



# Associated Colleges of Illinois

**Thomas "T.J." Whitfield  
Wheaton College  
ACI General Scholarship**

Thomas "T.J." Whitfield visited his sister at [Wheaton College](#) and realized he, too, could see himself as a student at the Wheaton, Illinois college. Whitfield is now communication/media studies major at Wheaton, with a minor in graphic design and photography. The Tinley Park, Illinois, junior was originally a computer science major, but soon realized that his real interest was in communication. "I really felt like I fit in well into the major, into the department and the career fields," he says, adding he's specifically interested in marketing and advertising.

Through and internship with the Community School of the Arts at Wheaton, Whitfield helped promote the school's music events through poster design and other advertising and marketing responsibilities. "I love the business side of communication and learning about these different elements, but I really love the artistic side that graphic design can offer to me," he says.

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An ACI General Scholarship has helped Whitfield with tuition expenses at Wheaton College. "Having the scholarship and learning about it has been such a blessing," Whitfield says. "There are so many times in the past when I haven't been able to register for classes because tuition

hasn't been paid yet or tuition hasn't been paid in full yet. For me as a student trying to be here to learn, that's on my mind. I will have the opportunity to continue on and graduate, something my parents didn't have the opportunity to do." Whitfield is also grateful for donors who make the scholarships possible. "Now it's my turn. Now I have to give to the next generation because the last generation gave to me," he says.

At Wheaton College, Whitfield is part the tae-kwon-do club and works in the Office of Multicultural Development. He is also a student ambassador for the Wheaton Fund, responsible for being a "bridge" between students and college donors.

"Being at Wheaton has shaped me in so many ways," he says. "It's shaped my mentally, it's shaped me physically. It's shaped me emotionally. Being a Christian school, it has shaped me in my faith. Just being here has really been a benefit to me and so many other students, that I'm just so grateful for the time that I've had here."