

# 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 58,000 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 Lawrence senior reach the next level



*Christie McCowen of Iowa, a senior at Lawrence University*

As a high school senior, Christie McCowen had serious doubts about whether she'd be able to pursue her dreams of a college education. With her family experiencing some

serious financial distress, she faced a cloudy educational future. "I was very afraid I wouldn't be able to afford to go to college," said Christie, an economics major at Lawrence University.

But thanks in part to the Wisconsin Tuition Grant, Christie was able to not only attend college, but thrive once she got there.

"The Wisconsin Tuition Grant provides assistance I couldn't come up with anywhere else," said Christie, who helps pay her college expenses by also working part-time at an

Appleton pizza parlor. "The WTG is really the difference between attending Lawrence and not attending Lawrence."

Since arriving at Lawrence, Christie has thrown herself headlong into a variety of activities, among them student government, the school newspaper, and the campus volunteer center.

"If I'm not booked, I'm bored," says the ebullient Christie. "Luckily, there's always something going on at Lawrence, so I'm rarely bored."

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## Tuition Grant recipient at Concordia prepares for career in occupational therapy



*Rachel Kleba of Oconomowoc, a sophomore at Concordia University Wisconsin*

Rachel Kleba has always had strongly defined goals for herself and has made the most of every opportunity. She was a very

involved high school student, excelling in both academics and extracurricular activities. She took her classes seriously and studied hard to maintain her grade point average of 4.0, but at the same time she also wanted to give back to her classmates and community.

When she graduated from Lake Country Lutheran School in 2007, she was not only class valedictorian, but also team captain for volleyball, basketball, and soccer; involved in student government as a class officer; active in the weekly youth band; and a member of the math/science team.

When Rachel began researching colleges in her junior year of high school, she says she knew immediately that a large public university would not be a good fit for her. She wanted to find a college or university where she could continue to grow spiritually while playing soccer and receiving a quality education in her chosen field of occupational therapy.

Rachel adds that when she found Concordia University Wisconsin she was immediately inspired by the welcoming atmosphere, small class sizes, beautiful campus, and great programs in athletic

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**CHRISTIE McCOWEN** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In addition to her role as an officer with the Lawrence University Community Council, the campus' governing body responsible for oversight of most non-academic matters, Christie is the longest-serving staff member of the student newspaper, handling both layout editor and business manager duties. She also finds time to write feature stories for the paper and will apply her business manager and journalism acumen as the incoming editor of Lawrence's annual yearbook.

But of all of Christie's interests, none brings her more satisfaction than her role as event coordinator of the Lawrence Community Service and Volunteer Center. She coordinated this spring's annual "Shack-a-thon," a weekend-long fundraiser for the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity, and also organized a weeklong series of collaborative activities involving 15 campus organizations.

"I really enjoy connecting students with the right opportunities for them to get involved in the community," said Christie, who plans to add volunteer work for the Appleton Community Blood Center to her résumé in the coming year. "I don't know of a single student at Lawrence who isn't doing more in some way, whether that's bettering themselves, bettering the campus, bettering the greater community. Everything is about reaching the next level."

Following graduation next spring, Christie hopes the next level for her includes event planning, including organizing conferences or conventions. "I'm very detail oriented," she said.

Christie calls her time at Lawrence "the best experience of my life" and is very grateful the Wisconsin Tuition Grant helped make it possible. She emphasizes, "Without it, I wouldn't be here."

**FACT OF THE MONTH**

More than 500 students receiving the Academic Excellence Scholarship—the so-called valedictorian's scholarship—are enrolled this year at Wisconsin's private colleges and universities.

*Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board*

**RACHEL KLEBA** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

training, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. She knew it would be a wonderful place to excel educationally while continuing to pursue her myriad other interests.

Concordia proved to be a great decision for Rachel, who earned a 4.0 her first semester and a 3.9 her second semester. She was also the only freshman to be named to the Rookie soccer team.

Now, as Rachel begins her sophomore year, she is ready to deepen her involvement on campus and participate in even more groups and activities.

She also looks forward to taking advantage of her opportunity to travel to Spain with Concordia's soccer team. With all of her accomplishments, she has success written all over her.

As for the future, Rachel wants to use her education to make a difference to society. She is hoping to utilize her occupational therapy degree to help younger kids in some shape or form.

In preparation for that goal, she has spent this summer helping to coach an 8th grade basketball summer league and assisting

with Speed and Strength camp for 7th grade through high school students.

When asked what the Wisconsin Tuition Grant means to her, she is quick to say, "The WTG has afforded me the opportunity to go the school where I feel comfortable and can excel both professionally and spiritually. I am so grateful to be a recipient."

Rachel's commitment to making the world a better place will serve her well when she graduates from Concordia with her occupational therapy degree and joins Wisconsin's health care workforce.

**Wisconsin's Private Colleges and Universities**

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

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

