



Dreamers
AND DOERS

★ 2024 ★



LEUKEMIA &
LYMPHOMA
SOCIETY®



Dreamers
AND DOERS

**THE LLS SCHOLARSHIP FOR BLOOD CANCER SURVIVORS
CLASS OF 2024**

**IN ONE WORD, DESCRIBE HOW YOU FEEL
ABOUT YOUR FUTURE**

strong confident
positive **excited**
limitless
successful **grateful** **hopeful**
success **optimistic**
amazing inspiration **empowered**
miraculous

dent
ed exciting meaningful
ful inspired happy fulfilled
ful determined useful
mpactful bright bold fascinated
owered promising courageous
dedicated



CONGRATULATIONS

Dear Scholarship Awardees,

On behalf of everyone at The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), we offer our heartfelt congratulations to the awardees of the 2024 LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors. We're thrilled for you and are so proud of your accomplishments! Each of you has displayed remarkable courage, grit, and determination—setting your sights high and reaching for your dreams despite setbacks. Our application reviewers were profoundly moved and impressed by your personal stories.

This yearbook celebrates your achievements! Not only does it commemorate the entire Class of 2024 awardees, it features graduates who have been past recipients of the LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors—providing inspiration, and maybe even some networking opportunities.

Seventy-five years ago, our organization was started by a family who lost their son, Robbie to leukemia. Since then, LLS has made tremendous progress by investing in scientific research, patient support, and advocacy to help families facing a blood cancer diagnosis. We understand how challenging it can be to plan for the future during or after cancer treatment—especially when diagnosed as a child or young adult. Hospital stays and interruptions in school can derail educational goals. And the steep cost of cancer care can make affording higher education difficult. The LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors is designed to ease those challenges.

These scholarships would not be possible without the generosity of our incredible sponsors and supporters: The Alex Okafor Family Foundation; Beth Ayres in Memory of Alan M. Ayres; Elbit Systems of America; Tour De Court; Alok Kapoor; Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation; ACE Family Foundation; Alto-Shaam; Bridge Investment Group; Cindy Scheehle Millsaps and Darrin Millsaps in Memory of Mike Scheehle; Genentech, Inc.; Massey Services, Inc.; Ronald Weiss and Peggy Ahlin; and the Marshall Family. Because of their commitment to our mission, we can provide much-needed funds to support tuition expenses for survivors like you.

Your future is now, and we can't wait to see what you do next! Congratulations again!



E. Anders Kolb, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer



Gwen Nichols, MD
Chief Medical Officer

CLASS OF 2024

Aidan C.	Dillon C.	Janna J.	Morgan F.
Aimee D. L.	Dylan F.	Jayden R.	Morgan H.
Amy L.	Elizabeth H.	Jenna P.	Morgan S.
Anaché V.	Elle B.	Juliana T.	Natalie T.
Angeline P.	Emilee M.	Katelynn M.	Noah Y.
Arielan P. L.	Emily S.	Katherine G.	Olivia C.
Ashley W.	Emily S.	Katheryne L.	Olivia K.
Aundre C.	Emma B.	Kayden J.	Rachel Lyn F.
Ava H.	Ethan D.	Keira W.	Rachel W.
Bentley B.	Evangeline N.	Kenzie A.	Ray L.
Brandon W.	Everett E.	Laken P.	Reed N.
Brandy S.	Francoise G. L.	Lauren C.	Samantha W.
Brayden S.	Gabriel S.	Lauryn W.	Sophia B.
Brett K.	Gentry B.	Leonardo S.	Steven P.
Brooke L.	Gilina V.	Liam C.	Tatiana M.
Brooklyn H.	Grace G.	Logan Z.	Tatum D.
Camlin V.	Guadalupe M. P.	Lucas S.	Taylor B.
Charenia W.	Gwyneth S.	MacKenzie M.-D.	Taylor C.
Colin W.	Hannah C.	Macy F.	Tiffany P.
Corinne M.	Hannah S.	Madison F.	Trevor F.
Darren B.	Isaac M.	Madison M.	Trevor V. S.
Delaney F.	Isabella S.-L.	Max A.	William James C.
Dev P.	Jackeline O.-M.	Mikayla B.	
Devin H.	Jackson M.	Molly G.	
Deyvis R.	Jaida S.	Morgan D.	



ANACHÉ V.

University of California Santa Cruz



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Alan M. Ayres

I've always said, "I'm not afraid of death, I'm afraid of dying." It was the suffering that leads up to death that I was afraid of. Over the course of two years, as I experienced intense pain physically, emotionally, and spiritually, I thought back to this declaration. Although death remains a taboo subject, as cancer patients, we're made to confront this inevitability. We all experience death on some level. We grieve relationships ending, loved ones moving away, versions of ourselves that are lost. Ending is just as natural as beginning. As I went through chemotherapy and felt my body decaying more than ever, I dove deeper into the Yin and Yang of life, death, and rebirth. As I was dying, I was also in the process of being reborn. I knew that my suffering had a purpose. I was shedding the old version of myself to make room for growth. It was this perpetual cycle of life that blossomed into my love of mycology.

A few weeks after I started losing my hair, a friend came to console me. We ended up talking all day. Los Angeles is usually so dry, but it had rained the day before. We sat on a tree stump and I noticed a mushroom growing from the bottom. We sat by that quiet tree for a while and talked through my diagnosis. As we conversed, I kept looking at this

turkey tail mushroom sprouting from the dead wood. It seemed so insignificant at the time, but looking back on it, I was transfixed. There was a harmony between what was left of the waning tree stump and this upsurge of new life. The mushroom was reusing what it could from what was dying to support new growth.

Being neither plants nor animals, fungi play one of the most crucial roles in our ecosystem. They are highly intelligent creatures who contribute to plant and soil health and have amazing untapped potential to help fight climate change. They connect the entire forest floor, communicate with each other, and most importantly, they decompose decaying matter in order for new life to prosper. I feel a kinship with this regenerative power of fungi. During one of the hardest times in my life, I found the strength to harness the fading parts of myself to support the person I've grown into today.

I'm now six months into remission and attending the University of California, Santa Cruz for Environmental Studies. I've joined an unpaid internship that works with native fungi to break down toxic metals after forest fires. I've found a niche in mycology restoration research. My goal is to cultivate a future where fungi are used to break down toxins and carcinogens—thus paving the way for humans and our ecosystems to recover from the devastations of climate change.

I feel so lucky to be a contributing member of this research team. I think back to the woman sitting alone in her room watching nature documentaries and realize how excited she would be to know I'm living in the forest, interacting with peers who have the same interests she does. As I do my lab work and inspect the soil and fungi, it almost feels like I'm sharing this microscopic world with her. She's a big part of the life I will lead. I want to let her know that her pain and suffering was worthwhile. Her strength is the reason I'm able to build a life of my own. I want to make her proud (and a little jealous).

My relationship with dying is different now. I don't associate dying with suffering anymore. Dying is the process of shedding and rebuilding all at once. My decay was filled not only with sorrow, but also with pride. I am not the woman I used to be, but I carry her with me. Cancer helped me find the beauty in decay. I am a new person who knows to embrace change and use it to my advantage. I know this is not the only time in my life that I will experience a rebirth. I look forward to the women who will come after me—their stories, their sadness, and their laughter.

☆☆
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ELLE B.

The Pennsylvania State University



In the tapestry of my life, the threads of happiness and laughter were intricately woven throughout my seemingly idyllic upbringing. From the earliest days of my childhood, I reveled in the warmth of a loving family. Their embrace was a sanctuary that shielded me from the world's harsh realities. At twelve, I was caught in the clutches of a beast: depression, not wanting the gift of life. The weight of every day was like trudging through quicksand, with each step dragging me down, threatening to engulf me. Its insidious tendrils wrapped around my fragile spirit, suffocating the light that once danced in my eyes. At thirteen, I was confronted with something more challenging than I could have imagined. Cancer, that insidious intruder, penetrated my body, immediately turning my world into cruel torment. Determined not to let cancer rob me of everything, I immersed myself in the world of eighth-grade homework, a lifeline to the academic excellence I had once achieved.

Months turned into an endless cycle of hospital stays, fighting for my life in critical condition. I pushed through three excruciating radiation sessions a day for seven agonizing days. In those moments, I wanted nothing more than to stop, to release the burdens weighing me down. But somewhere within me, a flicker of determination remained.

Though my body was weakened, my spirit blazed with an unyielding flame. My experiences taught me that nothing is truly impossible. After numerous difficult attempts, I rose from the depths of despair and took back control of my life. I would not miss my mother's arms, seeing my beloved doctors and nurses, or savoring my abuelita's homemade Latin dishes. I did not have to miss life itself—for I was alive. My scars remind me that I have overcome my most profound wounds. They are my roadmap to survival.

Additionally, they evoke something else—they show that life's hardships have made me more robust and resilient in many ways. I would reach out to my younger self, offering her the comfort and reassurance I desperately needed, telling her to believe in the virtue of resilience. Even in the darkest moments, strength lives within her forever. The past is not my future. For my present and future self, my journey has significantly shaped my educational and career aspirations. I'm committed to pursuing a medical degree to support patients during their most challenging moments. I'm genuinely grateful for the care provided by my medical team. Specifically, during my spinal tap procedures, the anesthesiologist was reassuring during my moments of fear. They guided me through breathing techniques, acknowledging my anxiety. I vividly remember my last meal before the procedure and my hunger-induced irritation (hangry). Yet, as I counted backward, the team's patience and assurances that all would be well left a lasting impression. In those moments, I recognized my calling to step into their role and provide solace to patients in their times of vulnerability.

The LLS Scholarship is pivotal in realizing my career ambitions, as it provides crucial financial support for my extensive medical school journey. The inspiring stories of recent recipients highlight how personal experiences can be transformed into meaningful contributions to the medical field. My journey has honed my leadership skills. As a participant in the Young CEO program within my community, I confidently presented my concept of a mobile wig and therapy service for cancer patients to an investor panel. This presentation secured me second place in the competition. I'm comfortable in my skin, and I turn challenges into opportunities. I'm part of the annual Christmas Show in my borough, held by a nonprofit organization. I lend my time to craft enchanting December performances. This outlet lets me sing my heart out and foster connections with my neighbors. It's a channel where I can be authentic, momentarily detached from life's trials. Collaborating with fellow volunteers, we conduct our talents to uplift our community through heartfelt performances.

For the past two summers, I've interned at a local community resource center for disabled individuals. I help them and make sure they are safe. I partner with transportation so they are safely picked up. Additionally, we organize enjoyable events that contribute to their sense of happiness. This experience has been incredibly fulfilling, as it underlines the necessity of accessible resources for all, reaffirming my decision to pursue a medical career. I firmly believe in acknowledging our shared humanity and understanding that we are not robots. It's crucial to self-reflect and admit when we're struggling, rather than constantly feeling the need to project an image of being okay. Each individual's scars bear witness to the transformation you undergo. Accept your new reality, even if it is less than the one you had before. Even in the face of loss, there is life. You are alive.

I will be an excellent recipient of your LLS Scholarship program. I will uphold your values and mission.

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MAX A.

Arizona State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the ACE Family Foundation Award**



Throughout life, we often face hardships that can influence our paths either positively or negatively. A significant challenge I faced at a young age was my acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) diagnosis in 2015. This diagnosis presented several challenges for me—physical, emotional, and personal. Throughout my treatment journey, I was always able to see a light at the end of the tunnel, persevere through the challenges, and—with the help of my friends, family, and the amazing care team at Children's Minnesota—win my battle against cancer. As I've grown into my own shoes here as a teenager, I've realized that my fight with leukemia was not just a test of survival: it was also a catalyst for my future.

I had always been an active and athletic child, and had dreams of becoming a professional football, baseball, or hockey player. A few days after my diagnosis, I had to have a port implanted into my chest to be able to receive chemotherapy infusions. That meant an end to playing football, as there was too much risk involved. About six months into my treatment, I developed peripheral neuropathy in my ankles—a side effect of the chemotherapy that was my key to surviving ALL.

So much had already been taken away from me; I just wasn't willing to allow baseball and hockey to also stop. Children's Minnesota has an amazing physical therapy team and I worked hard with my PT to enable me to continue to play baseball and hockey, even as the chemotherapy continued to damage the nerves in my ankles. This hard work taught me a lot about perseverance, which I think has been and will continue to be a key character attribute of mine.

I was very grateful for the role that physical therapy played in allowing me to keep playing baseball and hockey throughout my ALL treatment. To give back, when I was in seventh grade, I led a fundraising initiative that raised over \$10,000 to support the Children's Minnesota PT department. A portion of the money we raised went to jump-start work that my PT led developing a mobile app to improve the accessibility of physical therapy for pediatric oncology patients. I was recently asked to serve on the advisory board for her effort, which I am really enjoying. My hope is that through this work, thousands of kids with cancer can minimize the impact of peripheral neuropathy on their ability to keep active in sports and life.

Sports has given me so much joy in my life; it has gotten me through some really tough times. Without a pathway to a professional sports career on the field, I have been thinking about ways to include sports in my future career, and my post-secondary education major plans are a direct result of experiences I had when I was in treatment. There were a lot of times when I was too sick to do anything but lay in bed and watch sports on TV. I was really drawn into the analytics and statistics part of sports. In my junior year of high school I enrolled in the AP Statistics class and really enjoyed this as an academic subject. I founded and am the President of the Montclair High School Sports Analytics Club—we have grown our membership to more than 25 students who meet weekly to discuss sports analytics and share our favorite statistics from the previous weekend. My goal for next year is to be admitted to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville to obtain a degree in Business Analytics and then hopefully pursue a career in sports analytics.

It would mean a lot to receive the LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors. Tennessee is one of the few universities that has a specific undergraduate degree program for Business Analytics, but I am out of state and the tuition costs are quite high. Being selected for this important scholarship would reduce the amount of student debt I would have to take on and limit the amount of part-time work I would have to take on in college to fund part of my tuition. This would then allow me to spend more time on extracurricular activities, such as VOLS for Cancer and the Business Analytics Club.



MORGAN H.

Johns Hopkins University, Whiting School of Engineering



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Elbit Systems of America Award

Once upon a time, in a bustling Minneapolis city filled with dreams, a young aspiring engineer was born. At a younger age, I had always been fascinated by the complexities of machines and the art of designing solutions to real-world problems. I had big dreams of pursuing a career in engineering and shaping the future with my innovative ideas. Little did I know that life had a different plan for me.

