



NEWS RELEASE

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200 Wisconsin Apprentices Will Earn \$1,000 Scholarships to Purchase Tools for Their Trades *Expanded Great Lakes Commitment Encourages Program Completion for Better-Paying Jobs*

Madison, Wis.—Tyler Stewart of Milwaukee, like many other apprentices across the country, has made sacrifices in order to invest in his future. In January 2015, he was about to begin his last semester in the maintenance mechanic/millwright program at Waukesha County Technical College. Although he regularly puts in overtime to accelerate through 8,000 hours of on-the-job training at Waukesha Metal Products, the modest wages he earns can only cover so much. On top of commitments to school and work, he provides for a wife, a newborn and two young kids.

Tyler also has to purchase a variety of expensive tools so he can install, repair and maintain industrial machinery at the shop. When he got a \$1,000 check in the mail last winter—his Tools of the Trade apprentice scholarship from [Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation](#)—he was able to buy new power tools without cutting into his budget for other living expenses. “The scholarship was a tremendous blessing for me,” he said. “It gave me hope that I could do this.” Tyler finished his classroom instruction in May 2015, and now he’s that much closer to earning his journeyman certificate and increasing his salary.

Apprentices like Tyler must complete up to five years of specialized training without the benefit of federal aid before they advance to good, family-supporting jobs. But financial obstacles can block their path long before completion.

Great Lakes created the [Tools of the Trade \\$1,000 Apprentice Scholarship](#) to help hardworking apprentices at Wisconsin’s technical colleges who struggle to cover out-of-pocket expenses like tuition, clothing and tools. Great Lakes has increased its investment in the program from \$20,000 in the first year to \$200,000 in the third year.

“In partnership with the [Wisconsin Technical College System](#) (WTCS), we’re building on a proud commitment to apprenticeship programs and preparing a new generation of workers with the skills and credentials they need to succeed,” said Richard D. George, President and Chief Executive Officer of Great Lakes. “Together, we are moving Wisconsin forward.”

The introduction of the apprentice scholarship program at Milwaukee Area Technical College in 2013 had the desired impact: 95 percent of recipients either completed or continued their training programs the following semester. By upping the number of scholarships to 200 this year, even more apprentices will get help they need to achieve professional certification, have rewarding careers, and meet employer needs for skilled workers in the construction and industrial trades.

Applications for Tools of the Trade scholarships have been distributed to eligible apprentices, and must be postmarked by October 17, 2015. A WTCS committee will select the recipients, and Great Lakes will issue individuals \$1,000 checks in January 2016.

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About Great Lakes: Dedicated to making college education a reality since 1967.

Knowing that education has the power to change lives for the better, Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates was established as a nonprofit group focused on a single objective: helping students nationwide prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education and student loan repayment. As a leading student loan guarantor and servicer, we have been selected by the U.S. Department of Education to provide assistance and repayment planning to more than 8 million borrowers—as well as assistance to colleges and lenders nationwide. Our group's earnings support one of the largest and most respected education philanthropy programs in the country. Since 2006, we have committed nearly \$154 million in grant funding to promote higher education access and completion for students of color, low-income students, and first-generation students. For additional information, visit home.mygreatlakes.org.