

I was born and raised in a small town in Northwest Iowa; I still call that place my home. My whole family lives around the area and we spend a lot of time together. Every holiday we gather at my grandma's house and quite a few weekends out of the year we find some reason to get together. I have had the same best friends since I was nine years old, and we talk almost every day. For as long as I can remember I have wanted to be a Speech-Language Pathologist. When I was younger I had trouble saying certain letters and went to speech therapy. Also, after my grandfather had a stroke, he went to therapy, and after a few months he showed much improvement. Ever since then I dreamed of being a speech therapist. I wanted to help people the same way the therapists helped my grandpa and I.

Three years ago, I was a college freshman and leaving my friends and family behind to start this new chapter in my life. Little did I know it would turn out to be the hardest year of my entire life. I thought I was ready and could do this on my own with minimal problems; boy was I wrong! A few days into this new chapter of my life I became extremely homesick; I would call my parents crying every day. I was not sure I could make it as a college student; as far as I could see no one else in my dorm was struggling with this as much as me. I was considering quitting school and moving home, so I would not have to go through the pain of missing everyone all the time. My first semester of college I lived like this; miserable, missing my friends and family, and wishing I could just go home. After Christmas break, however; something clicked and I decided I was not going to give up school and my dreams. I was going to persevere, stay in school, and become a speech pathologist like I had been dreaming about for years. That was the toughest decision I have ever had to make, but I am so glad I chose to stay here. Now I have amazing friends, I love my classes, and I am almost finished with my undergraduate study. I cannot imagine how my life would be if I had not stuck it out through the hard times. I feel that situation made me who I am today. I know when things get tough I just need to hang on and keep going; everything will turn out okay.

This situation has made me realize I possess valuable strengths such as: perseverance, responsible, reliable, devoted, and determined. I have persevered through the hardest moment in my life, I made a very mature and responsible decision to stay in school, and I am truly devoted and determined to do well in classes and become a Speech-Language Pathologist. I also have a tendency to over commit and I tend to be unorganized. I have found using a daily planner and writing everything helps with these problems. I know where I need to be and when and I do not agree to do too many things; I give 100% to everything I am involved in.

If I were to be awarded this scholarship you can be guaranteed the money will go to good use. I plan to use this money to pay off my student loans. I hope to pay off my loans as soon as I can, so I can live out a dream I have. This summer I traveled to Nicaragua for two weeks and provided speech therapy services to children in orphanages. I hope to travel back there or somewhere in need and stay longer and help these children, however; I need to pay off student loans first. I work hard to keep my grades up, volunteer, and I have a job; any help I can get will be greatly appreciated and will not go to waste.