My parents' marriage was short-lived and I moved to Canada with my mother. At the tender age of 18 months, I received a devastating diagnosis: cancer. My world turned upside down as I faced the challenges of chemotherapy, surgeries, and the uncertainty of my future in a new country with only my mother on my side. But I was determined not to let this adversity define my life.

Throughout my treatment, I drew strength from my mother, community, and friends, who stood by my side as pillars of support. I also discovered an unexpected ally in my hospital room: a book on engineering design principles. As I

flipped through its pages during my long hours of treatment, I found solace in the intricate world of engineering. It was a source of inspiration and hope in the darkest of times.

After months of fighting the battle against cancer, I emerged victorious, but not unscathed. The experience left me with scars, both physical and emotional, but it also ignited a fire within me. I realised that life was too precious to waste on anything other than my passion for engineering. My K1-12 was filled with accolades and I was on the Principal's high honors list.

I was accepted by various Ivy League schools including MIT. However, I enrolled in an engineering program at a prestigious university, Johns Hopkins University, and embarked on my educational journey. The hardships I had faced during my illness had taught me invaluable lessons: resilience, perseverance, and an unwavering determination to succeed. These lessons became my guiding principles as I pursue my studies.

During my college years, I have actively sought opportunities to apply my engineering knowledge to solving real-world problems. I joined a team of like-minded students working on innovative projects, including a device to make life easier for individuals with disabilities. My design skills and dedication continue to shine brightly, earning recognition from professors and peers alike.

Upon my graduation, I plan to look for a position at a leading engineering firm. My cancer diagnosis has given me a unique perspective on life, driving me to excel in my chosen field. I am passionate about creating solutions that could improve the lives of others, just as engineering provided me solace during my darkest days.

As my student life blossomed, I remained committed to giving back. I became a mentor to young aspiring engineers, sharing my story of resilience and the importance of pursuing one's dreams, even in the face of adversity. My cancer journey has shaped my goals, making me not only an exceptional student engineer, but also a compassionate advocate for those facing their own challenges.

In the end, my story serves as a testament to the power of perseverance and the lessons we can learn from the hardships we encounter. My cancer diagnosis has not defined me; it has strengthened my resolve to make a difference in the world through engineering. My journey teaches us that life's obstacles can be stepping stones to future success, and that the most profound innovations often arise from the deepest wells of human experience.

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TATUM D.

College of Southern Nevada



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**



I was never the planner. Before my cancer diagnosis, I was not the kid who knew. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, and frankly, it was a far thought from my mind. I was living my life down to the last second without concern for what I was supposed to accomplish in the future. Then before I knew it, that wasn't an option anymore. Instead of living in every moment, I was forced to think of the worst-case scenario and face a different type of uncertainty. While my friends and family did all they could to support me, they never really knew what was happening. I suddenly found myself bedridden in the hospital for months at a time, alone and isolated, truly not knowing if I was going to walk away from this.

That feeling of being alone was the scariest, most gut-wrenching thing I experienced. And realistically, I wasn't alone. I had an enormous amount of people standing behind me through everything that I was going through. But because of my diagnosis, I wasn't allowed to see anybody except my caregiver and any medical official who walked into the four walls of my hospital room. Changing from someone who one day was surrounded by her best friends and family, to someone

completely secluded from everyone and everything she knew and loved, was undeniably the most difficult situation to be put in. Still, there was one person that made things a little easier. Actually I should say a few people: Maria, the first nurse that checked me into the pediatric oncology unit and made me feel as comfortable as possible. Nubia, my absolute favorite nighttime nurse, who made sure she was extra quiet while checking on me and allowed me to have the peaceful, uninterrupted sleep that I was heavily lacking then. Daywa, who would constantly update me on everything going on throughout the day, making me feel like I was a part of it all. These are just a few of the people I owe my life to for more reasons other than just their administering of treatment. I wasn't just a patient to them; I was an actual person with real feelings and emotions, and they understood that. I eventually stopped seeing my nurses and doctors as just medical officials, and they became those friends that I was missing so very much at home. They offered that companionship and friendship I desperately needed and ultimately relieved me of so much pain and suffering because I felt at home.

I believe after enduring so much hurt and so much loss throughout that time period almost two years ago, one thing that sticks with me every single day is my hospital family. I don't miss what I went through, but I do miss the people I came out of it with. They did so many incredible things for me; they made my bad days a little better. And as I walked away from that, healthy and happy, I knew that there was a deeper meaning and purpose behind all of this. I knew I wanted to enter the medical field and be a Nubia or a Daywa to a kid in the same position I was in. Make them feel comfortable, give them the help that they need, and bring some light to their very cloudy day. Being in the hospital and experiencing so much and then coming out of it cancer-free was a clear sign to me that this is what I was made for. I finally found it.

If I were to receive this scholarship, it would greatly help pay for my tuition, no doubt. But this means more to me than just getting through school. This scholarship represents all the trials I have fought through, finally moving past them, and returning the same kindness to others that was once given to me. It's not only going towards my future, but also toward the future of other humans who are going through a tough time. I am capable of being someone who could save a person's life in more ways than one, just like all of my nurses and doctors were to me. Earning this scholarship is more than just the money—it's about paying that kindness forward, and that's something I plan on doing forever. As Harold S. Kushner once said, "Kindness doesn't just change other people's lives, it also changes yours."



AIMEE D. L.

San Diego State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Tour De Court Award**

I never imagined that one of my life's purposes would find me in the gift shop of a children's hospital while I was sick, bald, and incredibly lonely. After being diagnosed with leukemia at age seventeen, I underwent three years of intense chemotherapy treatment. Those years should have been filled with college classes, new experiences, and friends, but they were replaced by medications, needles, and the worst days of my entire life. I was placed under strict isolation for my own safety, but it also left me with a sense of loneliness.

The outpouring of love from friends and family was amazing, but perhaps even more surprising was the support I found in nonprofit organizations that reached out to me. Some sent gifts, some provided financial support, and some, like The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, provided helpful resources. However, they all had the same message: "You are not alone." It astounded me how complete strangers would come together to help someone they did not even know. Their message and support helped me get through the darkest days.



AMY L.

The University of British Columbia



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

When I think of my future, I think of my ten-year-old, freshly cancer-free self saying, "I want to help people—like those who helped me." But it has been seven years; the path to that statement has become uncertain. It is difficult to admit that I am so unsure of my future. In my experience, I felt that my diagnosis and treatment left me stuck. I returned from isolation discovering that the world had kept moving while I lost two years of my life to the grasp of my illness.

I turned my attention to what I can do for my community. I devoted myself to violin, joined my school's audition-only orchestra, and took private lessons. The connections I gained from these activities led me to form a quartet that performs around the community. I've learned from my diagnosis that the little things—like playing music for strangers—create joyful little memories that leave an impact on everyone, including myself.



ARIELAN P. L.

University of Colorado Boulder



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

My diagnosis and subsequent experiences became instrumental in shaping my academic and personal growth and my passions. Although initially challenging, I learned to find the silver lining in adversity, using it as a source of education for myself and others facing similar situations. My journey from shame and silence regarding my cancer diagnosis to a place of confidence and openness revealed that this challenge didn't just come with disadvantages, but also a lifetime's worth of priceless lessons.

One profound realization I gleaned from this experience is how easily we take our lives for granted. After enduring almost half of my adolescence in and out of hospitals, undergoing numerous procedures, and losing abilities that I once overlooked, I've come to understand that I can't dedicate the rest of my life to pursuits that lack significance or fail to drive me toward my passions.



ASHLEY W.
Purdue University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the ACE Family Foundation Award**

I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia ten years ago, at age eleven. My type of leukemia consisted of a rare mutation; only a handful of children had the same diagnosis as me. It wasn't an easy process. But I did it—and now I use my experience to help spread the word about the reality of childhood cancer.

I am currently a junior at Purdue University, majoring in nursing with a goal to work in pediatric oncology. As a childhood cancer survivor, I am confident that I can help children affected by cancer and their families in a positive way. I hope to one day work alongside the same nurses and doctors that saved my life, while providing excellent, compassionate care to sick children. My cancer diagnosis took a huge part of my childhood away from me, but it also opened so many pathways for my future.



AUNDRE C.

Adams State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Spending as much time as I did in the hospital, and always hearing medical terms, is what sparked my interest in science. Because of this spark, I decided to take Advanced Placement Chemistry. The feeling of relief and accomplishment when completing something difficult is one of the best feelings someone could ever have.

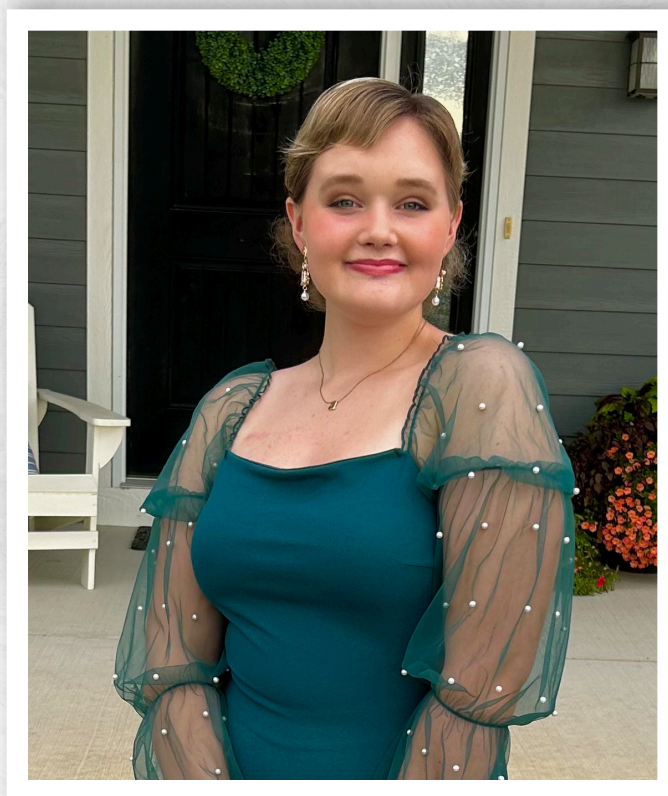
Another feeling that brings me joy is being able to give back. I spend time in the community giving back, especially to the youth. Being able to help them brings me joy because I love how excited the kids get to be able to work with me. I am a role model to many of these kids, so I want to teach them all the best things I have learned.

I don't ever want to say that I wasn't able to achieve something because I couldn't afford it, therefore I will keep seeking opportunities that will enable me to achieve my goal of being the first in my family to earn a college degree.



AVA H.

Wichita State University



Throughout the beginning of my cancer diagnosis, the idea of being around others and having an influence on them scared me greatly. I thought that my changed physical appearance, personality changes, and new life experiences would deter others from wanting to be around me. However, the complete opposite has happened in my experience with leukemia. I have been extremely blessed with a supportive community and friends to help lead me.

My goal in going to Wichita State is to complete a bachelor's degree in Forensic Science to hopefully conduct forensic chemistry analysis in a crime laboratory at a county or state-level criminal investigation bureau. This career path would be the next challenge for me to overcome, and with my analytical thinking skills, joined with strength in the areas of math, science and writing, I believe I will be able to make connections across areas to add to the science field. This scholarship will allow me to continue to receive the best medical care possible while balancing education, work life, and financing my personal education.

★ ★
★ **BENTLEY B.**
Undecided



On March 25, 2011, at the age of five, my and my family's lives changed forever. I received news that I was diagnosed with ALL (acute lymphoblastic leukemia) and would have to undergo chemotherapy treatment. There were times I would have to stay overnight at the hospital, resulting in my mom and I not being able to see my dad or sister for long periods of time. These dark times of isolation would create the first spark of what is now a burning passion of mine today.

During the years of my treatment, I developed a fascination for technology. I remember having conversations with my oncologist regarding the positive impact that biomedical technology has had in the medical field, such as the speed at which different forms of cancer can be diagnosed nowadays. Overall, my life has been a long and bumpy road, with many unexpected twists and turns. With my early exposure to technology, however unconventional it was, I have developed skills that are applicable to a technology-oriented career in a technology-driven world.



BRANDON W.

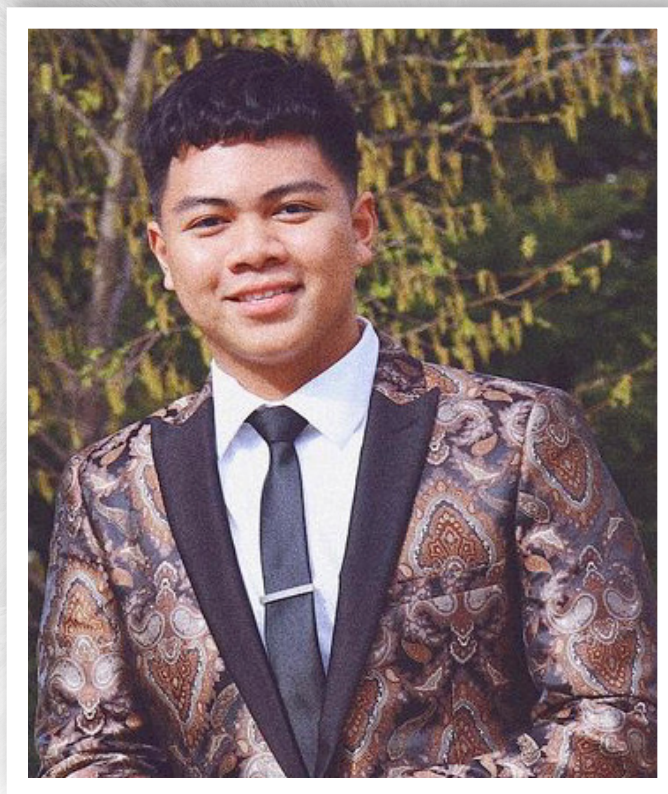
The University of Arizona



Sixteen days after my fourteenth birthday, I found out I was diagnosed with Burkitt's non-Hodgkin lymphoma. I felt scared and confused and remember crying and laughing at the same time, as I didn't know how to process my emotions.

Suddenly everything I'd ever wanted to experience and accomplish in my life was being threatened by cancer. I thought about how I may never see the seven wonders of the world or raise a family of my own. The memories I wanted to create with lifelong friends might never happen.

