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WDA Foundation awards \$16,500 in dental and hygiene scholarships

The [Wisconsin Dental Association Foundation](#) is helping lighten the higher-education financial load of 11 dental and dental hygiene students in the state by awarding them a combined \$16,500 in scholarships.

Five dental students entering their fourth year at Marquette University School of Dentistry in fall 2019 have received \$2,500 each in WDAF Tuition Scholarship Awards. These awards are made on the basis of academic achievement, motivation, character and financial need. Students must be Wisconsin residents who rank within the top 20 state students in their class to be considered.

Amanda Beltrame (D3) of Brookfield has always wanted to be a dentist. She began researching the profession when she was 8 years old and started shadowing dentists in high school to prepare for the profession. She hopes to practice in Wisconsin.

Hannah Bonikowske (D3) of Iowa is a first-generation college student from a small rural town. While all aspects of the health care field provided interest, dentistry became her career goal from a very young age. She would like to practice general dentistry in a rural location.

Katelyn Kreh (D3) of Brookfield has a natural inclination to be a caregiver, leading her to select dentistry as a career path. She has devoted her time to learning skillsets that will best prepare her for patient interaction encountered in dentistry. Dedicated to giving back, Katelyn would like to practice in a community clinic in Milwaukee.

Jessica Vogt (D3) of Germantown worked as a pharmacy technician for six years, which led her to wanting a more “hands on” approach to providing health care and prompted her return to college to study dentistry. She would like to practice general dentistry in a small community.

Shaina Zhao (D3) of Minocqua has a love of science and a desire to use that love to help others. This passion and some gentle guidance from her family dentist steered Shaina toward the dental profession. Shaina is interested in teaching or mentoring students in the future.

One dental student received a \$1,500 WDA Foundation/Alliance Scholarship Award, given to a married Wisconsin resident in his or her second through fourth year of study.

Jonathon Traska (D4) of Wausau had a seven-year career in youth ministry before deciding he was looking for a different path where he could continue to help people. That desire eventually led him to dentistry. Married with five children, Jonathon credits his wife for keeping the family grounded while he pursues his dream to become a dentist.

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The WDA Foundation also awards scholarships to support students in Wisconsin technical colleges who are studying dental hygiene. One student at each college is selected to receive a \$500 scholarship to help defray education costs.

Five dental hygiene students received scholarships this year. Recipients must be state residents with academic achievement and financial need. The schools, their scholarship recipients and students' cities of residence include:

- Chippewa Valley Technical College – **Nicole Birschbach** of New Holstein
- Fox Valley Technical College – **Morgan Reed** of Appleton
- Milwaukee Area Technical College – TBD
- Northcentral Technical College – **Emma Johnson** of Ashland
- Northeast Wisconsin Technical College – **Elizabeth Nelson** of Mayville

Since 2000, the WDA Foundation has awarded \$233,000 in scholarships to dental and dental hygiene students to help assure quality dental care will always be available to Badger State residents.

Donations from many people and organizations have helped the foundation provide financial support for statewide charitable dental care, oral hygiene outreach and education efforts for 62 years.

Visit the WDA Foundation [donor page](#) on WDA.org for information on how you can help with a donation.

About the Wisconsin Dental Association Foundation

The Wisconsin Dental Association Foundation was established in 1957 as an independent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization that works closely with the WDA. The Foundation is committed to improving the oral health and overall well-being of Wisconsin residents while supporting the needs of the dental community. It does this by awarding scholarships to qualified students, providing financial support to projects that deliver dental care to the underserved and administering Donated Dental Services and the Mission of Mercy program.

About the Wisconsin Dental Association

The Wisconsin Dental Association, with 3,100 member dentists and a number of dental hygienists, is the leading voice for dentistry in Wisconsin. WDA members are committed to promoting professional excellence and quality oral health care. Established in 1870, the WDA is headquartered in West Allis and has a legislative office in Madison. The WDA is affiliated with the American Dental Association - the largest and oldest national dental association in the world. For more information, call 414-276-4520, visit WDA.org and find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).