

3rd 20something BC3 grad creates, or inspires, scholarship after receiving one

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Lindsay Walter, 24, of Allegheny County, is shown in front of the Student Success Center on Butler County Community College's main campus in Butler Township on Monday, June 15, 2020. Walter, a 2017 graduate of BC3's Nursing, R.N., program and a registered nurse at UPMC Passavant in McCandless Township, Allegheny County, this spring became the third BC3 student age 24 or younger to create, or inspire, a scholarship at BC3 after receiving one. Walter received the Janice Phillips Larrick Nursing Scholarship in 2016. Her Lindsay M. Walter '17 Nursing Scholarship will be awarded at BC3 for the first time Aug. 1.

(Butler, PA) A single 24-year-old sat at her kitchen island at 9:15 one night 10 weeks ago, her thoughts fixed not on her mortgage payment, her auto insurance statement, her water, electric, natural gas, Internet and phone bills, but on the evening news she'd just watched, about the COVID-19 pandemic and about "people who are in need of financial assistance right now."

Within the next 15 minutes, the Allegheny County resident had slid a laptop computer across the kitchen island, typed Butler County Community College scholarships into a Google search bar, found a contact on a BC3 webpage and composed an email.

Subject line: *Scholarship Fund Inquiry*

Hello Michelle,

My name is Lindsay Walter. I am a 2017 BC3 Nursing graduate and am interested in creating a scholarship fund for students currently enrolled in the Nursing program.

As a former scholarship recipient, I know first hand the impact a financial award can make. I would love to give back and provide students with the same opportunity for years to come.

Please feel free to contact me or pass along my information to someone who is able to assist.

Warmly,

Lindsay Walter

Within 30 days of sending her email to Michelle Jamieson, associate director of the BC3 Education Foundation, Walter became the third BC3 graduate no older than 24 to create or inspire a scholarship after receiving one.

Scholarships created by Walter and inspired by Sarah Kasunic will be awarded for the first time Aug. 1, and one established by Tanner McCaw, for the fifth time. They join the more than 130 named scholarships the BC3 Education Foundation will award to BC3 students for the 2020-2021 academic year.

“Something ... she wanted to do”

Walter and Kasunic each received the Janice Phillips Larrick Nursing Scholarship – Kasunic in 2015 and Walter, in 2016 – while students in BC3’s Nursing, R.N., program. McCaw was awarded the Matthew Kapp Memorial Scholarship in 2013 while a student in BC3’s business administration program.

The Sarah Kasunic ’16 Scholarship and the Lindsay M. Walter ’17 Nursing Scholarship will benefit students in BC3’s Nursing, R.N., program. The McCaw Family Scholarship helps students in BC3’s accounting or business administration programs.

McCaw established the McCaw Family Scholarship in 2016, three years after his graduation from BC3 and at age 24. He was in 2016 the youngest scholarship creator in BC3 history.

Kasunic in February 2019 contributed funds to the BC3 Education Foundation to help members of BC3’s chapter of an international academic honor society attend a national conference in Florida. Kasunic, former president of Rho Phi and a 2016 BC3 graduate, was killed by a motorist in Knoxville, Tenn., in March 2019.

The 23-year-old had discussed with her parents, Tom and Margaret, her plan to establish a scholarship to assist BC3 registered nursing students, a conversation that inspired the 2019 creation of the Sarah Kasunic '16 Scholarship.

“She called and told both of us about a month before she died that she was going to create this nursing scholarship, and the reason she was going to do it was she saw nursing students who were in financial need,” Tom Kasunic said. “She wanted to help them and she was grateful to BC3 for what she had gotten and she loved BC3. This is just something she felt she wanted to do.”

“Hey, you can do that, too”

Former recipients of BC3 scholarships creating their own at their alma mater, “is a very great way for them to express their appreciation for a good education, and the ability to have a good education, which are two separate things,” said Larrick, who attended BC3. “So many times a student has the desire to become something, but can’t do it.”

Kasunic worked as a registered nurse in Knoxville.

Walter is a registered nurse at UPMC Passavant in McCandless Township, Allegheny County.

McCaw is a certified public accountant in Indianapolis.

“I know how grateful I was when I received that scholarship,” McCaw said. “And I always told myself that when I was going to be in a position where I could financially give back to BC3 to directly impact students’ learning or just their time there, whether it was for books or to pay for one course or all the courses, I was going to do that.”



Sarah Kasunic received the Janice Phillips Larrick Nursing Scholarship while a student at Butler County Community College in 2015. The 2016 graduate of BC3’s Nursing, R.N., program in February 2019 contributed funds to the BC3 Education Foundation, and discussed with her parents creating a scholarship to help students in BC3’s Nursing, R.N., program. Kasunic, 23, was killed by motorist in Knoxville, Tenn., in March 2019. The Sarah Kasunic '16 Scholarship will be awarded at BC3 for the first time Aug. 1.



Tanner McCaw, of Indianapolis, at age 24 in 2016 became the youngest graduate in Butler County Community College history to create a scholarship at his alma mater. McCaw, a 2013 graduate of BC3’s business administration program, received the Matthew Kapp Memorial Scholarship in 2013. The certified public accountant’s McCaw Family Scholarship will be awarded at BC3 for the fifth time Aug. 1.

In doing that, his McCaw Family Scholarship enabled 2019 recipient Madison Koegler, 21, of Sarver, to avoid seeking a second part-time job as she pursues an associate degree in accounting from BC3. McCaw is, Koegler said, inspiring.

“It gives me and other students who are still in school a push and an encouragement to say, ‘Hey, you can do that, too. You can graduate and become a 24- or a 23-year-old person who is able financially able to provide scholarships to kids who struggle just like you did to pay for school,’” Koegler said. “And I think that’s awesome.”

As does Jamieson.

“I’m very impressed these young people are willing to give up their money to help a fellow student,” Jamieson said. “A lot of people become generous and philanthropic as they grow older and have extra money. These young individuals are just starting out their careers and they don’t necessarily have extra money. But they were so touched by the generosity of others throughout their educational journey that they want to do it. They don’t want to wait until they have extra money. They want to do it now.”

Creating “a wave effect”

These young individuals, Margaret Kasunic said, “are actually giving from what I would call their monthly budget, where somebody older might be giving from savings or money earned over time. For them to say, ‘I am going to budget this into the month,’ that is just outstanding. ... It is a sacrifice because sacrifice hurts.”

“Every little bit helps,” Walter said. “When I received the Larrick scholarship, I was able to use that for books, tuition. Being able to receive that financial award was absolutely tremendous.”

Walter’s gift to BC3, inspired one night at her kitchen island 10 weeks ago, will now join budgeting for her mortgage, auto insurance, water, electric, natural gas, Internet and phone bills.

“It is a sacrifice,” Walter said, “taking my hard-earned money and giving it to somebody else. But Michelle (Jamieson) described it as a wave effect. If this inspires somebody else to give back and make a difference in the life of somebody else, that’s great. Hopefully I can help make a difference in their life the way Janice’s scholarship did for me.

“And I’m happy to do that.”



Madison Koegler, 21, of Sarver, in 2019 became the most recent Butler County Community College student to receive the McCaw Family Scholarship, created by BC3 graduate Tanner McCaw in 2016 and when he was 24. Koegler, a 2017 graduate of Freeport Area Senior High School, is pursuing an associate degree in accounting at BC3.