



State of Wisconsin
Department of Financial Institutions

Tony Evers, **Governor**

Cheryll Olson-Collins, **Secretary**

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Wisconsin Money Smart Essay Contest Awards \$12,000
Scholarship Program Supported by Financial Industry Promotes Financial Literacy

MADISON, Wis. – Today the [Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions \(DFI\)](#) and the [Wisconsin Coalition on Student Debt \(Coalition\)](#) awarded 12 Wisconsin graduating high school seniors with scholarships, in the form of \$1,000 Edvest, Wisconsin's 529 College Savings Plan, gift certificates, for their winning [Wisconsin Money Smart Essay Contest](#) submissions this spring.

Graduating high school seniors from across Wisconsin were encouraged to write essays about how they plan to finance their college education for a chance to win a \$1,000 Edvest gift certificate scholarship. Members of the Coalition reviewed and scored the 152 essay submissions based on criteria including identifying funding sources for college and explaining how to manage student loan debt. The Coalition and the DFI congratulate this year's essay contest winners:

- Summer Ahrens, Chetek Weyerhaeuser High School, Chetek
- Emma Arneson, Sheboygan Falls High School, Sheboygan Falls
- Lianna Baxter, Oconto High School, Oconto
- Vanessa Carr, Altoona High School, Altoona
- Chloe Lichucki, Holmen High School, Holmen
- Isabella Lyste, Barron High School, Barron
- Allison Matzek, Xavier High School, Appleton
- Andrew Mims, River Ridge High School, Patch Grove
- Grace Ratty, Rhinelander High School, Rhinelander
- Carter Sura, Walden III High School, Racine
- Isaiah Tabbert, Appleton North High School, Appleton
- Stephen Vesche, Menomonee Falls High School, Menomonee Falls

“These students have shown us through their winning essay submissions that they have developed plans to pay for college and manage potential student loan debt,” said DFI Secretary-designee Cheryll Olson-Collins. “We applaud these deserving students for all they have done, and we encourage them to continue building their financial literacy skills as they continue their education.”

The Wisconsin Money Smart Essay Contest was sponsored by the Coalition, the DFI, Edvest, Ascendium Education Group, Educators Credit Union, SecureFutures, Summit Credit Union, and UW Credit Union.

The Coalition is backed by more than 30 organizations that share one common agenda – helping Wisconsin residents become debt smart and financially stable. Participating organizations include: Ascendium Education Group; Fair Opportunity Project; Herzing University; Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB); Madison Metropolitan School District; Medical College of Wisconsin; Navient; Sallie Mae; Summit Credit Union; University of Wisconsin – Center for Financial Security; University of Wisconsin – Madison; Wisconsin's Private Colleges; UW Credit Union; Western Technical College; Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU); Wisconsin Bankers Foundation; Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI); Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC); and Wisconsin Manufactures and Commerce.

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