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## **Natalee Ihde Awarded \$2,500 Wisconsin Cheese Originals Scholarship**

MADISON, Wis. – A Door County woman with a Culinary Arts degree and professional cheesemongering experience is the recipient of the 2017 Beginning Cheesemaker Scholarship from Wisconsin Cheese Originals.

Natalee Ihde, of Fish Creek, will use the \$2,500 award to begin the process of earning her Wisconsin Cheesemaker's License. Wisconsin is the only state to require cheesemakers to be licensed, an 18-month process that involves attendance at university short courses, 240 hours of apprenticeship under a licensed cheesemaker, and passing a written exam at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture.

Ihde is currently taking cheesemaking short courses while working as a farm helper at Door County Creamery in Sister Bay. Her goal is to create artisan cheeses someday in her own farmstead creamery. "I hope to follow in the footsteps of the many passionate cheesemakers that encouraged me, and also create an environment to support the next generation of cheesemakers," she said.

Since 2009, Wisconsin Cheese Originals has awarded \$21,500 to nearly a dozen different beginning Wisconsin cheesemakers, many of whom have won U.S. and World Championship medals for their cow, goat and sheep milk cheeses.

Wisconsin Cheese Originals is a member-based organization dedicated to growing and promoting the state's artisan cheese community by hosting classes, dairy tours and educational events. To learn more, visit [www.wisconsincheeseoriginals.com](http://www.wisconsincheeseoriginals.com).

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