I remember lying in bed late at night, hearing the helicopters bringing kids to Seattle Children's Hospital. That sound stuck with me, and I wondered how to one day design a more efficient means of air travel to offer lifesaving minutes to people in one of their darkest times in life. I will pursue a degree in Aeronautical Engineering at the University of Arizona. Being a survivor has inspired me to take challenges head on and embrace life.



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Before receiving the diagnosis that I have Hodgkin lymphoma, I had always known that I wanted a career in the medical field. Although being diagnosed with a life-threatening disease such as cancer can feel like a curse, I soon realized that it was a blessing in disguise. Despite the doubt and mental obstacles, this diagnosis was an eye-opening experience as to why I chose to become a doctor.

I currently volunteer for our children's worship service at church. Having the privilege to work with children, I realized my calling to become a pediatric oncologist. To be a pediatric oncologist means so much more than diagnosing and treating a patient. I would like to become an advocate for children and become a symbol of hope that there's still a chance and a life worth fighting for; that there is hope in their future lives ahead. I would like to be the same doctor that my oncologist was to me. The path of development doctors face is demanding, but I keep in mind that every risk comes with a reward.



BRAYDEN S.

University of South Carolina



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Alto-Shaam Award

Futures are shaped by life's circumstances. When diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) at age ten, my first question was when I would be able to play baseball again. Baseball was my life, and I was now too weak to play. I was determined to get back on the field. My oncologist suggested physical therapy to maintain muscles during chemo. My physical therapy experience led to my goal to become a PT.

As Boy of the Year for LLS-Midlands of SC in 2018, and top student fundraiser for Student of the Year 2021, I spoke about how, even through the darkest times, there is light at the end of the tunnel. At Camp Kemo, a camp for cancer patients and their siblings, I connected with other kids also going through treatment. I'm now dedicated to helping with camp events to give back for their support.

Having cancer led to a clear vision for my future: providing care and inspiration to others. I am thankful that the difficult years of illness led to my true calling.



BRETT K.

Delaware State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

In 2011, I was diagnosed with pre-B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Life in my family became complicated through my three-plus years of chemotherapy. We faced things one day at a time. Instead of playing in kindergarten, I got a port catheter surgically implanted in my chest to receive months of chemotherapy in a hospital.

Shortly after my port was removed in 2012, I was granted a wish by the Make-A-Wish Foundation to visit Disney World and fight Darth Vader. Being invited to be a Wish Ambassador at the annual Wish Ball taught me how I could help other children like me. My volunteer leadership work led to similar roles in high school, including becoming Student Body President. I learned the power of communication as I told my story, raised funds, and became a voice to support others. Giving back is a tremendous blessing.

I look forward to studying toward a career in public speaking and media communications for nonprofit organizations that support those who need hope when it is needed the most—just like I needed it.



BROOKE L.

University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point



I will attend the University of Wisconsin to pursue a degree in physical education and become an elementary school physical education teacher. I have always loved playing soccer because it is a team sport and everyone works together to achieve the same goal. When I got diagnosed with leukemia, I had to stop playing; my body was too weak. I went from playing full soccer matches to needing a wheelchair. Not being able to play soccer was an adjustment, but I realized that staying active was crucial for my recovery. After my bone marrow transplant, the best piece of advice I received was to walk. Staying active helped me improve my mental and physical health during my chemotherapy treatment. During my stay, I also saw other patients facing similar challenges. The resilience they showed inspired me to become a role model through teaching. These experiences changed my life for the better. Now, I want to share the lessons I learned with others and teach them that it's possible to transform negative experiences into positive ones.



BROOKLYN H.

Oklahoma State University

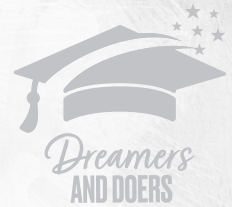


When I was diagnosed, my first thought was that my life was over. I couldn't believe cancer had taken so much from me—including soccer, my jobs, and most importantly, my senior year of high school. Staying positive during chemotherapy was tough; each day was harder than the last. Just when I thought I could enjoy my remaining time at school, I had to continue treatment. However, instead of facing radiation therapy with a negative mindset, I realized everything happens for a reason—I just had to find mine. With this in mind, I started a nonprofit, In the Middle of a Miracle. Dealing with cancer as a teenager was hard, so through this organization, I aim to support teenage cancer patients, giving them a place to turn during difficult times. More importantly, my mission is "to love and serve children battling pediatric cancer in Oklahoma, supporting them in the middle of their OWN miracle." Now, I am studying nonprofit management, working hard to graduate and see In the Middle of a Miracle grow.



CAMLIN V.

University of Colorado Boulder



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Mike Scheehle

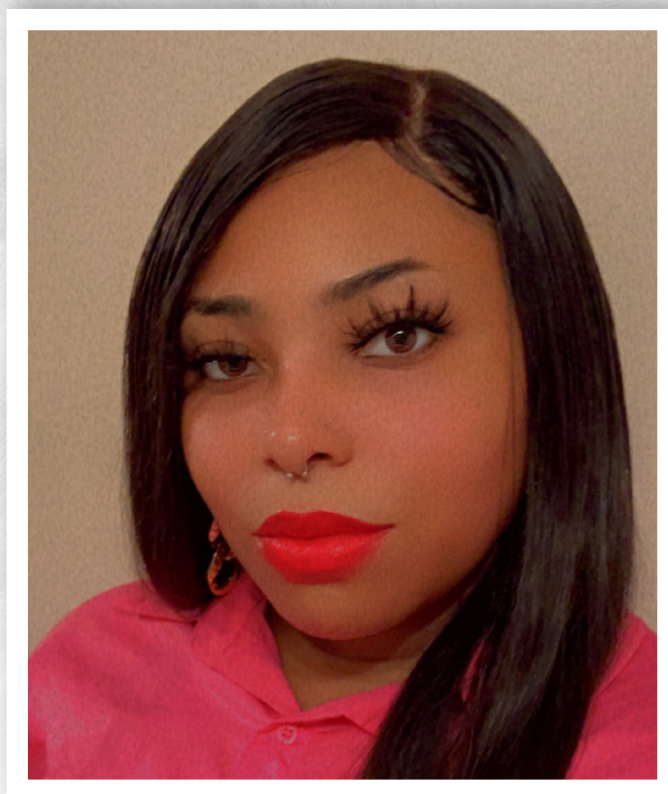
The experience of having cancer during adolescence has without a doubt changed the trajectory of my life. My illness forced me to grow up and be conscious not only of myself, but also of how my sickness was negatively impacting the people in my life. My mom is a single parent and had no choice but to drop out of nursing school to care for me, and in turn, my brother didn't receive the attention he deserved because of the attention my disease required. Recognizing the toll my health was taking on my loved ones at such a young age was an indescribable experience.

In this new phase of life, cancer is no longer my obvious identity, but having cancer forever changed who I am and the way I view the world. It was a stepping stone that led me to developing a sociological perspective. I did not feel particularly passionate about what I was learning until taking sociology courses. This scholarship will alleviate financial stress as I finish college.



CHARENIA W.

Jacksonville State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

I was twenty-four years old when I was diagnosed with stage two Hodgkin lymphoma. My whole world stopped, and I immediately went into a depressive spiral. I was a freshman in college and had to put that on hold; I could not physically do the work due to my illness. I fought and didn't give up and now I can say I am a cancer survivor.

My goal is to get my doctoral degree and become a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. When I finish school, I want to open an animal clinic in New York City. This scholarship will help me reach my goals.

I also want to start a nonprofit organization for cancer patients and survivors to get the proper help and support needed. When I was battling cancer, I had little to no support, nor did I have many resources. I want to make it easier for those battling cancer.



COLIN W.

Washington State University Pullman



The obstacles we encounter through life end up shaping us and our aspirations. Some may not understand what they are facing until it passes. I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia at just fifteen months old. I was not aware of the severity of my illness, but I still knew I was sick. I only understood the reality of my diagnoses in high school. I became grateful for my recovery and gained a new appreciation for life. My diagnosis and life experiences have made me want to do my part to help the planet.

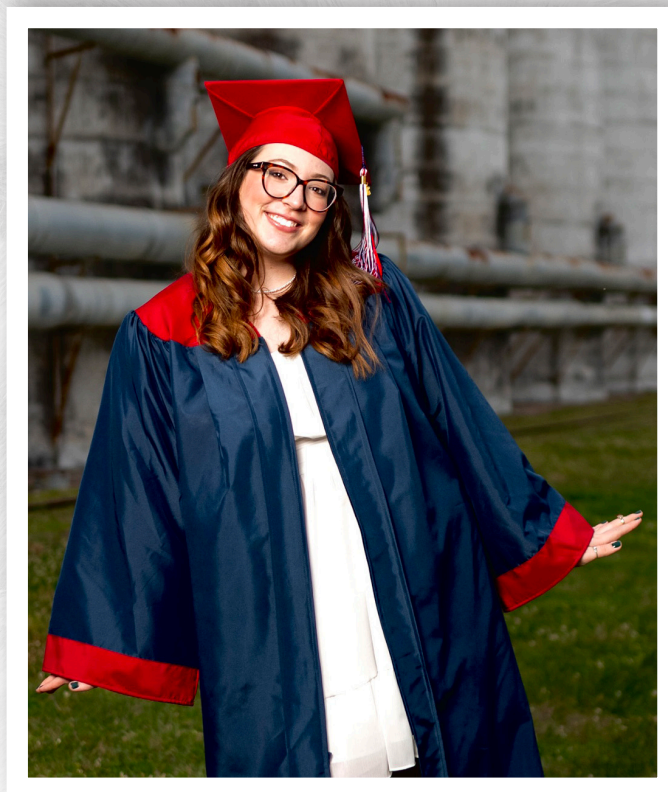
I decided to give back to the world. After discovering ecology, the study of organismal interactions with the environment, I fell in love. I set my sights on Washington State University, with a Wildlife Ecology and Conservation major.

Receiving financial support will help me get the education to reach my dream career and make a difference in the world. It will help me give struggling life another chance, just as I was given all those years ago.



CORINNE M.

The University of Oklahoma



Cancer will always be a part of me, trailing behind me like a shadow. But it also fuels my fire; it keeps me pushing and wanting more. More education, more research, more hope. As I continue to grow and learn, I look at life with a different perspective than when I was growing up. I use my passion for writing to see the beauty and importance of the world around me. I take the opportunities given to me and turn them into something worth writing about and celebrating.

I love my scar now. My 'battle' wound. I see it anytime I wear a tank top, or if I'm getting in the shower. There's no ignoring it. I love it because it will always be a part of me: a constant reminder of what I am capable of. And the thing about shadows is, they stay behind me while I continue to face towards the light.



DARREN B.

Missouri Western State University



As a survivor, I try to be there for newly diagnosed teens. I still attend our monthly teen support groups to share the positives of life after treatment. I encourage others to realize that a diagnosis does not mean an end to our dreams and goals—just a different route. Throughout my long treatment, I had one goal in mind: to play college baseball to pay for my college education. Although cancer may have set me back, my goals have not changed... I want to give someone else the hope to not give up on their dreams, because leaders continue—no matter what obstacles they face.



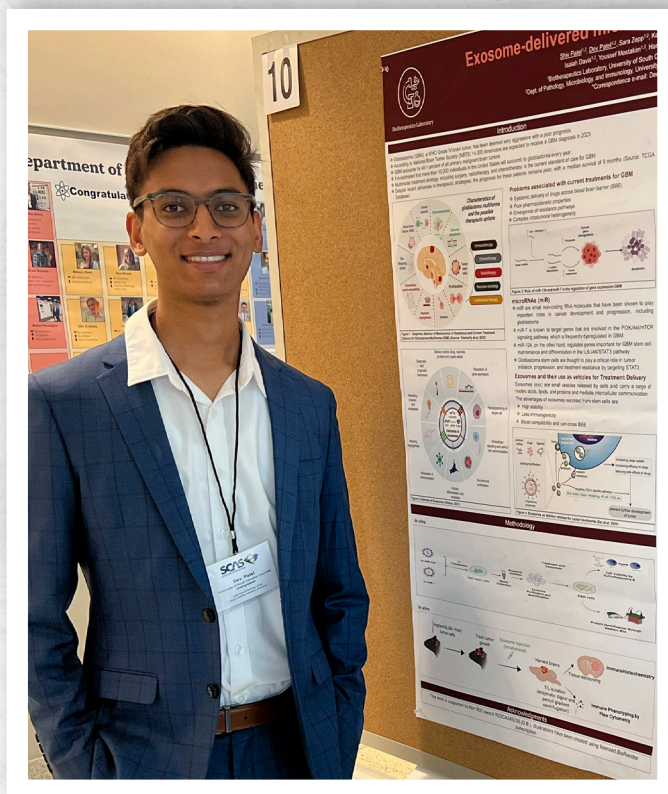
DELANEY F.

West Virginia University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the ACE Family Foundation Award**

My very first nurse in the hospital left the biggest impact on my family... It's because of nurses like her that I decided that I want to be a piece of the puzzle. Now I have reached the point in my life where I can make it happen. I have seen the nurses support my parents; I could be that person who gives other parents clarity in a time of distress. I want to be the one to make connections with my patients and relate to them because I truly understand what they are going through... I want to be a nurse that inspires someone else to help others. My goal in life and my passion is to help other people.



 **LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Two months before my fifteenth birthday, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma. What began as a lump on my neck morphed into a journey of denial and fear. I felt that I was misdiagnosed and became angry, irritable, depressed, and self-conscious.

Cancer caused me to quickly mature. It taught me to view people differently and not judge based on physical appearances or disability. They have a story like I do. I studied Hindu scriptures and realized that I was meant to have this disease to foster my growth and development in life.

Fast forward four years and I was about to enter college. All the change was daunting, but my strength in battling cancer helped me to persevere. I was accepted into a medical program and got involved in medical research. Cancer is going to make me a stronger physician who can empathize with patients.

Cancer did not debilitate me; it strengthened me. Each life experience has a lesson. Cancer has taught me to appreciate life.



DEVIN H.

University of Colorado Boulder



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Learning I have acute T-cell lymphoblastic lymphoma has transformed my outlook on life. Although I am still in treatment, it has caused me to push myself, as I recognize that life is not guaranteed. So I have cried harder, laughed deeper, and loved fuller. I long for others' lives to be better because I was here.

I feel whenever I sit down or take a rest that I must stand back up and carry on. The aspiration of making a difference in someone's life, no matter how small, has become a daily intention of mine.

