

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #1

Age: 22

Major: Occupational Therapy Assistant

I am pursuing a career in occupational therapy and will begin Parkland's Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program this fall. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies from UIUC, which gave me a strong understanding of human growth and the value of support systems. Now, I seek the hands-on skills needed to help others regain independence.

I funded my undergraduate degree through a full scholarship, but now I rely on loans, part-time campus work, and babysitting to cover living expenses. A scholarship would ease this financial pressure and allow me to fully commit to my studies and clinical experiences.

Parkland's OTA program offers the right balance of affordability, expert faculty, and practical training. It's the ideal environment for developing my professional skills and compassion.

While at UIUC, I faced hardships that affected my GPA—balancing multiple jobs and grieving personal losses caused burnout. Yet I pushed through. These challenges built my resilience and further affirmed my passion for occupational therapy.

I am dedicated to helping people live full, independent lives. Financial support now would give me the stability I need to succeed in the OTA program and ultimately support others through rehabilitation.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #2

Age: 28

Major: Radiologic Technology

After three denial letters from another community college's radiology program, I am proud to share that I've been accepted into Parkland's. This journey has been anything but easy, but it taught me that perseverance and determination are key to success.

I was raised by a single mother who immigrated from Guatemala. Watching her juggle multiple jobs with limited education and no English skills, I quickly learned to be independent. Her strength became the foundation of my resilience.

At 15, I became a mother. Though terrified, I used that fear as motivation. I graduated high school three years later, driven by the desire to build a better life for my son. He continues to be my biggest inspiration.

After my initial rejections, I earned an Associate in Arts degree and retook recommended science and math courses—only to be denied a third time. I refused to give up. I applied to Parkland's Radiology Program, despite being an out-of-district student, and was honored to be one of just five non-resident students accepted.

I originally pursued nursing and became a CNA, working in a nursing home. But I realized I wanted a healthcare career with a better balance and less burnout. Radiology, with its strong focus on anatomy and future growth opportunities, became the perfect fit. I hope to eventually expand into sonography as well.

This opportunity means everything. I want to show my son that success isn't about how many times you fall—it's about how many times you rise. After graduation, I plan to work in a hospital and pursue travel radiology or sonography when my son heads to college.

As an out-of-district student and single mom, tuition is a significant burden. Receiving this scholarship would relieve financial stress and allow me to focus fully on my studies and continue pursuing my dream.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #3

Age: 34

Major: Nursing

Nursing is more than a major—it's a calling shaped by both pain and purpose. I have survived emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, and endured the unimaginable loss of my entire family. These experiences forced me to find strength I didn't know I had. The nurses who cared for me during my darkest moments inspired me with their compassion and humanity. They gave me hope when I felt hopeless—and I want to do the same for others.

My goal is to become a trauma or mental health nurse, helping people through crisis. I want to offer both medical care and emotional support to patients who feel scared, isolated, or overwhelmed. My experience with trauma gives me deep empathy—something I will carry into every interaction with a patient.

Since losing my family, I've been fully self-supporting. I've worked long hours to cover my tuition and living expenses, while continuing to make academic progress. It hasn't been easy. At times, financial strain and emotional challenges affected my grades—but I've never lost sight of my goal. I've worked closely with therapists and counselors to heal, and I've kept pushing forward.

I chose Parkland College for its outstanding nursing program and supportive community. I've completed over 150 volunteer hours at a shelter for abused women and children, and I've shadowed nurses in various hospital departments. These experiences have only strengthened my desire to serve and support others through nursing.

Receiving this scholarship would provide critical financial relief, allowing me to focus more fully on my studies and clinical training without the constant burden of making ends meet. More importantly, it would bring me closer to a future where I can use my past to bring healing and hope to others.

I believe I should be selected because I've demonstrated resilience, commitment, and an unwavering desire to give back. Nursing isn't just a profession—it's how I intend to turn adversity into empathy and pain into purpose.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #4

Age: 17

Major: Medical Laboratory Technology

I plan to complete general education courses at Parkland before transferring to Lincoln Land for Diagnostic Medical Sonography. My goal is to become an OB/GYN sonographer—a field that lets me combine my interest in anatomy with my desire to help others, without being directly involved with blood.

