

Alyssa Hoffman is a first-generation college student from Park Falls, Wisconsin, who loves being outdoors. When she discovered Northland College, she knew it was the perfect fit for her. But coming from a large family with six siblings, she knew she needed all the support she could get to make it a reality.

“The Wisconsin Grant gave me the opportunity to be able to come here, which was remarkable,” says Alyssa. “I was kind of on the edge, but then as soon as I got the grants coming in, it was really the onset of like, I really, really want to go there now.”

Once Alyssa arrived at Northland, she quickly became involved in the community. She loves participating in Northland’s organized events and appreciates the small campus that has allowed her to get to know everyone. Her favorite event so far was the Everybody Party at the beginning of the year. “It was nice to really get to know everyone, not just my peers, but the faculty, too. It was wonderful just to have made those connections there that made the first semester even more awesome than expected.”

Having just finished her freshman year of courses, she has officially paired an elementary/middle school education major with a psychology minor.

Alyssa’s passion for teaching younger children was inspired by her experiences working with the Children’s Church and Nursery when she was younger, as well as her mother homeschooling her six siblings growing up. She has a goal to teach at the third-grade level and is excited to work with that age group this summer as the head coach for her hometown’s little league softball team!

Despite the challenges of being a first-generation college student and balancing work and school, Alyssa is motivated to succeed. This past year, she worked thirty hours a week at the local supermarket to make ends meet. Next year, she is planning to play softball for Northland College, as well as being a resident assistant for the freshman dorm. She is grateful for the support of her advisor, Danny O’Brien, as well as the dean of students, Joe Cooper.

Reflecting on the challenges of figuring out how to get to college without her parents’ financial support, Alyssa shared that “it’s built so much character, and it’s built so much motivation for me, especially [since I’m] going to be a teacher and will have to balance so many things, especially with little kids. I just feel like it’s a good thing to be figuring out now rather than later.”

Thanks to the Wisconsin Grant, Alyssa can pursue her dreams and attend Northland College—where she has found a home and a community that she loves.