A lot of my memories from the beginning of my treatment are a blur, but one is clear. A lunch lady from my high school left a message of support, noting that she enjoyed our small conversations. That was three years ago, yet those moments were significant enough that she remembered details, showing every conversation is an opportunity to change someone's life.

I plan to obtain a degree in finance and use my knowledge to provide people sound financial advice.



DEYVIS R.

Louisiana State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

I was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia at the age of eighteen, right before I was to start college. I had to put my dreams of going to college on hold and instead spend time in treatment. I used this time to think about who I wanted to be and what I wanted to do. When faced with the possibility of my own mortality, it became clear I want to be a human rights attorney and spend every day trying to spread as much love as I can to those around me.

Before I got sick, I wanted to study corporate law; but enduring my own suffering and witnessing the suffering of others has made me realize that the most valuable thing on earth is human life. This has led me to want to be a human rights attorney to advocate for those who are unable to speak for themselves. I believe everyone deserves to have a high quality of life, and in this role, I can provide that to those in need.



DILLON C.

Western Governors University



My life took an unexpected turn on June 15, 2020 with my diagnosis of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL)— shattering my dreams in aviation. Enduring painful treatments and the uncertainty that came with them, I learned resilience and gained perspective, realizing the insignificance of past worries. Cancer revealed true friends and family who stood by me amidst the challenges I faced. Despite setbacks like the FAA's revocation of my medical license due to health concerns, my determination to become a flight instructor remains unwavering. Recognized as an Honored Hero for the Las Vegas community by LLS, I've been privileged to raise awareness and funds for research. The LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors will provide crucial financial support, empowering me to pursue my aviation dreams despite the hurdles imposed by my diagnosis and allow me to continue my appeal with the FAA. This scholarship symbolizes more than financial aid: it represents hope and determination on my journey to achieve my dreams.



DYLAN F.

Malone University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

Facing a rare and severe diagnosis of stage four non-Hodgkin lymphoma before my freshman year was the toughest challenge of my life. Enduring surgeries and grueling chemotherapy, I fought through excruciating side effects to achieve my goals: ringing the bell and making the basketball team my sophomore year. This journey has taught me resilience and a deep appreciation for life's moments. Inspired by my experience, my family and I founded the Fearless Fighters Foundation to aid families facing pediatric cancer. Through fundraising events and initiatives, we've made a significant impact for patients and their families. The foundation has raised over \$100,000 to help families facing their child's cancer diagnosis and donated over 200 blankets to comfort patients during their treatment. This scholarship will allow me to continue my philanthropic efforts while pursuing a business education, determined to make a difference in the lives of others affected by cancer.



ELIZABETH H.

University of Delaware



Hanging from my bedroom ceiling are my "Beads of Courage," physical reminders of every step of my three-year journey through leukemia treatment at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Initially, I resented these tokens of resilience, praying for a normal childhood instead. Yet, in remission, they've become a source of gratitude, reminding me of the kindness and expertise of those who cared for me. Each bead signifies someone who went above and beyond, filling me with appreciation for every day of school, every smile, and every strand of hair. Now a freshman at the University of Delaware, majoring in Medical Diagnostics with aspirations for physician assistant school, I've embraced opportunities for service and leadership. Through volunteer work at the local hospital and involvement in various clubs, I've learned the profound impact of giving back. Scholarship support will enable me to continue my journey in healthcare. I aspire to become someone's bead of courage, offering hope and support when it's needed most.



EMILEE M.

University of South Carolina



It is exciting for me to see how the pieces of my life are coming together. Being diagnosed with leukemia when I was three years old was life-altering. The challenges I endured have made me so much stronger. The diagnosis that once made me weak now drives me in my future endeavors.

As I begin to pursue my career, I plan to intern and volunteer with many types of therapists and organizations. Through the years, I encountered pet therapists, music therapists, physical therapists, play therapists, and psychologists who each shaped and left their mark on me. These impressions have created in me a passion to impact other kids, allowing me the opportunity to give back to the community that gave so much to me throughout the years.

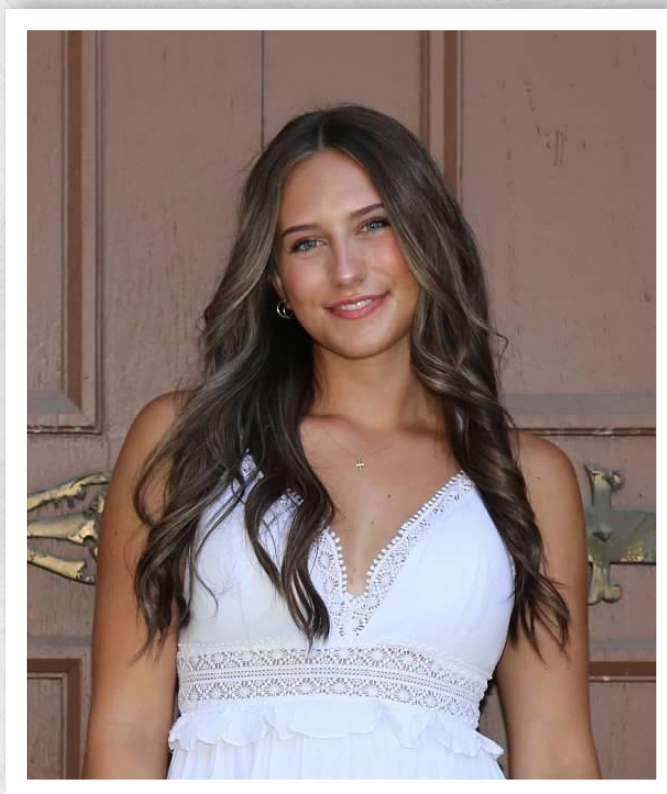
★ ★
★ **EMILY S.**
Bates College



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

It was supposed to be like every other day and instead it's permanently engraved in my mind as the day I was diagnosed with cancer. The next five months of my life were by far the hardest times I ever had to endure. As a biology student, I have spent most of my life learning about the specific ways tumors are treated. After my diagnosis, I was experiencing first-hand what I had spent my life learning about. Science is the reason I am able to still be here today. Medicine is deeply personal, and the best care can only be provided through true human connection between a patient and caregiver. My cancer taught me how to better form this connection and I use this experience almost daily to help others. I work as an LLS First Connection volunteer to help recently diagnosed patients cope with their disease by having someone else to relate to. My cancer experience has given me purpose and determination to continue pursuing my goal of becoming a physician.

★ ★
★ **EMMA B.**
Miami University



I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in 2013. Each day of my treatment held something different for me to learn, experience, and grow from, and it was my joy to discover how God was already in it and how blessed I was to partner with Him. While I might have focused on what cancer took from me, I prefer to celebrate what I gained from my diagnosis. The sum of me has been created through adversity and victories, forged through trials and triumphs, and developed over the last eighteen years—with so much learning and discovery still ahead. Because of my cancer experience, I developed unstoppable perseverance not just to face a challenge, but also to overcome it. I survived for a purpose. My life has a calling that pushes me forward. I choose to live life fully and pursue a degree in Marketing & Business, with a healthcare focus. I want to lift the voices of the multitude of children who will be diagnosed with cancer in the years ahead.



ETHAN D.

University of Georgia



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Marshall Family Award**

At the time of diagnosis, I lost the ability to visualize my future. Three and a half years of chemotherapy forever changed how I tackle life and shaped the person I am now. Though I anticipate a lifetime of surprises, I am confident I can take whatever is thrown my way. I may have lost my childhood innocence, a few friends, and my hair, but I gained empathy, strength, and unwavering determination. I was lucky to have support at home and within the community. Now it is my turn to pay it forward. By sharing my story at different stages of my fight, I was able to inspire, motivate, and encourage others. Cancer does not define me; it serves as the catalyst for growth. Witnessing the kindness of others revealed my desire to use my story to make a difference. My path may have a few extra twists and turns, but thatâ€™s what makes it beautiful. Life is worth the ride.



EVANGELINE N.

Florida International University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

Cancer is always in the back of my mind. Every time I think about my career, my family, my future, cancer is there. Cancer took away my childhood, has taken many family members from me, and one day it will take me too. But I don't want to hide from that. I want to embrace it and help others the same way I was helped.

Throughout high school, I've worked with children from low-income families. I've also remained in touch with the hospital that treated me, donating toys for the kids and planning fun events that offer a distraction from their current circumstances.

I've always known that there are scholarships for survivors like me, and the LLS Scholarship gives me a glimpse into what my future could be. It can help me through a year of school that otherwise I wouldn't be able to afford.



EVERETT E.

Prairie View A&M University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

As a freshman at Prairie View A&M University majoring in Engineering, my life was starting. It was the first time I ever spent away from home. During my short time at Prairie View, I encountered various challenges, one being Calculus and the most significant being my diagnosis with leukemia—five weeks before spring finals.

Leukemia has changed all of my personal and professional pursuits. It taught me that life goes on with or without my contributions, and I realized I couldn't be the same version of myself. Leukemia stole my short, intermediate, and long-term goals and replaced them with goals focused on individual transformation. Battling cancer has also impacted my ability to volunteer and give back to the community.

Receiving this scholarship would ease financial burdens, allowing me to focus more on my studies and touch people's lives through community service. By investing in my education, this scholarship would contribute to the development of a future engineer who is technically competent and compassionate.

★ ★
★ **FRANCOISE G. L.**
Starmark Academy



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Teenage life is filled with hope, excitement, and uncertainty. During my teenage years, I embarked on a courageous battle against cancer when I was diagnosed with leukemia.

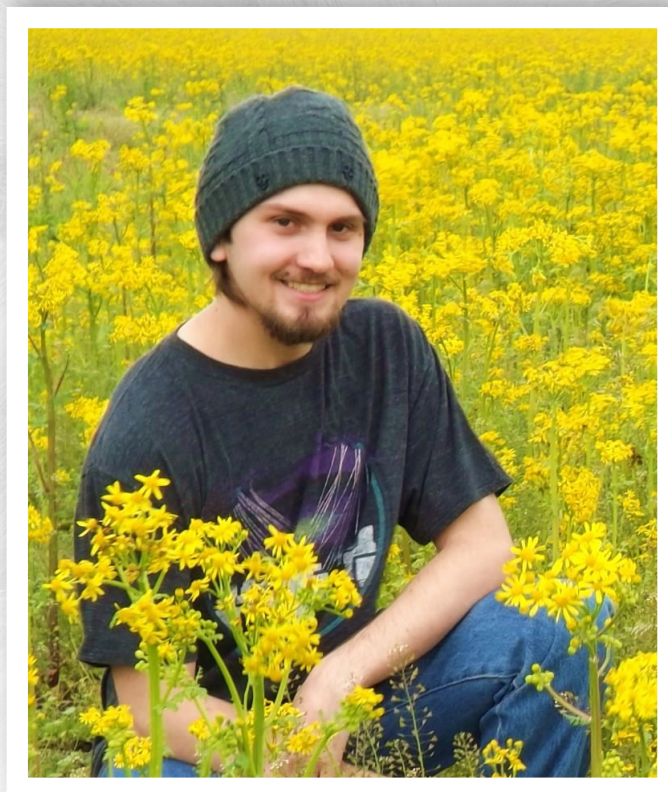
The treatment took close to three years. I had a year-long absence from school and returned for half days while still undergoing treatment. The COVID pandemic forced me back into the house and I had to isolate myself from friends and the outside world. My cancer treatment continued during COVID, and I finally rang the bell. It was a significant milestone in my journey. However, the side effects of the treatments knocked at my door. The chemo had eaten the Lunate bone in my wrist, and I needed a wrist implant.

I then began volunteering at a dog shelter that gave me a sense of purpose again. I became involved with organizations that supported cancer patients. My cancer journey with all its challenges has taught me empathy and how lonely the road can be. By sharing my cancer story, I have made a difference and an impact.



GABRIEL S.

Shawnee State University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia when I was three years old. The main benefit of being so young is that I do not remember the hardships of chemotherapy. However, what may have been the best treatment my parents gave me was to treat and love me like a normal kid.

During the last two years at Hocking College, my productivity, resilience, and drive to succeed have been a testament to me making the best of the life I fought so hard to win from leukemia. I am the vice president of the National Society of Leadership and Success and a long-standing member of the Rock Student Ministry, a student-led Bible study club. From those amazing support systems, I was able to graduate with honors this last May. I will be returning to Hocking College in January to pursue a second degree. I have plans to go into the medical laboratory technician field.



GILINA V.

University of Pennsylvania



My handwritten entry in our kindergarten yearbook declared: "When I grow up, I want to be a nurse." I loved the nurses' colorful, playful scrubs and their sweet smiles. I still want to be a nurse, but the reason is now much more profound. When I was six, my parents were told something no parent should ever have to hear: "Your daughter has acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a type of blood cancer."

A nurse gave me a Chemo Duck stuffed animal with a PICC line just like mine. The nurses always smiled, like the nurses in my picture books. I felt less alone—and safer. I wanted to be a nurse like the ones watching over me.

I have excelled in all my high school classes and volunteer weekly at the Kaiser infusion center, comforting patients with blankets and conversation. Working to become a nurse has helped me overcome my cancer trauma. My experience is a testament to the nurses who inspired me to follow in their footsteps.



GRACE G.