I chose Parkland for its affordability, diversity, and proximity to home. I've worked since age 15, bought my own car, and saved what I could, but college costs are still a major hurdle. A scholarship would help reduce work hours so I can focus on school and avoid debt.

In high school, I was active in sports, clubs, and leadership: student council, Spanish Club, and captain of both volleyball and soccer. I was Student of the Month, homecoming queen, and earned mostly A's. I also volunteered at youth camps, food pantries, dog shelters, and church programs, gaining valuable life experience.

I've moved eight times and faced personal challenges, including temporary homelessness and depression. These experiences taught me resilience and strengthened my empathy. I now use what I've learned to support others.

A scholarship would ease financial stress and allow me to pursue my dream of helping women and families through diagnostic imaging.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #5

Age: 19

Major: Veterinary Technology

I'm pursuing a Veterinary Sciences degree at Parkland College with a focus on surgical skills. I commute from Decatur and work part-time to support myself. I can't afford housing near campus and receive minimal financial aid, so a scholarship would greatly help me continue my education.

Parkland's Veterinary Tech program offers the highest standards and provides hands-on learning at a local animal hospital—key factors in my decision to attend. I hope to work in a local vet hospital after earning my AAS degree and certificate.

My interests include painting, crafting, and reading. I've volunteered over 200 hours at camps, church programs, and high school theater. I'm in a college Bible study, served as a summer camp counselor, and earned honors from the National Honor Society, the Thespian Society, and Phi Theta Kappa.

I've also struggled with anxiety and OCD, but with the help of a counselor, I've developed coping strategies. These challenges have strengthened my resolve and taught me valuable self-discipline and empathy.

I believe this scholarship would support not only my academic goals, but my commitment to caring for animals. I'm passionate about learning, dedicated to my future, and eager to give back to my community through veterinary care.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #6

Age: 18

Major: Associate in Science

Before December 2022 of my sophomore year, I felt hopeless, unmotivated, and in the worst mental state of my life. I was extremely lazy, both physically and mentally. I gained a lot of weight and put less effort into school each day—until my dad had a heart attack right in front of me.

While I still haven't decided on a future major or career, that moment changed everything. It was my first real-life challenge and made me realize there's more to life than schoolwork, workouts, or video games. I called 911 and performed chest compressions until help arrived. Thankfully, surgery saved his life. The surgeon even met with me to thank me, crediting me with saving my dad's life.

This experience matured me quickly. I couldn't be the same kid who avoided difficulty or was known by teachers as someone who didn't try. Entering 2023, I made serious changes. Progress was slow at first, but I kept going. By junior year, I'd made new friends through football, grown closer to God, picked up creative hobbies, and lost 75 pounds. A year later, I landed my first job at my local Subway, which I still hold today.

Through all this, I learned discipline, the value of hard work, and the importance of pushing myself out of my comfort zone to achieve what I care about. As someone who will be financially independent through college, I deeply appreciate any scholarships awarded. Though I have some savings, they won't come close to covering all costs. Any scholarship I receive will be used fully toward academic success and personal growth.

Parkland has been on my radar since freshman year. Its strong programs and local support make it an ideal place to continue my development. I'm confident I'll thrive here and make the most of this opportunity. I believe I'm a deserving candidate for your support.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #7

Age: 17

Major: Kinesiology

I plan to study Kinesiology through the Pathway program at Parkland College and the University of Illinois, ultimately becoming an orthopedic physician assistant. Two knee surgeries sparked this goal. I tore my ACL in a basketball game sophomore year and spent months rehabbing—only to tear my MPFL in the other knee junior year. Those setbacks taught me grit and showed me how life-changing skilled orthopedic care can be.

Because my older sibling is already in college, paying for tuition is a challenge. Parkland's affordability, hands-on labs, and proximity to home make it the perfect place to start. Scholarships would let me focus on academics and clinical experiences instead of financial stress.

