 University *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*

