

# Worthy Women's Scholarship – Finalist Essay

Essay by Katie Zehr

At the age of 31, sometimes it is hard to believe in making my dreams become a reality.

There can be many bumps in the road and obstacles that can get in the way of what we want in life. As Dumbledore says in Harry Potter “ In dreams, we enter a world that is entirely our own.”

It is the drive, determination, and passion in ourselves that keeps us going so that our dreams can quite possibly come true. My dream is to be surrounded by children and books everyday. That dream is to continue to get good grades and finish my masters degree, become certified in NYS so I can be able to teach, and become a School Librarian also known as a Library Media Specialist.

Sometimes I feel others do not see my value or just because I am Autistic, that I am not capable of doing more than what my current career position is at this time. I currently work as a Middle/High School Library Aide at a local school district. I have always had to work extra hard and do more than my peers to get where I need to be. I know firsthand what it is like to go through adversities. I did not find out I was on the Autism Spectrum until I was 27 years old. I didn't know if I would get into a college to pursue my Masters to become a School Librarian. It is a huge deal for anyone on the spectrum to get past the expected requirements that need to be done education wise. Going beyond that mark and going further, is exceptional and truly amazing! Any goal I set my mind to achieve or any adventure I decide to embark on, is never easy. There is always so much to think about and at times alot at stake, even when we least expect it.

I was one that always had “mediocre” grades. I didn't ever think I would get such high grades and at the Master level at that. The last three semesters Fall 2022, Spring 2023, and Summer 2023 Semesters online with University at Buffalo, I have had a 4.0 GPA. I didn't think I would ever see a 4.0 GPA in my lifetime. This all happened while working a full time job as well. Sometimes those of us on the spectrum surprise ourselves. We prove ourselves and others wrong. This was something I never

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imagined happening let alone ever actually being able to do. But after lots of frustrations, academic work, and moments of doubts, I fought against all odds. I came and I conquered! This for sure was an obstacle I overcame and achieved. Proving myself wrong and getting top notch marks.

Though an obstacle I am still trying to overcome, is financially trying to figure out how to make this dream of getting my Masters degree and becoming a School Librarian a reality. I feel at times I am overlooked. I have so much to offer and work so hard. That I tend to get the "short end of the stick". I know you have many applicants applying for this scholarship. How do I stand out from the rest of the applicants applying for this scholarship? Well here I am applying for this scholarship and tend to not always get that opportunity of getting picked for one, when I truly financially could use the assistance. I am asking you to let my voice be heard.

Sometimes I have trouble asking for help, so this is a big step for me in doing so. I work very hard and feel like I am always living paycheck to paycheck. No one wants to feel that way when they are trying to make ends meet while trying to obtain their Masters degree so they can get the job of their dreams and also having better pay as well. I would be entirely grateful and thankful if you not only take the time to look at my application and essay; but give it some actual thought of considering me for this scholarship. I do not like giving up but I know this is a time where I truly need some assistance to keep me going in "charging those mountains" to get where I need to be. If chosen for this scholarship, I can assure you I will not let you down. I will keep working hard and overcoming my obstacles. With this scholarship, this will surely help me greatly in overcoming the financial burden and obstacle of paying for graduate school. This scholarship will help me be a few steps closer to having my dream come true so that I can share my excitement of the world of literacy with children of all ages. Thank You so much for this opportunity and allowing me to apply to this scholarship. I hope to hear from you in the coming future.

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Sincerely,

Katie Zehr