I work year-round at the YMCA. As a Summer Day Camp Counselor and Child Watch staffer, I create a safe, engaging space for children of all abilities, strengthening my leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills. I also serve weddings at Pear Tree Estate, where attention to detail and teamwork ensure each event runs smoothly.

Athletics remain central to my life: I've captained varsity volleyball for four years and served as captain in basketball and softball. These roles honed my time-management and motivational skills while I maintained National Honor Society-level grades. Off the court, I give back through bell-ringing for charity, pet sitting, house care for traveling families, sports lessons for young athletes, and helping set up school events—over 110 volunteer hours in total.

These combined experiences—persevering through injury, guiding younger students, and balancing work, service, and sports—have prepared me for the rigor of a medical career. Parkland's strong science courses and transfer pathway will move me closer to my goal of delivering the same expert, compassionate orthopedic care that once restored my own mobility.

Thank you for considering my application. Your investment will help me concentrate on my studies and clinical preparation, bringing me one step nearer to serving patients as an orthopedic physician assistant.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #8

Age: 21

Major: Computer Science

I am pursuing a degree in Computer Science. In high school, my favorite classes were computer-related, especially graphic and web design. I'm excited by the opportunity to blend coding with creativity and hope to find a career that combines my love of technology and art to contribute in innovative, visually compelling ways.

A scholarship would help relieve the financial burden on my family. I live at home and depend on them for tuition, supplies, and daily expenses. Chronic migraines have added emotional and financial stress, as ongoing medical treatments and accommodations are costly. Support would allow me to focus more fully on my studies.

I chose Parkland for its strong academic reputation and proximity to home. Staying nearby lets me continue volunteering as a Junior Girl Scout Leader for my sister and a Cub Scout Den Leader. As the oldest of four, balancing school with family responsibilities is important to me. Parkland also offers health support and flexibility, which is essential to managing my migraines.

Outside of academics, I'm passionate about art, the outdoors, shooting sports, and service. As a certified archery instructor and rangemaster, I teach at Girl Scout camps in the summer. I was a Girl Scout for 13 years and proudly earned my Gold Award through my project, Duffels of Dreams, which provides handmade comfort items and essentials to children in foster care. Over 165 children have benefited so far. I currently serve as a troop leader, Cub Scout leader, and secretary for Big Grove Day Camp, dedicating around 20 hours per week to volunteer service.

Although my migraines became chronic during high school, I remained focused and committed to my academic and extracurricular goals. That resilience continues to motivate me as I pursue higher education at Parkland.

This scholarship would ease financial pressures, allowing me to concentrate on coursework and continue growing as a student, leader, and community volunteer. I am committed to using this opportunity to its fullest and believe my perseverance, leadership, and service make me a strong candidate.



## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #9

Age: 20

Major: Aviation

While in high school, I completed 30 credit hours toward my aviation degree through dual enrollment at Danville Area Community College. I especially enjoyed the flexibility of online learning and access to a college-level English course at my high school. In Fall 2023, I began Parkland College's seven-semester Aviation program, aiming to earn my degree and pilot certification in two and a half years.

I relocated to Champaign to attend classes and maximize flight time. Since weather plays a big role in aviation training, I wanted to be prepared when flying conditions were ideal. To support myself, I work part-time at Flightstar as a GA Detailer. The job gives me hands-on experience with aircraft and helps cover my living expenses.

My love of flying began in 2021 on a Southwest flight to visit my grandparents. But what truly ignited my passion was a surprise Thanksgiving trip in a small private plane piloted by a family friend. Experiencing multiple takeoffs, landings, and briefly taking the controls showed me that aviation is where I belong.

Community service has always been important to me. I've volunteered at the Catlin Strawberry Festival, helped neighbors with yardwork and snow removal, participated in student council, and joined two mission trips with the Appalachia Service Project. On those trips, I helped build accessibility ramps and porches for families in West Virginia.

