

Derek,

I hope this finds you well. I wanted to reach out and formally get in touch with you and all others involved in making the Bucky Badger student mascot scholarships possible... something that, regrettably, has taken me far too long. I want to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for all of the aforementioned efforts.

Being a member of the UW-Madison community was always high on my list of goals throughout my upbringing. With roots down in Stoughton, just a half hour from Madison, my childhood would often consist of family trips up to campus to hang out at the Union Terrace or catch a game at Camp Randall. From these early exposures my love for the UW community blossomed. When I got into UW in my senior year of college, I felt a true sense of happiness and contentment.

Three years later, I found myself at the UW Fieldhouse on a chilly Monday night trying out to be the face of the university I hold so dear. From the start, the idea of being Bucky was something that I knew was possibly a bit far-fetched, but something I pursued nonetheless. I truly had to pinch myself when I found out I made the team... and I continue to pinch myself as I find myself as Bucky in situations I never thought I would possibly be a part of.

As we know, being Bucky is not always synonymous with financial peace-of-mind. I have been unable to work this semester due to commitments related to being Bucky and being a nursing student- both of which have been subject to increased complications and nuances due to the continuing pandemic. Though this work all brings me great satisfaction, it is not without subsequent financial pressure on myself and my family. With the support of yourself and all who have supported the Greater Bucky Open, I am able to carry out these commitments with less financial concern and preoccupation.

Bucky brings an immense light to my life, the lives of those I hold closest, and folks throughout the entire Badger state. Your support and the support of those affiliated with the Greater Bucky Open enables myself and other student mascots to keep this great Wisconsin tradition alive. For that, I am truly grateful.

With gratitude,
Mitch Osterhaus