

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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199 Wisconsin Apprentices Receive \$298,500 in Scholarships from Ascendium Education Group
\$1,500 ‘Tools of the Trade’ Scholarships Help Cover Cost of Equipment, Tools and Clothing to Keep Apprentices on Path to Success

Madison, Wis.—Ascendium Education Group (formerly Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates) is pleased to continue its successful Tools of the Trade Apprentice Scholarship program for a sixth straight year. A total of \$298,500 in scholarships were awarded recently to 199 construction and industrial trades apprentices from 15 Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) institutions. Each apprentice received \$1,500.

With high demand for skilled employees, apprenticeships offer a win-win solution. Apprentices gain up to five years of real-world work experience while attending school, and businesses gain access to skilled workers with legitimate on-the-job experience.

But financial pressure can make it hard to complete an apprenticeship. Apprentices are often juggling the pressures of school, work and family, while apprentice wages are modest and financial aid options are limited. Meanwhile, apprentices incur substantial costs beyond tuition, such as purchasing tools, clothing and other supplies. Tools of the Trade scholarships provide funds to help cover those expenses.

Jordan Jordan, a sheet metal apprentice attending Milwaukee Area Technical College, is experiencing first-hand the benefits of a scholarship to help defray costs. His goal is to complete all five years of his apprenticeship, become a well-rounded journeyman and provide for his growing family.

“As you can imagine, just starting out, it can be rough financially, especially providing for a family of five with one income,” Jordan said. “This scholarship will provide money for tools I can use for work, so it removes a major weight off my shoulders. It’s an honor to provide for my household and do something I really enjoy at the same time.”

Since the program’s inception, 95% of Tools of the Trade scholarship recipients have either completed or continued their apprenticeships the following semester. This year, Ascendium surpassed the \$1 million mark in total Tools of the Trade scholarships awarded.

“Our scholarships help learners overcome financial barriers so they can focus on successfully completing their apprenticeship and advancing to an in-demand trade career,” said Ascendium Chairman, President and CEO Richard D. George. “We’re proud to help Wisconsin’s hardworking apprentices build brighter futures.”

To learn more about the Tools of the Trade Apprentice Scholarship program, visit ascendiumphilanthropy.org.

2018-2019 Tools of the Trade Apprentice Scholarships

Blackhawk Technical College
13 recipients

Fox Valley Technical College
10 recipients

Chippewa Valley Technical College
12 recipients

Gateway Technical College
9 recipients

Lakeshore Technical College
12 recipients

Madison College
33 recipients

Mid-State Technical College
11 recipients

Milwaukee Area Technical College
19 recipients

Moraine Park Technical College
14 recipients

Nicolet Area Technical College
2 recipients

Northcentral Technical College
11 recipients

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
22 recipients

Waukesha County Technical College
16 recipients

Western Technical College
9 recipients

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College
6 recipients

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About Ascendium: Elevating opportunity through the power of higher education since 1967
Ascendium Education Group (formerly Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates) is the nation's largest student loan guarantor, a leading postsecondary education and workforce training philanthropy, and a provider of student success services for colleges and universities. Founded in 1967, Ascendium provides information, tools and counseling to millions of borrowers nationwide, helping them avoid default and keep the door to re-enrollment open. Ascendium's philanthropy provides grant funding to educational institutions and researchers aimed at eliminating systemic obstacles to postsecondary success. Our grantmaking focuses on students from low-income families, a disproportionate number of whom are students of color and first-generation students. To learn more, visit www.ascendiumeducation.org and www.ascendiumphilanthropy.org.