

PLATO 2019-2020 Education Fund Scholarships

In 2019, PLATO provided scholarship assistance to four University of Wisconsin-Madison returning adult students, financial support for the Odyssey Project, and educational opportunities for young people through five community agencies. This was all made possible by the generosity of PLATO members who value lifelong learning and provide needed financial support on behalf of students who would be left out of educational opportunities due to financial need.

Returning Adult Student Program

Administered through the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies, these scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis and targeted toward single-parent students and other nontraditional adult returnees. Financial need and academic potential are critical components in determining the awards. For 2019, the PLATO Education Fund has supported four \$3,500 scholarships.

Adrian Molitor is a returning adult student who started his academic journey with an 8th grade education. He currently works in the nonprofit sector with young children. His goal is to teach English and creative writing in alternative education settings in areas of high financial need. His greatest inspiration to keep pursuing his education is his late grandmother, Mildred Molitor, who raised him.



After graduating from UW-Madison in 2004 with an undergraduate degree in English, **Rachel Salsedo** was able to return this year to pursue a long-desired graduate degree in physician assistant studies. She and her husband are the parents of two awesome kids, ages 6 and 9, and she intends to serve low-income patients in a community health center upon graduation.

Jessica Shattuck credits her success to the unconditional positive regard she receives from friends and family, coupled with her natural resilience and tenacity. Specializing in mental health, she is interested in becoming a licensed clinical social worker and coordinating a transitional housing program for young adults exiting the foster care system.



Bo Vue is a first-generation student who returned to school to pursue nursing. Her desire to become an interculturally-competent nurse is derived from her experiences growing up in a low-income family and taking care of her elderly parents. She believes there is a need for intercultural competence in healthcare, where these skills lead to more effective communication.



Odyssey Project
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



In 2019, the PLATO Education Fund donated \$6,000 in support of the **Odyssey Project**. Since 2003, the Odyssey Project (www.odyssey.wisc.edu) has empowered more than 400 adults near the poverty level find their voices and get a jump-start on college degrees they never thought possible. Their children participate in **Odyssey Junior**, allowing whole families to learn and hope about the future. **Onward Odyssey** connects program alumni with other UW-Madison courses, including Special Education Paraprofessional training, Food Systems, and African American Studies.