Northeastern State University

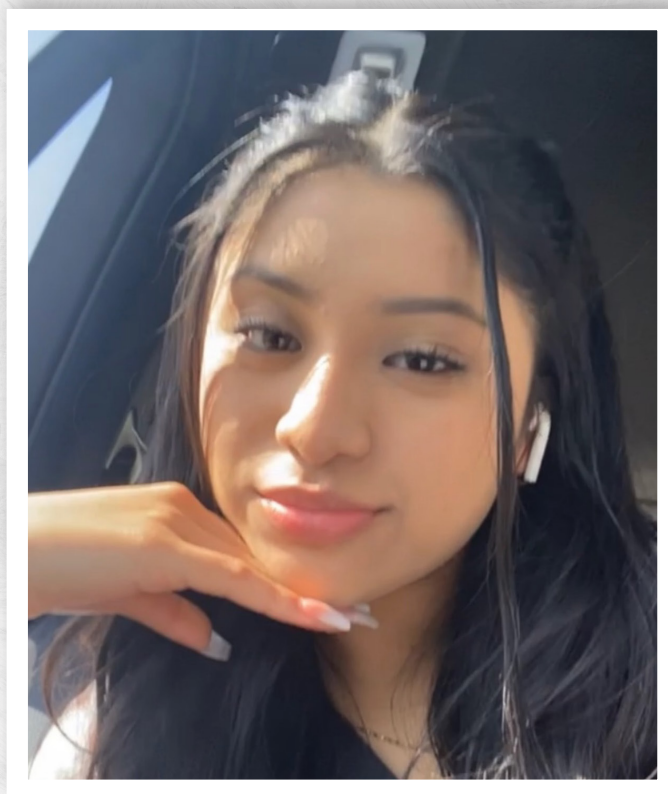


At just three years old, I faced the unimaginable: a diagnosis of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). The shock reverberated through my family, but with their unwavering support, I embarked on a journey of resilience and determination. By September 2010, I completed my last dose of chemotherapy, marking the end of one battle and the beginning of a new chapter. Cancer may have reshaped my childhood, but it did not define my future. Driven by a desire to give back, I pursued leadership roles and athletic endeavors, finding solace in the strength of community. Despite financial fears, my dreams of becoming a pediatric oncologist persisted, fueled by a passion to help others navigate similar challenges. From hosting lemonade stands to advocating for childhood cancer research in college, I've embraced my survivorship as a catalyst for positive change. My journey is a testament to the power of resilience, perseverance, and the support of loved ones. Being a childhood cancer survivor doesn't define who I am—it has only helped to shape the woman I am today.



GUADALUPE M. P.

Bellingham Technical College



In the summer of 2022, I faced the daunting diagnosis of B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. As the news settled in, I grappled with fear and uncertainty, questioning, "Why me, why now?" Yet, amidst the blur of treatments and worries, a profound purpose emerged. Surrounded by unwavering support from family, friends, and compassionate healthcare professionals, I discovered a newfound resilience and determination. Their encouragement became my guiding light, propelling me forward through the darkest moments of my journey. Now, in the midst of my own healing, I find solace in the opportunity to pay forward the love and support I received. My resolve to become an oncology pediatric nurse burns brightly, fueled by the desire to provide children facing similar challenges with the same atmosphere of positivity and hope that sustained me. Through my own experience, I have found my true calling: to be a beacon of light for others navigating the stormy seas of illness, guiding them towards healing and hope.



GWYNETH S.

Cleveland State University



My Hodgkin lymphoma diagnosis hit me out of nowhere. I am one of seven children, and I was working about 25-30 hours a week as a waitress to pay my way through college while enrolled in six classes. I was in constant pain and exhausted.

It wasn't until July of 2023, when I noticed a giant lump on my neck at work and took a trip to the ER, that I found out I had cancer. I had to quit my job and take the fall semester of 2023 off so I could have the energy to fight this.

I am so grateful for those who came before me so I could have a cure for this cancer. I'm grateful that I live thirty minutes away from the Cleveland Clinic. I'm grateful for a family that is supportive and loving. I'm grateful for friends who have done nothing but care for me.

While cancer may have put my life on hold, it has only made me more excited for it to start again.



HANNAH C.

Howard University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

Life often surprises us with unexpected challenges, and my journey took a profound turn when I faced the daunting diagnosis of Hodgkin lymphoma during my sophomore year at Howard University. This transformative experience has not only imprinted itself on my future educational and career aspirations, but has also ignited a fierce determination within me to overcome adversity and make a lasting impact on my community and the world.

This scholarship represents far more than financial support; it symbolizes a key that unlocks the doors to my dreams.

My journey is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the human heart and the transformative power of resilience. I am unwaveringly committed to leveraging my experiences to create a brighter future, not only for myself but also for the broader community. With the support of this scholarship, I am poised to take the next step in realizing my dreams, continuing to transform adversity into opportunity.

ISAAC M.

The Pennsylvania State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

My journey from trauma to triumph began at the age of fourteen when I was diagnosed with mixed phenotype acute leukemia (MPAL). My battle led to several unexpected benefits. It taught me invaluable lessons that continue to guide me towards a future based in resilience, leadership, and making a difference in the world.

The realities of a life-threatening illness at a young age forced me to mature quickly. Advocating for myself, making critical decisions, and staying strong in the face adversity are skills I continue to build upon today.

My experiences fostered a deep appreciation for the technology and healthcare professionals who saved my life. I'm now driven to pursue my passion in the IT field so I may also assist others battling cancer. Additionally, I seek opportunities to give back to the community when possible by fundraising and organizing activities for young cancer patients.

I look forward to using my education and passion to make a meaningful impact on the lives of others.

★ ★
★ **ISABELLA S.-L.**
Auburn University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

You would think losing my brother would be one of my greatest challenges in life. What then does it say when I faced the same challenge nine years later? How was my brother able to find the strength within him to deal with cancer at the age of five? How was I going to find the same strength at the age of thirteen?

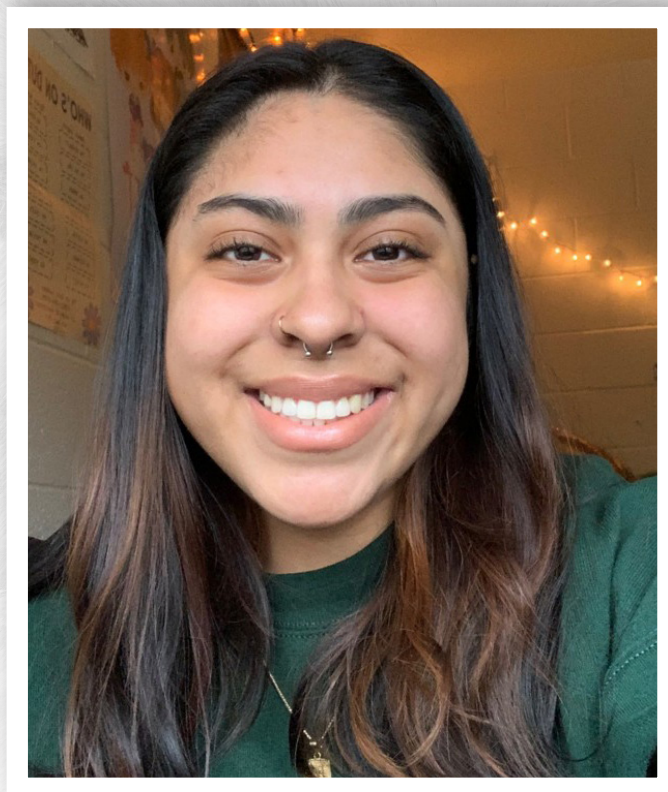
I am so grateful for my family, doctors, and friends. Through their advice, I learned valuable life lessons about courage, true friendship, and compassion. They inspired me to open my heart and lead an intentional life.

I soon found ways I could get involved through the same organizations that helped me when I was fighting cancer. I became a candidate for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Student Visionaries of the Year campaign, helping to raise \$185,000 with like-minded high school students. I also joined the leadership team for LLS. Volunteering allowed me to give back what I had received during my treatment and refine my leadership skills.



JACKELINE O.-M.

University of Delaware



I was diagnosed with anaplastic large cell lymphoma in 2018 at fourteen years old.

I am pursuing a degree in Medical Laboratory Science. As I've furthered my education over the years, I've faced endless barriers to get where I am today. There is no urgency to care for people in detrimental circumstances, to support working-class immigrant families with little to no resources, or to solve the illnesses that develop or are present. I continue to speak out on the epidemic factors that can directly affect marginalized communities' physiology and behavioral aspects.

I believe in fairness, justice, and equity in healthcare. I want the best care to be provided to everyone who goes to the doctor asking for help. What I want from my education is to bring about change in medicine. To influence and educate others to provide equal opportunities for quality medical care. A fair chance to live and accomplish my dreams. I wish to be seen and allowed to learn during and after my educational journey.



JACKSON M.

Louisiana Tech University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

I always wanted to make a positive impact on the world. My battle with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) allowed me to realize my calling in life, helping others through physical therapy.

With a diagnosis at age four, my journey was challenging. For a time, I was not sure I would even survive. I also had to re-learn some physical skills, including running and using the stairs. Physical therapy helped me achieve these goals.

During treatment, I learned the value of being grateful for all I have, including the small things. I also learned the importance of listening. I achieved several of my health goals by listening to doctors and trusting the process. Also, I gained insights by being a leader and staying active. I currently participate in several sports, clubs, and nonprofit organizations to help the less fortunate.

My battle with ALL helped me value the importance of gratitude, listening, and leadership while helping others. I look forward to applying these skills in college and eventually in my career as a physical therapist, helping those in need.



JAIDA S.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College



I am excited to attend Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for Childhood Education. Previously, I pursued Forensic Investigation while working at a daycare, which led me to discover my passion for teaching children. I graduated with honors from Denmark High School and was active in various volunteer organizations and sports teams. My life took a dramatic turn when I was diagnosed with stage 3 large B-cell lymphoma during my junior year. Treatment was intense, and I spent much of that year hospitalized and isolated due to COVID-19. Despite these challenges, I graduated on time and am now in remission. My experiences have given me a deeper empathy for children's struggles, driving my commitment to become a compassionate educator. Working at a daycare and participating in Camp One-Step, a support camp for young cancer survivors, has further prepared me for this career. Financial assistance would be invaluable as my family now faces additional financial burdens due to my mother's recent breast cancer diagnosis.



JANNA J.

University of Illinois Chicago



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Mike Scheehle

Diagnosed with non-Hodgkin primary mediastinal B-cell lymphoma (NHL PMBCL) during my first year of nursing school, I had to pause my studies and withdraw my research on LGBTQ+ health disparities. The experience was alienating and exhausting, involving complex medical jargon and intense treatments. Despite these challenges, shared moments with fellow patients—like exchanging IV pole stickers and playing piano—revealed the compassion and community within adversity.

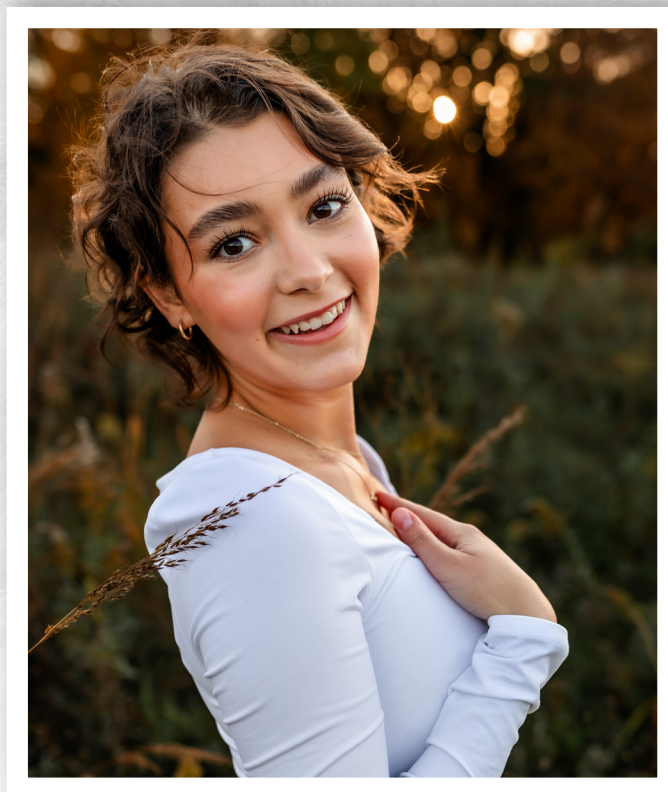
This journey has deepened my understanding of healthcare's complexity and humanity. It motivated me to volunteer with Planned Parenthood and Gilda's Club in Chicago and to work on mental health initiatives for nursing students, such as creating a mini library and incorporating art therapy. My goal is to become a pediatric oncology nurse, using my creativity and experiences to advocate for mental health in younger populations.

Grateful for my journey, I am eager to return to school and continue advocating for patients, caregivers, and healthcare teams with renewed resilience and determination.



JULIANA T.

Moraine Valley Community College



Since being diagnosed, my life has changed in many ways. If I had never been diagnosed with cancer, I would not have met amazing people or opened my eyes to new perspectives. My time in the hospital gave me front-row seats to the work that inpatient and outpatient nurses accomplish.

I have my heart set on becoming a nurse, specifically in pediatrics. I have always been interested in the human body and taking care of people, especially after being the one who was cared for.

Although cancer is awful, I refuse to let it control my life. Instead of being angry with cancer, I thank it for giving me a life I never would have lived otherwise. Cancer is not who I am, but an obstacle I will overcome.

★ ★
★ **KATELYNN M.**
The College of Idaho



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors
Award, in Memory of Mike Scheehle**

While undoubtedly a daunting adversary, lymphoma became an unexpected catalyst for change and self-discovery. It thrust me into the world of healthcare, a realm filled with compassionate professionals, cutting-edge medical practices, and the raw humanity of patients navigating their health journeys. This exposure heightened my awareness of the unique challenges those battling cancer face, fueling my passion for contributing to oncology and supporting others enduring similar struggles.

With a newfound purpose, I have set my sights on becoming a Physician Assistant (PA). This role perfectly aligns with my desire to make a tangible, positive impact on the lives of others, particularly those navigating the complexities of cancer. My experience through lymphoma has honed my resilience and enhanced my leadership abilities, making me more attuned to the needs of others and more determined to play an active role in community initiatives focused on cancer awareness and support.

My diagnosis does not define me; instead, I am empowered by it, as it has shaped my goals, values, and unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of others and contributing to the fight against cancer.



KATHERINE G.

University of Wisconsin–Madison



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Mike Scheehle

I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia at age two and spent three years in treatment. Defeating cancer left me with short-term memory loss, difficulty walking, fine motor challenges, and learning disabilities. For the majority of my life, I have felt less-than because of my struggles.

This changed when I joined Student Visionaries of the Year, a program that fundraises for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. At the end of the campaign, I was given the Mission Integrity Award at the Leukemia & Lymphoma Gala. The organization saw me for me: a cancer survivor, a warrior, and a community leader. I finally felt good enough. I realized I will continue to struggle, but that doesn't stop me from being a successful leader.

Because of my own experiences, I want to empower students with disabilities, which is why I want to be an adapted P.E. teacher and special educator. I want to cheer them on and let them know that it is okay to struggle—just like my teachers, specialists, and paraprofessionals did for me.

★ ★
★ **KATHERYNE L.**
University of Georgia



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Life is often defined as a series of moments, the most pivotal of which become markers of "before" and "after." After my diagnosis, my perspective changed. I now know, without a doubt, that I am meant to work in the medical field.