With guidance from Parkland advisors and students, I've also started weekend courses through SIU to earn a bachelor's in aviation management. I'm excited to continue advancing in this field.

My goal is to become a commercial pilot. I know it takes flight hours, experience, and dedication. I've always worked hard—earning strong grades, leading as a soccer team captain, saving for my first car, and supporting my family. My parents both paid their way through college, and I plan to do the same. This scholarship would ease the financial burden, helping me focus more on flight training and academic success. I'm ready to work hard—and soar.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #10

Age: 55

Major: Nursing

Nursing is my chosen field because caring for others has always come naturally. My passion for healthcare grew as I watched my parents struggle with their health and saw the compassionate care they received. Those experiences inspired me to pursue a career where I can make a meaningful difference. Becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant was a major step, and I've found fulfillment in connecting with patients each day. While I'm still exploring specialties—perhaps hospice care—I know I want to provide skilled, compassionate care wherever I'm needed.

As a self-supporting student, I work part-time to focus on my studies. Reducing my hours has helped academically, but it has created financial strain. A scholarship would ease that burden and allow me to stay focused on my nursing degree.

I chose Parkland College for its strong healthcare programs and supportive learning environment. Although I'm still completing prerequisites, the guidance from instructors and advisors has been invaluable. Parkland's nursing program gives me confidence that I'm building a solid foundation for my future.

Outside of school, my life centers on faith, family, and service. I enjoy church, spending time with loved ones, and attending my grandkids' events. My family and I have volunteered with Meals on Wheels and at community dinners—experiences that deepened my commitment to service, which I bring into my healthcare journey.

Recently, my son was in a serious car accident and airlifted to Carle Hospital. The care he received reaffirmed my calling to nursing. However, the medical bills and rehabilitation costs may force me to increase my work hours, making school more difficult to manage.

I believe I'm a strong candidate for this scholarship because I am hardworking, dedicated, and committed to excellence. I maintain a high GPA, am a Phi Theta Kappa member, and made the Dean's List for Fall 2024. With this scholarship, I can stay on track to becoming a Registered Nurse and make a lasting impact on the lives of others.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #11

Age: 18

Major: Business Admin/Marketing/Management

Business has always intrigued me because it offers so many paths—management, entrepreneurship, and leadership. I plan to major in Business Administration and minor in Spanish to build meaningful connections across cultures. Learning Spanish in school opened my eyes to the warmth and richness of Hispanic communities, and I want to honor and build on that experience.

My long-term goal is to work in a bilingual business setting, and eventually teach and mentor Hispanic youth. A scholarship would ease the financial burden on my lower-income family and allow me to focus on school instead of working long hours to make ends meet.

Depression hit hard during my freshman year of high school. I struggled to function, but with time and support, I learned to manage my mental health and have steadily improved academically each year. I now advocate for mental health awareness in underrepresented communities.

Though I once dreamed of attending a big university, Parkland's welcoming environment, affordability, and Pathways program have helped me thrive. I've found that starting small has given me a strong foundation and the clarity I need to dream big again.

This scholarship would allow me to continue focusing on school and service—and take the next step toward empowering others.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #12

Age: 18

Major: Graphic Design

I am pursuing a double major in Graphic Design and Marketing at Parkland College. Art has always been my passion, and graphic design lets me turn creativity into practical solutions. I have designed posters for clubs and events, attended the 2024 FAA Summer Intensive at UIUC, and mastered Adobe Creative Cloud. These experiences confirmed my goal of opening my own art studio, and adding Marketing will give me the skills to lead it.

Reaching this point has been challenging. My undiagnosed ADHD made school difficult until sophomore year. Once diagnosed, I built habits—reminders, task-breakdowns, and strict organization—that transformed my academics. I'm proud of the growth those strategies unlocked.

I also dove into leadership and service. In FCCLA I served as Section 7 VP of Publicity and later President, planning rallies and designing promotional material. I have acted and stage-managed in Drama Club, led Color Guard and Winter Guard teams, and sat on the Principal's Advisory Committee. Community work includes 50+ hours with Knights in Action, the public library, and 4-H, where I am Club President and a two-time Creative Collective Art Ambassador. Each role sharpened my confidence, teamwork, and commitment to giving back.

