



2014 WINNERS



BRANDEE MAIN
Grand Prize Winner



SAMANTHA HERRING
Runner Up

Grand Prize Winning Essay *from Brandee Main*

Higher education has always been a goal of mine. My parents were not able to attend college right after high school. At 18 years old my parents had a child, my mom worked full time, and my dad had three different jobs. As you can see, they struggled to make ends meet their first several years together. My dad graduated nursing school when he was 38 and my mom has a successful career but still does not have a college degree. Because of this, my dad has always stressed to me how important it is to stay focused and make wise decisions in life. Every morning as I leave for school he shouts, "Learn something, the rest of your life depends on it!" And he is exactly right. The rest of my life depends on the type of education I receive, the career path I choose, and the hard work and dedication I have to get there. Making decisions that the rest of my life depends on is not easy to do at 18 or even 20 years old. I had a hard time determining what I wanted to do in life for a while but I always found my way back to one thing; the medical field.

It has been my goal for quite some time to become a doctor so that I can use my knowledge and talent to give back to the world. There are many characteristics I have that lead me to believe I could become very successful in this field. Medical school takes a great deal of focus, time, and dedication, all attributes that I believe I have. When it is all said and done, being a doctor takes a great deal of knowledge, time, kindness, and heart. Again, all attributes that I believe I have. Knowing this, there is nothing that can keep me from my goals. Unfortunately, financing an amount of education such as this can really add up.

Right now, my father is receiving an associate's degree in Fire Science from Kansas City Community College (he is a nurse and has been a fireman for 18 years) and my sister is a senior in high school taking 5 credit hours at Pittsburg State University and attending Labette Community College in the fall. I am currently attending Labette Community College but will be attending Pittsburg State beginning this summer. It is my goal to receive a bachelor's degree in Pre-Medicine from PSU. As you can see, my parents have a lot on their hands financially and I, as well, if I continue to pursue medical school. I will live with my parents for the next two years so food and housing are current expenses that I do not have. However, all related school fees are coming out of my pocket. My dad has instilled responsibility and a solid work ethic into my two sisters and me. He had to pay for his own college education; therefore, we can too.

After receiving my degree in Biology with an emphasis in Pre-Medicine from Pittsburg State, it is my

goal to attend the University of Kansas Medical School. Unfortunately, if I attend medical school I will be living on my own, which means I will accrue the costs of food and shelter that are currently being financed by my parents, as well as all other educational fees. I realize that I will have substantial debt after medical school so I am doing all that I can to save money for the future. I currently work at Via Christi Hospital in Pittsburg as a Laboratory Assistant and have just joined the PreMeds With Promise Program working for Dr. Mindi Garner in Pittsburg. Quest Credit Union is also helping me in my endeavors by helping me build my credit. I have VISA credit card from Quest that I am making monthly payments on in order to build my credit for future loans.

Paying for my own education is one of the reasons why I chose to begin my higher education at a community college. It is a much cheaper route to begin at a community college and it has been a great transition for me. While attending Labette, I have excelled in the chemistry department. I received the highest grade in College Chemistry I and II, both earning me the Gilbert Newton Lewis Award at the college. Because of my achievements during these two courses, Dr. Doug Ecoff (my professor) nominated me for the American Chemical Society Local Section Award for Community Colleges, which I won. I also went on to earn the highest grade in Organic Chemistry I at Labette (I am in Organic Chemistry II and have not completed the course upon writing this essay). I have also excelled in all other courses, earning my name on the President's List each of my four semesters at the community college (my fifth semester is not yet complete, though I expect the same outcome). My success at the community college also gave me the opportunity to be nominated for, and win, the Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges Award. My artistic ability has had time to shine, as well, winning me Honorable Mention and Distinguished Recognition in two of my pieces at the Phi Theta Kappa Regional Convention. I am also a talented writer and have received an award for top three entries for the Paper of the Year Award at Labette (the final winners have not been announced upon writing of this essay).

I would hope that my success up until this point is evident that I am a very hard working student and well deserving of this scholarship and an opportunity to continue my education. I am a very motivated person and whole heartedly believe that I will reach my ultimate goals. When weighing the pros and cons, the only downside of attending medical school is the expenses. Receiving this scholarship would greatly help me financially because every cent makes a difference. Therefore, I believe that this scholarship will help me to reach my goals and prepare me for that next step in my education and future.

Runner-Up Essay

from Samantha Herring

Rumor has it, I had thirty. Thirty baby dolls that I loved to play with and nurture when I was a little girl. I tucked them in their beds or corners of my room for sleep time. I fed them and bathed them. One day while I was gone my Grandfather teased me by hanging a few of my dolls upside down from my bunk bed. I was so angry at him. I cared so much about my babies and always thought they came alive at night. I paid him back though by tying his socks and handkerchiefs in knots and putting a few small rocks in his pillow case. Why do I tell this story? Because my passion to nurture and take care of others has been my passion since I was little.

Hello, my name is Samantha Herring and I go to Holton High School in Holton, Kansas. I am a senior with a great work ethic. I am very dedicated to my schoolwork and I enjoy the feeling I get when I am successful. In my high school career I have played sports such as: basketball, softball, and golf. I was

on the qualifying state softball team and I was state golf qualifier as a team and as an individual. I am a member of the Anti-bullying group. I am a member of the Evangel United Methodist church where I helped the Christmas Bureau this past Christmas.

I began my working career at 13 years old as a babysitter, and worked some restraint jobs over the last few years. The summer I turned sixteen I obtained my CNA license and currently work at Glenn Moore Meadows Assisted Living, Medicalodges Nursing Homes, Shelter Insurance as well as waitress at Trails Café. I have accomplished this while keeping up with sports and school. Beginning my junior year of high school I took college courses and have continued through the summer so I can have several classes completed. My goals and life plans have always inspired me to do my best. From grade school to high school I continue to push myself further so that I can always grow as a person. In high school my primary goals included getting in to college. Now that graduating high school is on the horizon, the plans I will accomplish include graduating high school with 30 college credits and attending Pittsburg State University where I will study nursing. I plan to get my BSN/RN in 3 years and continue studying to become a nurse practitioner while working as an RN.

I love all my jobs but I feel as though I can shine the most through my nursing jobs. I feel helping people is my passion, and seeing those people that may be depressed in the nursing home has taught me I have the ability to touch their hearts and make them smile. They want you to sit with them for a short amount of time, just talk and give them your attention. I have experienced a lot of moments in my life that are what I call “shine” moments, but these are the ones that touch my heart in a way no-one else can experience. This has changed my life and driven me to make a difference in helping others. My jobs are my passion and I want to pursue this passion with a nursing career. I want to work with babies in the nursery when I get my degree.

I feel that I am deserving of this scholarship because my financial needs are very high due to circumstances out of my control. I live with my mom who divorced when I was three years old and has raised my brother and I on her own. Yes, she has worked all that time with 3 part-time jobs and in the past 4 years has a full time career. Those years did not provide enough income to save for college therefore, I work several jobs for extra cash but it isn't going to be enough. I want to follow my dreams, but money does get in the way and adds stress. I was to be stress free for money and continue my schooling with good grades. I know college will require a lot of discipline on my part to achieve these goals and get the grades I need, but I plan to succeed. I will also be the first in my family to obtain a college degree. I can give back to society, and isn't that really the goal? I know it's mine.