The primary driver for my desire to enter the medical field is my own experience with the neurocognitive side effects of chemotherapy. I will use my own experiences, coupled with the rapidly evolving field of neuroscience, to research ways to help other kids who are forced to undergo treatment with similar lifesaving, yet life-altering, chemotherapy protocols.

Entering the field of neuroscience will also enable me to give back to the team of warriors who had their own cancer experiences alongside me. I want to be able to return to them one day and say, "Your battle was not in vain. Because of your stories and your experiences, the team I am leading has made these great advances in neuroscience—so no more children will have to suffer like you did."



KAYDEN J.

University of Kentucky



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

I never thought I would hear the words "you have cancer". In April of 2023 I was diagnosed with Philadelphia chromosome-positive acute lymphoblastic leukemia. My parents put on a smile, but I knew they were terrified; so was I.

Going through cancer was the hardest thing I have ever done, but it gave me purpose, wanting to attend college and then medical school. I want to help others who are experiencing what I went through. I have developed a great relationship with my oncologist and he has inspired me as well.

After all I have been through, I have learned to appreciate everything in life. None of us are guaranteed long lives, so every moment of every day needs to be valued. Waking up each day is a gift and I refuse to let cancer take over my life. Cancer is not the end, but the beginning of a new chapter of your life. I want to be a beacon of hope for those diagnosed with cancer.



KEIRA W.

The Pennsylvania State University



In August 2018 I was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukemia. I took oral chemotherapy to suppress the cancer cells, but by the summer of 2022, the cancer was detectable and my oncology team informed my parents that a bone marrow transplant was my only option.

I became extremely close with one my nurses, Nicole. I felt we had an instant connection. She understood how I was feeling physically and emotionally, and opened my eyes to a different side of nursing. Combining her clinical knowledge and emotional intelligence, she was able to be the calm in my storm. When the time came to shave my head, I knew I wanted Nicole to be the one to help me find a new version of myself.

I want to be for another child exactly what Nicole was for me, thus my interest in pediatric oncology nursing. I have raised money for pediatric cancer at my high school and been involved in art and music therapy. Having such rewarding experiences confirmed my interest in pediatric oncology nursing.



KENZIE A.

University of Central Florida



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Elbit Systems of America Award

My life got flipped upside down when I was diagnosed with stage 4 Burkitt lymphoma. When I was going through treatment, I wanted someone to help me understand every detail of what was going on. Unfortunately, because Burkitt lymphoma is rare, no one around me could help me do that as well as I needed them to. This helped reignite the desire in me to help other people. Being a lawyer is the way that I believe I could help people feel heard and cared for while I help them with a fight that they cannot fight by themselves.

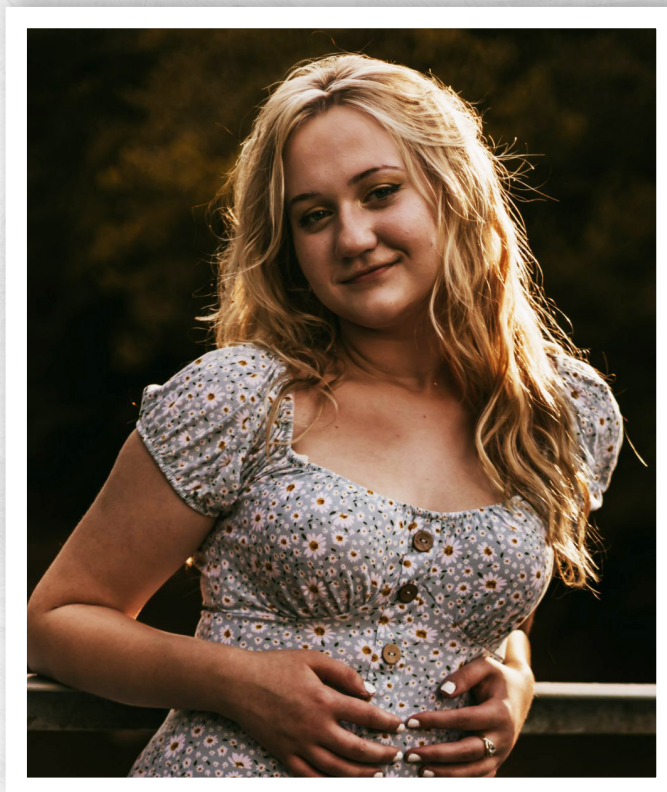
I am fortunate that I was born into a loving and caring family who would do anything to protect me and take care of me. They were by my side through every step of this journey.

A new goal I have is to be a listening ear and a guide for people who go through what I went through. I want others to know, especially young adults, that their lives can continue after cancer.



LAKEN P.

Indiana State University



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Alan M. Ayres

Having been diagnosed with a rare form of leukemia (high-risk MLL-arranged acute lymphoblastic leukemia) at just three months of age, I was basically born overcoming the odds—facing adversity in the fight for my life from the very start. I was given only a 20 to 30 percent chance of survival. My parents will tell you that I was born a fighter. I would not be here now, much less attending college, had I not learned from an early age the importance of overcoming the obstacles set before me.

I survived cancer for a reason; I was given a second chance at life. I strongly feel the call to give back by advocating and helping to find justice for victims of crime and their families.

Knowing what a positive support system has meant to me, I can't imagine an individual or family being affected by crime and trauma without someone to care and stand beside them—without someone to help advocate for them in a similar way that my family, and doctors, have advocated for me.



LAURYN W.

The University of Oklahoma



At the age of four, I was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer, pre-B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. This diagnosis encouraged me to value life and the importance of serving above self.

To overcome the setbacks caused from cancer treatment, dance became my physical therapy. I'm now able to provide free instruction to those seeking to develop and improve their skills in dance through my community service initiative, coined Gracefully Given.

Because of my experience, I intend to pursue a degree in the biological sciences at the University of Oklahoma to help me prepare for a career in the medical field. My dream of becoming a physician has no doubt been influenced by the doctors, nurses, and staff who once cared for me during my time of need.

Living through childhood cancer has provided me with an insight that most people lack when caring for patients. I know firsthand what a truly caring heart and words of encouragement can do when someone is living in their darkest hour.



LEONARDO S.

Peabody Institute of The John Hopkins University



When I was in first grade, my school participated in a fundraiser to raise money for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. I remember being eager to help kids in need. At that time, I had no idea what leukemia and lymphoma were, but two years later, I would find out.

Not long before my diagnosis, I told my grandpa I wanted to learn to play the guitar. Once I was at the hospital, he bought me one. When I finally got out of the hospital after a relapse and a bone marrow transplant, I was sure I was going to become a professional musician. All of it started and was fueled by that joy and strength that music gave me in a time of need.

I am truly thankful for everyone who has helped me along my journey, from my family and friends to my doctors and nurses, the amazing teachers, and especially my bone marrow donor, who I had the privilege of meeting. Ultimately, I hope to use music to connect with people and help them find joy and comfort in tough situations.



LOGAN Z.

Bowling Green State University



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

Within a week of being diagnosed with diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, I was lost. I felt as though my life was over; my dreams of being a commercial airline pilot all but vanished. The one constant message my cousin provided was to never give up on my dreams, and that cancer would be the most epic obstacle I would ever overcome. Before my diagnosis, I always found being a captain or leader on a team challenging, because I am not a vocal leader, but always try to lead by example. With being a cancer survivor, I now appreciate what a leader and mentor means to someone who is struggling. Everyone needs someone they can look to and talk to about the challenges they are facing. I have learned so much about myself and the resilience, pain, and suffering associated with cancer. My perspective on life and challenges has completely evolved. With my survivorship, I want my life to have purpose, and to be able to give back and help others.



LUCAS S.

College of Holy Cross



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Elbit Systems of America Award**

The diagnosis of leukemia and being a bone marrow transplant survivor taught me there are no guarantees in life. It also instilled in me the unshakable belief that discipline, hard work, and perseverance can help me achieve my goals. My goal is to become a successful business leader and translate my future successes into philanthropy to provide support to organizations focused on pediatric cancer research and support. I learned the value of a support network and the strength that comes with being part of a community. This motivated me to become a leader in supporting others by raising funds and awareness, as well as providing emotional support. I have gained a broader perspective on empathy, the impact of medical research, and patient support that reinforce my commitment to making a difference. My life experiences have shaped me into a resilient and determined individual, and I am excited to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. Inspired by the lessons I have learned through adversity, I am eager to contribute to the betterment of society.

★ ★
★ **MACKENZIE M.-D.**
Boston University



Cancer is akin to hitting a brick wall: it puts your entire life on hold. I had to completely cut ties with all the momentum I had been building, and I was left unable to accomplish what I had planned to. My goal had been chosen for me: survive, survive, survive.

I could no longer recognize myself in the mirror, despite the fact that we shared the same voice and the same thoughts. I was constantly beaten, battered, and bruised; my body was left in turmoil that I still haven't escaped.

Despite the many ways in which my experience belittled my being, I'm grateful for it. I would not be the person I am today if I had not learned to create cherished memories among those I'd wish to forget.

This also helped me to realize I wanted to become a pediatric oncologist, so I can relate personally to patients' experiences. I found the difference I wanted to make in the world: my near death has become my new life.



MACY F.

University of Tennessee, Knoxville



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

The game doesn't always go according to plan. In my case, being diagnosed with cancer abruptly ended my athletic career. However, this setback ignited a new passion within me and fueled my determination to support athletes in their journey to recover and return to the sports they love.

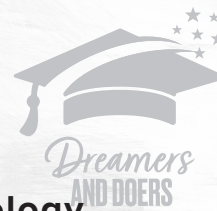
I have transformed from an athlete to a sports advocate, pursuing athletic training and my unwavering commitment to helping athletes overcome injuries. I want to be the link between athletes and their safe return to what they love. Studying athletic training will equip me with the knowledge and skills to provide comprehensive care, rehabilitation, and support to athletes recovering from injuries. By understanding the challenges they face, I aim to help them regain confidence and reach their full potential.

My experiences have strengthened my commitment to making a positive impact on athletes' lives, and I am grateful for the opportunity to pursue this rewarding path and be back in the game.



MADISON F.

Mary Washington Hospital School of Radiologic Technology



My diagnosis of chronic myeloid leukemia has played a key role in shaping me into the person I am today. It has taught me the importance of maintaining a positive outlook on life. This lesson was very difficult to accept at first because I was a scared eleven-year-old, but I quickly realized that I would use my experience to have a meaningful life. My decision was strongly influenced by the outstanding patient care I received from my oncologist and nurses. Their commitment was inspiring and it sparked my interest to pursue a career in the medical field.

Radiography allows doctors to properly diagnosis patients. This role is highly rewarding because I would be responsible for providing a piece of the puzzle that improves a patient's wellbeing. The capability to help others would allow me to fulfill the dreams of my eleven-year-old self. I fell in love with the idea of specializing in radiation therapy due to my experience with cancer. The scholarship will greatly contribute to my journey of becoming a successful radiographer that prioritizes her patients' wellbeing.



MADISON M.

The University of Michigan



“You have cancer.” These are the words that no one wants to hear, let alone a high school freshman with her entire life ahead of her. Faced with obstacles that no one expects at my age, being a normal, healthy teenager was what I missed most of all.

I met a young boy, maybe three years old, in the room next to mine who was also receiving treatment. Seeing him, too young to understand what was happening to him or even why, inspired a strong need within me to do something about it. Science has always been a love of mine, and after a little research I found the dream job: biomedical researcher.

My experience with cancer taught me one of the most important things about myself: my life purpose. My fight against cancer is going to be a lifelong battle, and I am happy about this. I am going to fight for the next kid who is diagnosed with cancer. Finding my purpose has been incredibly eye-opening for me, and I have cancer to thank for that realization.



MIKAYLA B.

Southeastern University



In April of 2022, I was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML). At that time, I was getting ready to move across the country to decide what ministry school I wanted to attend. Along with ministry school, I was planning on getting my bachelor's degree in business. I am happy to say I have officially started back at school. My dream is to one day be able to work for a nonprofit that solely focuses on the rehabilitation of victims who have been trafficked.

My journey with AML has instilled in me an even bigger desire to empower people just like me, no matter their trauma, to do what they have been called to do. I want people to know what it looks like to fight no matter the odds against you.

Receiving this scholarship is not solely about financial support: it's about empowerment, commitment, and resilience to fight through hard things to make a difference in a world that needs people to shine their light.

★ ★
★ **MOLLY G.**

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

On April 10, 2023, I received a life-changing call from my doctor. All alone in my dorm room, I was informed that I had stage 2B nodular sclerositis Hodgkin lymphoma. At this point, I thought my life was over and that I was never going to be a normal teenager again.

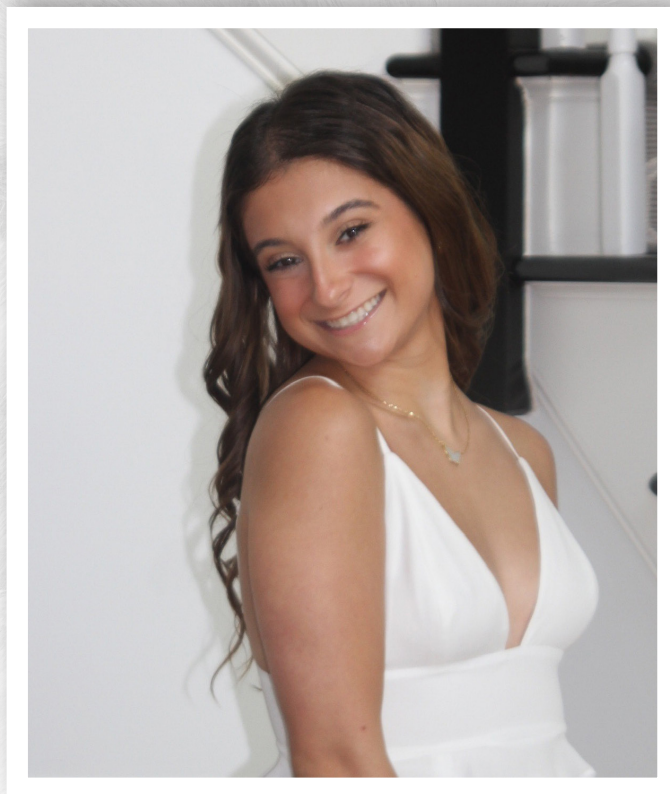
I decided to change my major to Biochemistry with the plan to attend medical school to be a hematologist-oncologist. I realized how much my doctor helped me see the good and I want to be able to do the same for others that have to go through what I went through. My perspective changed from "my life is over" to "maybe this happened for a reason": to help me find my calling to be an oncologist.

