



Contact:

Tanya Pinsoneault

UW Credit Union

tanya@theweaponry.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

UW Credit Union Awards \$30,000 to UW System Students

2023 marks the 10-year anniversary of the credit union's Community Values Scholarship

Madison, WI – August 28, 2023 – UW Credit Union distributed a combined \$30,000 to 10 students this month on behalf of the credit union's annual Community Values Scholarship program. Since its inception in 2013, the scholarship fund has honored the volunteerism, activism and mentorship of more than 80 students.

"For ten years, we've been humbled by the focused way today's students put others first," said UW Credit Union Financial Inclusion and Education Manager Erin Bykowski. "People helping people. It's a simple philosophy and a core tenant of the credit union movement but it's also something that guides how these individuals live their lives. Their contributions extend well beyond campus, with many of them forging lasting connections that continue to bring our communities closer to a place of compassion and mutual respect."

From creating tuition equity and curbing sexual violence to helping international and first-generation college students thrive, the 2023 Community Value Scholarship winners underscore primary issues impacting students and society.

- **Najwa Atasi, UW-Milwaukee** – Atasi is a National Honor Society member and student mentor whose volunteerism efforts include coordinating campus blood drives and securing food aid via local pantries. Through her work with Syrian Refugee Food Shelters, Atasi also donates toys and clothes.
- **Phinneous Markson, Edgewood College** – Markson's service path has taken him to Madison College and Edgewood, where he sharpened both institutions' DEI efforts. His role in multiple task forces increased student access while fostering more inclusive teaching practices and campus communities.
- **Paul Morris, UW-Stevens Point** – An incoming freshman, Morris learned a lot about giving back in high school. Morris and his football teammates often volunteered with a local food pantry to serve hot meals to the community. Those conversations offered a healthy dose of humility and humanity.
- **Okpara Ikechukwu, Madison College** – Ikechukwu is the inaugural president of the multicultural student nurses' organization. Her efforts improve preparedness and expertise for students of color. She also established Peer Coaches to help freshman acclimate to campus and curriculum.
- **Adriana Vazquez Rodriguez, UW-Madison** – Through her role with Dreamers of UW Madison, Rodriguez advocates for undocumented and DACA students via tuition equity and scholarship aid. She also volunteers with Centro Hispano, helping with annual give-back events.



- **Trisha Saxena, UW-Madison** – As a House Fellow, Saxena is a primary campus resource for first-time students. She also leads workshops about sexual violence and victim empowerment through [PAVE](#) while serving on a mental health services board and providing sign language research assistance.
- **Kelsey Shoppach, UW-Whitewater** – Shoppach and her a capella group partners with the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight to bring joy to WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans. In addition to 16 honor flight performances, her community service includes hundreds of handwritten cards for veterans.
- **Lim Spark, UW-La Crosse** – Spark is an international transfer student with active roles in the Hmong Organization for Promoting Education (HOPE) and the Asian Student Organization. Cheng also assists incoming first-generation college students as a mentor for the Academic Success Institute.
- **Will Stevens, UW Oshkosh** – As a national honor society member, Stevens participated in several community fundraisers in high school. He also earned a Certificate of Global Competence, raising much-needed funds for Haiti and assisting the Haiti Outreach Program with student education.
- **Lauryn Wiesman, UW-La Crosse** – Wiesman applied her skills as a secondary Spanish-speaker to teach English to a struggling young student. Through her mentorship, the student experienced tremendous language acquisition. Wieseman subsequently helped modify lesson plans for non-English speakers.

Scholarship winners will receive \$3,000 each to be directly deposited into their tuition account. Eligibility requirements include that individuals are new or returning full-time undergraduate students attending a UW System school, Madison College or Edgewood College.

To learn more, visit <https://www.uwcu.org/about-us/community-giving/scholarship/>

About UW Credit Union

UW Credit Union is a growing, federally insured financial institution and a leading provider of a full range of financial services to University of Wisconsin communities. UW Credit Union's more than 900 employees serve the financial needs of nearly 333,000 members through world-class technology systems, and through a convenient network of 32 branch locations and over 100 ATMs. With \$5 billion in assets, UW Credit Union is ranked nationally among the leading credit unions. Founded more than 90 years ago by members of the University of Wisconsin faculty and staff, UW Credit Union continues to operate as a not-for-profit, member-owned financial cooperative with locations in the Madison, Milwaukee, Stevens Point, Green Bay, Oshkosh, Whitewater and La Crosse areas.

###