Being able to help another teenager with the same diagnosis as me one day is my goal now. My story can hopefully inspire my future patients and help them realize that they are stronger than the word "cancer" and it will not overtake their life.



MORGAN D.

University of Wisconsin–Madison



I made the firm decision not to let cancer take me down. Now when I think of cancer I do not think of the end, I think of it as my new beginning.

I have always been fascinated by why people behave and think the way they do, and what factors contribute to their behaviors. During one of my many hospital stays, I took An Insider's Guide to Psychology, an introductory psychology class focusing on personality disorders, cognition, and in-depth experimental design. The course furthered my interest in the field, fueling my excitement to pursue a degree in Psychology. Once I got sick, I recognized how important mental health is and taking care of your mind must be a priority. Speaking with therapists, child life specialists, and professionals in the field made it clear that my goal after college is to become a clinical psychologist for children. I am currently studying Psychology with a social work track at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. The courses I've taken inspire me to help others in need.



MORGAN F.

St. Norbert College



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

It's not uncommon to hear a cancer survivor or someone with a chronic illness say they want to go into the medical field to help patients with the same condition. My story started that way as I was going through treatment, but changed after I was introduced to research in college.

I spent ten weeks killing brain tumor cells with viruses at the Mayo Clinic, doing research that excited me and made me feel like I was making a difference. Something my mentor said helped me decide between pursuing medical school or graduate school. Medicine is perfection, he said, you cannot afford to make mistakes. However, in science, there's beauty and acceptance in failure, in revising a hypothesis and redoing an experiment. In failure, there can be discovery. I found a love for exploring questions, for research. Instead of aiming for perfection, I am focused on learning from both my successes and failures while learning as much about cancer cells as I can. My passion is to someday make cancer a less scary word.



MORGAN S.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

I was diagnosed with pre-B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia at the age of twenty. I have wholeheartedly tried to use the experience as educational, just as I have done with all my other activities. In fact, this diagnosis has solidified my desire to go into healthcare. Through treatment—including chemotherapy, surgeries, hospital stays, infection management, and more—I have been exposed to many areas of healthcare I had previously not considered. But most importantly, I truly understood what it meant to be on the receiving end of things. During treatment, I experienced every weird side effect imaginable and felt very isolated at times because I was told my reactions were unusual. It was heartbreaking to feel alone and that no one understood me. Regardless, my whole patient care team at my hospital have truly been my biggest cheerleaders, and I wouldn't be as strong without them. After countless discussions with my pediatric oncologists and doing my own research on my cancer, I learned that this field is what I am truly passionate about. Being able to connect with patients on a whole new level than before is a blessing.



NATALIE T.

University of Detroit Mercy



In March 2020, I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma. After hearing the words "You have cancer," it was as if the world around me had begun moving in slow motion.

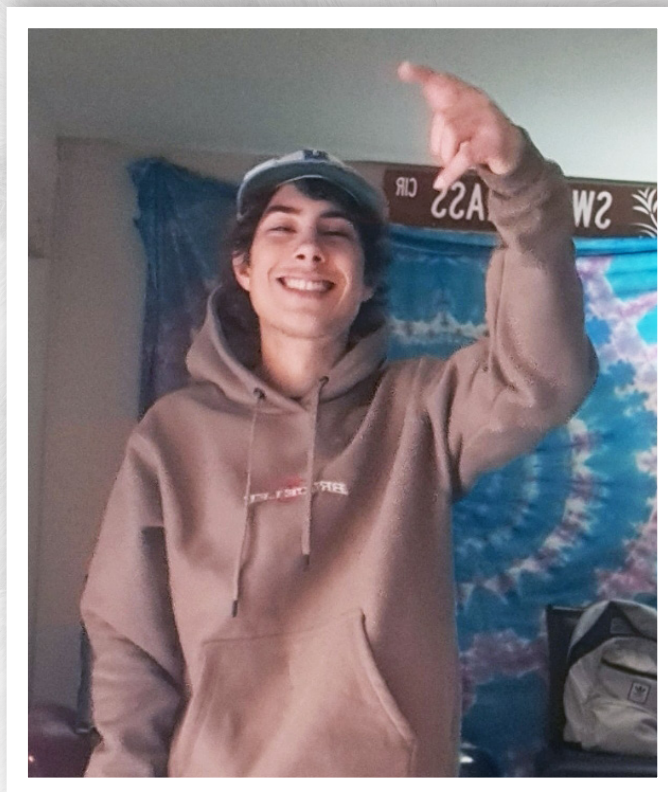
I have always said that everything happens for a reason. I believe that I had to go through this journey for a purpose, to gain something great from this life-changing experience. Not only did my diagnosis lead to me discovering my dream career of becoming a pediatric oncology nurse, but I also came to realize that I am much stronger than I give myself credit for.

My goal is to be a pediatric hematology oncology nurse so I can be there for my patients not only as a nurse, but also as a support system—just like how my nurses were there for me and my family.



NOAH Y.

Texas State Technical College



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award**

I had just turned twenty-one and was satisfied with what I had and how I was living. I felt on top of the waves. I was living the dream: I had no plans, no goals. This young man's life was easy-peasy, lemon-squeezy. BOOM, acute lymphoblastic leukemia hit while I was working on my 2007 Pontiac. The sickness began and my "easy-peasy" life would be no more. Going through cancer, for the most part, was one of the biggest triumphs I've had over that which tries to take me or those like me! Blessed by my Savior Jesus Christ and thanks to the many wonderful medical staff at MDA, I beat leukemia, giving me a reset and a better appreciation for life.

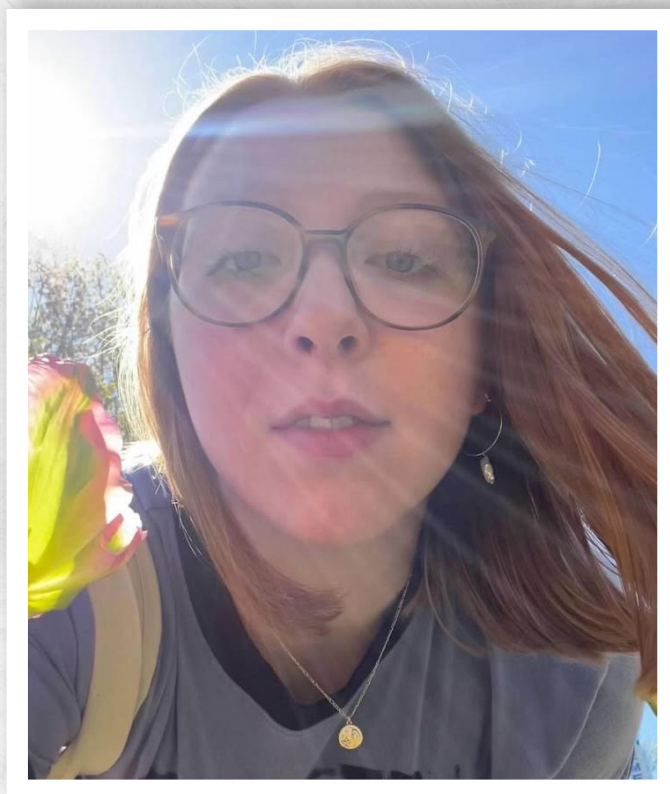
I am attending two colleges, Wharton County Junior College for my basics, and Texas State Technical College for my trade, Heat Ventilation Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR). I plan to graduate with my universal HVACR License and my Associates degree in Applied Science.

I will not let cancer stop me from reaching my goals!



OLIVIA C.

Mount Holyoke College



I was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia at eight years old. I was determined not to fall behind or let cancer impact my education. Eleven years later, I understand that that was an impossible hope.

At its core, cancer is a force of disruption. It interferes with existing systems, forcing us to confront it and adapt to the damage left behind. Following my treatment, I was diagnosed with a neurocognitive processing disorder. Through my experience, I found myself drawn to psychology and neuroscience. I wanted to understand how chemotherapy was able to impact my processing ability.

I am a psychology major at Mount Holyoke College. My goal is to graduate in 2026 with a BA in psychology, a certificate in cognitive neuroscience and a minor in statistics. I plan to attend grad school to receive a masters in cognitive psychology, and eventually apply for a doctorate program. I also spend much of my time outside of school working for the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, a camp dedicated to serving children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.



OLIVIA K.

Purdue University



Right before I was to start second grade, I was diagnosed with a grapefruit-sized tumor in my chest: T-cell acute lymphoblastic lymphoma (ALL). My seven-year-old brain vividly recalls the first two weeks of treatment. Tests. IV pricks. The numbing static feeling. But also, the genuine feeling of support, that my nurses cared deeply about me.

My cancer was a silver lining. My disease taught me to find the light in the little things, that connections with people and supporting others are so important. Nine years later, I am still in remission. My diagnosis revealed to me that I have the gifts to be empathetic and compassionate. In my future, I want to use these gifts to serve others through nursing.

My experience with this disease will enable me to connect with and support young patients and their families—and to help them find the silver lining, as well.



RACHEL LYN F.

University of Dayton



Cancer didn't beat me—I beat it! It took some challenges to overcome since my diagnosis at 14 months. That diagnosis morphed into another form of cancer a few years later, followed by a bone marrow transplant and recovery. I lived in the "cancer kid" bubble for nearly a decade.

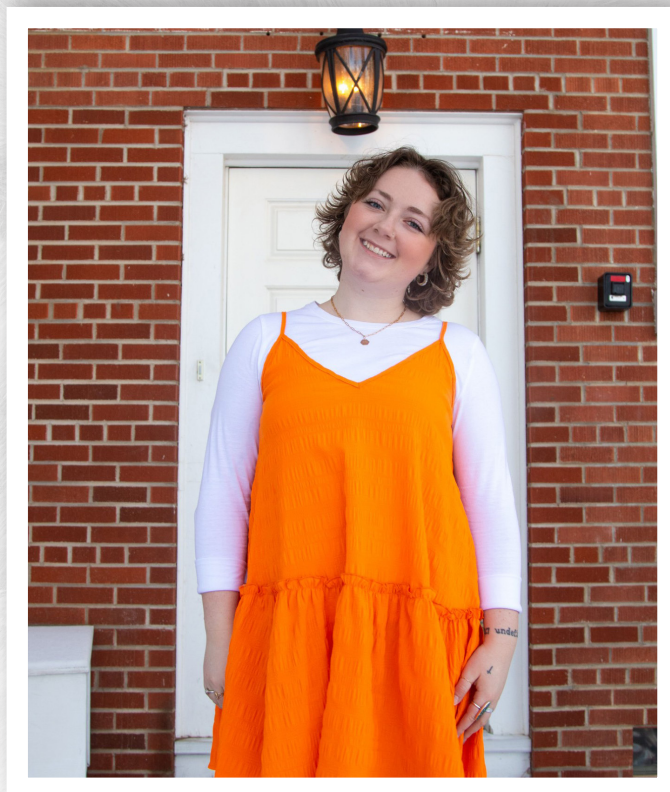
But I didn't let it define me. My mindset was the foundation for popping the bubble. Doctors told me I had limitations physically, and I proved to them that through consistency, determination, and perseverance, I could do whatever I put my mind to. Today I am an accomplished bodybuilder and scholar. I give 110 percent to whatever I do.

My passion, which is to help others who have experienced medical setbacks like I have, was formed by my cancer journey. I want to help others to make sense of their bodies and diagnosis, and to reclaim who they are meant to be despite challenges and setbacks!



RACHEL W.

University of Wyoming



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors Award, in Memory of Alan M. Ayres

I received my diagnosis of acute promyelocytic leukemia one week before moving back to college, where I had just been selected to serve as a leader for my sorority. My life turned upside down. I endured. I fought for my life while stuck in a hospital bed for a month. Back home, I had chemotherapy every day and worked on leadership responsibilities for my sorority, which I was missing out on. Despite this, I received the "Emerging Leader of the Year" award for all of fraternity and sorority life at my university. I want nothing more than to give back and help others realize they are not alone. Those who continually reached out to me gave me a will to still be here.

My battle with cancer was many things. Saying it was hard would be an understatement. It truly was a journey to find myself, to realize how strong and capable I am, to fully understand all of the purposes I have and how much work I still have left to do.



SAMANTHA W.

University of California San Diego



**LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors,
the Massey Services, Inc. Award**

Months before my own cancer diagnosis, I was staring at a wild Cayman parrot, riddled with cancerous tumors. I wanted to understand what in its environment caused cancer, if there was a preventable problem, or if it was hereditary.

In January of 2023, I was diagnosed with stage 2B Hodgkin lymphoma. Before my biopsy and port placement surgery, the hospital's support dog, Galaxy, stayed with me. Being cared for by a support animal for the first time, I realized how animals comfort us in ways many humans cannot.

Still, while an animal provided incredible emotional support, it was a team of human doctors that saved my life.

This scholarship will help me excel in college. I have been working to save money for college, but with rising tuition fees, my parents and I will not be able to cover my yearly tuition. With the help of this scholarship, I can devote more time to supporting children with life-threatening illnesses, animals essential for our emotional health, and the general health of the planet.



STEVEN P.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Tour De Court Award

"You are stronger than you believe": words I saw daily on the wall of my home became real when diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma just after turning sixteen. Despite the initial shock, my diagnosis was an unexpected gift that showed me how strong I am, uncovering yet-undiscovered parts of my character. My newfound resilience enabled me and my family to treasure ordinary moments that suddenly felt extraordinary. Whenever a challenge arises, I think, "You've beaten cancer, and you're saying this is hard?" I've learned to make the most of my today, for tomorrow is never promised.

After treatment, I became an advocate and fundraiser for the LLS Student Visionaries of the Year Program, becoming the top fundraiser in the Westchester-Fairfield Region. I gratefully continue to advocate for all those who are still fighting by mentoring and delivering motivating speeches about my experience. I am no longer that "normal" teenager cruising through life. He could never accomplish what I have done and what I will do. The world will just have to wait and see.



TAYLOR B.

Oklahoma State University



I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia right before my fourth birthday. As I look back on my diagnosis, I realized it impacted my leadership abilities more than I could even realize.

In my sophomore year, I asked to speak at our Cancer Awareness Week assembly to share my battle. My story reached so many people, and we raised over \$10,000 that week to donate to the Go-Mitch-Go Foundation, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, and other organizations to help support cancer patients and cancer research.

My future education includes attending Oklahoma State University in Stillwater and graduating with a degree in either accounting or engineering. After I graduate college, I plan on getting a job in my degree field and volunteering with cancer foundations and organizations to help kids like me. My diagnosis and life experiences have shaped these goals because of the things I was given the great opportunity to do.

I am thankful for where I have gotten and the support system that got me through.



TAYLOR C.

University of California San Diego



I was diagnosed with a rare blood cancer in March of this year. I was told college would be the best part of my life. Little did I know, my mom and I would both be diagnosed with different cancers—all within my very first year. I became an EMT because I want to help people. I work in healthcare because I know how important compassion is. I want to be a doctor because I know the significance of feeling impacted by a healthcare provider.

With my passion for helping others, my commitment to saving the environment, and my interest in medicine, I hope to contribute to creating a better world. I aspire to work alongside researchers and organizations to develop innovative solutions that address the interconnections between environmental sustainability, human wellbeing, and technological advancements. One day, I can become a doctor and find treatments that can help other humans.



TIFFANY P.

Eastwick College



LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation Award

My life has been challenging. I've gone through many health issues since the age of twelve, but my family and friends have always been there for me since day one. I've learned to be strong, considering all the difficult obstacles I went through at such a young age. Most importantly, I've learned to simply be more appreciative of life and be closer to God.

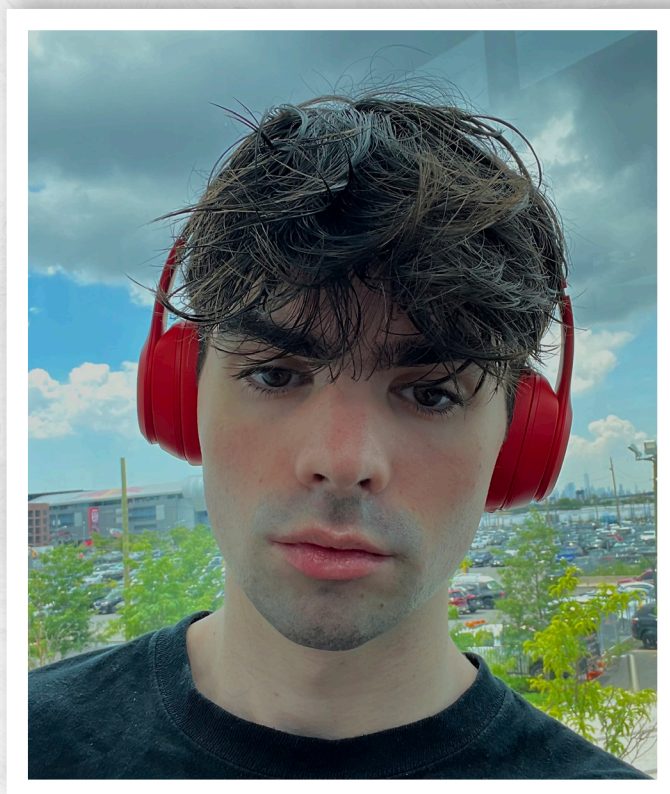
I was interested in doing something in the medical field. I didn't want to be a nurse, because I lived that part of my life in the hospital already. I found out about medical billing and coding. I looked into it and found it very interesting. This is exactly what I have been looking for. Now I have a clearer sense of the career path I want to pursue.

Thanks to God, family, and friends, I have been able to overcome many obstacles in life and be the young woman I am today, looking for new opportunities and starting a new chapter in my life.



TREVOR F.

Hudson County Community College



My leukemia was in remission at the age of six. One of my favorite nurses told my parents about Camp Happy Times, a summer camp for children who have or have had cancer. The ability to make connections with people my age that share a certain level of trauma has proven to be one of if not the most impactful aspects of my social life, and I can't say I have this bond with many others. Attending the camp as a leader-in-training, this position of leadership has guided me towards the criminal justice field. I plan to join the FBI, specifically as a special agent.

I feel as though I am finally at the age where I can appreciate and acknowledge how my hardships influenced me to become a better version of myself. In the absence of my cancer diagnosis, my entire life would be unimaginably different, and the irony of something so fatal having positive ramifications on my life is one I may never be able to put into words.

★ ★
★ **TREVOR V. S.**
Hope College



My cancer battle doesn't define me. However, it influenced who I am today. Cancer gave me the determination to live a purposeful life through serving others.

My goal is to learn more about the human body and help others the way my medical team helped me. I'm attending Hope College, and look forward to enrolling in medical school and then residency.

The support our community gave my family during my illness ignited our passion to give back. As Visionaries of the Year (formerly Man/Woman of the Year) participants, Light the Night team members, Team In Training participants, and more, our family has raised over \$100,000 for LLS. We participate in other charitable programs and also founded an endurance team through Make-A-Wish Michigan that has funded over twenty wishes.

I look forward to finding more ways to use my leadership skills and passions to impact the lives of others. I thank God for the gifts cancer has brought into my life.



WILLIAM JAMES C.

The University of Michigan



Rushed to the hospital and quickly diagnosed with leukemia, I faced aggressive chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. Despite the overwhelming situation, I became fascinated with the science behind my treatment, deepening my desire to become a doctor. Throughout my treatment, I maintained my academic excellence, completing five classes from my hospital room and achieving a perfect GPA and top scores. This reinforced my resolve to pursue a medical career.

Returning to school post-treatment posed new challenges, including isolation and a loss of self-confidence. However, I gradually found joy in life and developed a passion for fitness, transforming my physical health. My cancer experience has driven my involvement in scientific research and cancer advocacy. I conducted research on natural killer cells at USC and raised \$268,000 through LLS's Student Visionaries of the Year campaign. Attending LLS events and advocating for pediatric cancer legislation were profoundly rewarding experiences.

The LLS Scholarship would support my university education, enabling me to achieve my goals and make a positive impact through medicine.



SCHOLARSHIP DONORS

★★ FOUNDING DONORS ★★

Our founding donors are dedicated to helping patients, survivors, and families get the support they need. Thanks to these essential partners, LLS is proud to offer the **LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors**:

Alex Okafor Family Foundation
Beth Ayres in Memory of Alan M. Ayres
Elbit Systems of America
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Alok Kapoor

★ SUPPORTING DONORS ★

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Ronald Weiss and Peggy Ahlin
The Marshall Family

★ RENEWAL DONORS ★

Ronald Weiss and Peggy Ahlin



MEET SOME OF OUR GRADUATES

They dreamed, they dared, and now they're living their dreams.

As the LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors enters its fourth year, our group of trailblazing scholars keeps growing.

Their dreams are diverse and distinct. From social workers and HVAC technicians to biomedical engineers and cinema makeup artists, these blood cancer survivors are unstoppable.

Our scholars are taking charge of their promising futures. And their successes lead the way as this year's awardees move toward making their own dreams a reality.

In these students' own words, the LLS Scholarship for Blood Cancer Survivors has "been the biggest blessing," "provided peace of mind," and "let me dedicate myself to my passions."

In these following pages, enjoy exploring the progress of some of our graduates—discover what they're grateful for and where their dreams have taken them so far.



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Abigail Q. Class of 2023 Scholar

"I cannot express the gratitude I have for LLS and my parents in supporting my dreams. I was working during school and the scholarship allowed me to not stress and have an education with some very talented artists."



Caroline D. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The LLS Scholarship provided financial relief to my family and me as college is incredibly expensive. LLS help to provide an education for me and has been an asset to my success at Charleston Southern University."



Autumn R. Class of 2022 Scholar

"My BSW degree had a 500-hour unpaid internship built into its final semester. If not for the LLS Scholarship, I would have had to drop down to part-time schooling, which would've added another two years to my degree."



Carson B. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] helped me graduate with no student loans."



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Christa H. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The LLS scholarship has been the biggest blessing in my undergraduate journey, because of LLS I have been able to pursue my education with little debt and appreciate the journey. I can't thank LLS enough."



Colton K. Class of 2023 Scholar

"I plan to use my welding degree, mechanical drafting certificate, and HVAC to become a master contractor and start my own business. Using this scholarship, I will continue my path of growth and hopefully make all my goals into reality."



Claire M. Class of 2022 Scholar

"Receiving the LLS Scholarship allowed me to continue my education at Baylor where I pursued a degree in Health Science Studies with the goal of becoming a pediatric oncologist so that I can help save lives like my doctors saved mine."



Daria K. Class of 2022 Scholar

"It was extremely helpful not to take out any loans."



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



David F. Class of 2023 Scholar

"I grew up in a hard-working low-income household of six. As the third child, I hope to be the first one to attend college to become a medical assistant and work in a hospital with children."



Elaine H.G. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] helped me to pay tuition during my last year of undergrad, since my parents were paying for both my and my sister's tuition. It was a big relief for them!"



Dylan C. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] gave me motivation."



Fatima O. Class of 2022 Scholar

"My declared major is Biology, but that is not my final objective. My projection for the future is to be accepted into a medical school. I identify myself as a first-generation Hispanic student at a prestigious school studying to become an exceptional doctor."



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Haley P. Class of 2022 Scholar

"I switched my major to Social Work. From trying to get a diagnosis, going through treatment, and navigating life after cancer, made me realize there is an abundance of resources out there, but they are inaccessible to those who need them."



Henry P. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] allowed me to stay focused on school and grades without having to worry about making money to pay for college."



Hannah G. Class of 2022 Scholar

"This scholarship allowed me the funds to continue my education and forgo taking out student loans. This was greatly appreciated and helpful!"



Jane F. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] took a lot of financial stress away from my family and allowed me to really focus on academics!"



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Jonathan R. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The hardest part of cancer was that I had to grow up. Cancer plucked me from that blessedly stupid boyhood haze and threw me into a world where everything was painfully serious. You can't un-grow up...but there are parts of that magic that I know, I can return to."



Kathleen R. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The scholarship allowed me to not have to worry about how I would pay for school. I took advantage of this by studying super hard in all my courses, and even earned straight A's last semester (and hopefully this one too!)"



Katarina H. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] helped me have more financial flexibility and free time because I could dedicate myself to more of my passions and schoolwork rather than finding a part time job."

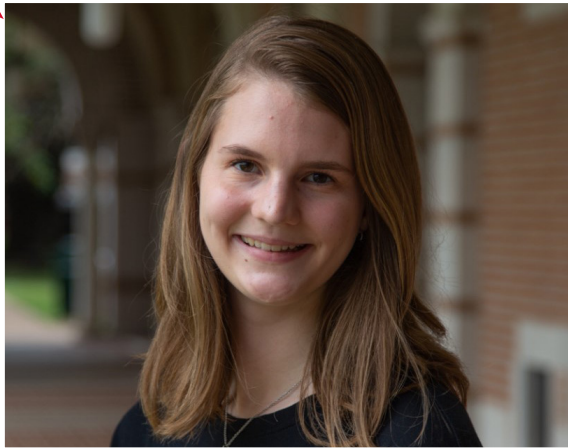


Katie B. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] helped me realize my passion for the LLS mission and the importance of volunteering. My experience with LLS has led to me to go into healthcare and work in a laboratory where I received a full time job offer after graduation!"



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Katie I. Class of 2023 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] helped me work towards my Bioengineering undergraduate degree, which is allowing me to start my Ph.D. in the fall and do cancer research."



Lana T. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The LLS allowed me to be able to continue school and live out my dreams of becoming a pediatric oncology social worker! This scholarship allowed me to finish school with no debt as a child to a single mom!"



Kim-Mail L. Class of 2023 Scholar

"The LLS Scholarship allowed me to complete my last year of college without taking out more private loans, which has helped me tremendously financially and mentally."



Lorelai C. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The LLS Scholarship is the reason that I was able to obtain an undergraduate education. My medical bills drained my college fund...but this scholarship allowed me to graduate from college debt free, and I am forever grateful for that."



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Marco G. Class of 2023 Scholar

"This scholarship made it possible for me to finish my program. It covered the majority of my tuition so I was able to afford my rent and food. I couldn't have completed this without it. Thank you so much."



Olivia C. Class of 2022 Scholar

"My diagnosis has led me to pursue a career as a pediatric oncology nurse. It has allowed me to maintain a positive outlook on life where I am grateful for my health, my life and all the people who surround me and support me."



Megan F. Class of 2022 Scholar

"The LLS Scholarship allowed me to put my education first and not were about whether or not I would be able to finance my degree. The peace of mind this provided was invaluable as I worked to meet my educational goals."



Rhea J. Class of 2022 Scholar

"[The LLS Scholarship] provided me the freedom to continue to pursue my dream of playing volleyball at the next level and focusing on studying every degree program I was interested in."



LLS SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Sahara T. Class of 2023 Scholar

"I am very thankful for the LLS Scholarship Fund. It helped me fund my educational studies that took relief off of me and my family."



Tate M. Class of 2022 Scholar

"Cancer has shaped me into a man of character, a man who shares kindness and compassion and a man who inspires generosity and hope in others. Time, introspection and circumstances have helped me realize the gift of my cancer."



Sofia S. Class of 2023 Scholar

"The LLS Scholarship lifted the financial burden of nursing school in my Fall 2023 semester, it gave me the opportunity to focus on my studies and invest my time in school. LLS has inspired me to work harder to achieve my goals and participate in survivorship."



YOUNG ADULTS AND CANCER



As a young adult with cancer, you have specific concerns and needs. You may have never been diagnosed with a serious illness before. This may be the time when you want to focus on school, start a family and work towards your career. Life is changing and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society wants to help you through those changes.

We offer:

- Personalized information and support
- One-on-one nutrition consultations
- Online support and patient podcast
- Booklets and fact sheets, including a young adult journal

For more information about all of our resources, visit: www.LLS.org/YoungAdults



LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA SOCIETY®





Get Support. Reach out to our Information Specialists.

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society team consists of highly trained oncology social workers and nurses who are available by phone, email and live chat Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (ET).

- Get one-on-one personalized support and information about blood cancers
- Know the questions to ask your doctor
- Discuss financial resources
- Receive individualized clinical-trials searches
- Get connected to resources



FOR MORE INFORMATION
POINT YOUR PHONE'S
CAMERA AT QR CODE

Contact us at **800.955.4572** or **www.LLS.org/InformationSpecialists**

(Language interpreters can be requested.)