Financing college, however, is a major hurdle. My parents are undocumented immigrants with inconsistent income. My father does woodworking and side jobs; my mother, who battles arthritis, works in a restaurant and carries medical debt. They have always supported me and my brother—now finishing his degree at UIUC through the Parkland Pathways Program—but tuition still weighs heavily on our family.

That is why this scholarship means so much. It would relieve financial pressure, allowing me to focus on coursework, studio projects, and campus leadership instead of constant worry about tuition. After completing my associate degrees, I plan to transfer through the Pathways Program to UIUC, like my brother, and ultimately launch a community-centered art studio.

Education is my key to building a stable future for myself and my family. With your support, I can turn creativity and perseverance into a career that uplifts both clients and community.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #13

Age: 27

Major: Computer Science

I'm a former software engineer from South Korea, now studying Computer Science at Parkland College. I came to the U.S. for a better education and new opportunities. Since starting, I've earned straight A's and work as a tutor in math, statistics, and computer science.

As an international student, I cover all my own expenses. The cost of living and studying here is much higher than in Korea, and it's been a challenge financially. I also assist with advising and accessibility services and have gained leadership skills from serving in the Korean military.

I chose Parkland for its strong transfer programs and its connection to UIUC, where I plan to continue my studies. In the long term, I want to work at a major tech company and save enough to start my own business—one that focuses on fields requiring human creativity, not easily replaced by AI.

Receiving a scholarship would ease financial stress and allow me to fully focus on academics. I want to use my education to contribute meaningfully in tech and eventually in business. I believe my resilience, academic performance, and experience make me a strong candidate.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #14

Age: 17

Major: Nursing

My goal is to become a neonatal intensive care nurse. Parkland's state-of-the-art simulation lab and strong nursing program make it the perfect place to start. I plan to complete CNA training and work locally while earning my associate degree.

I've always balanced school, sports, and service. I've played volleyball, basketball, and softball, earning awards like Silver Slugger and Mental Toughness. I've maintained straight A's while taking dual-credit college courses.

Leadership has been a big part of my life. I've served as class Vice-President and President, led fundraisers, and was elected Mayor at Illini Girls State. I've also served in 4-H, volunteered, and stayed active in community service. After injuring and reinjuring my shoulder, I stayed committed to my team, learned perseverance, and returned stronger.

A scholarship would help cover living expenses and books while I focus on coursework and clinicals. My dream is to bring comfort to families of premature babies and care for the most vulnerable patients. With your support, I'll bring both skill and compassion to the NICU.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #15

Age: 18

Major: General Studies

I am thrilled to share my journey and aspirations with you! Throughout my high school years, I have balanced a rigorous academic schedule with meaningful personal time. I have racked up 200+ hours of volunteering (learning non-profit service), worked two jobs half of the time, and presented many well-thought out, innovative ideas to the school board and other committees. I take pride in knowing just how many leaders, peers, strangers, I have made smile and laugh while sharing stories, beliefs, and understandings with!!!

Family, friends, and personal work is also very important to me: I got my family invited back into the big family holidays while also picking up shifts to let my coworkers be on holiday, I have gotten my friends outside for long walks and into climbing trees (some into loving and being more caring)! and personally I (and God) have gone through a lot of different battles, including multiple horrible hearings and backlash from close friends during the beginning of fall 2023 semester. I actually had just met God around that point, and since then we have done many things like research careers (I was deeply considering elementary teaching or St.Jude's hospital nurse or fruit farming too.., plan an upcoming Easter dance, and dress more professional young-lady like (but also fashionable because <3 it).

As far as my financial circumstances, I work very hard while trying to handle a very balanced life, and I do so with a smile. I partake in buying food for the house, for my pets, for a pop-up camper to soon live in, as well as my phone bill and truly meaningful gifts for my loved ones!

Thank you so much for considering my application. I am eager to contribute and make a positive impact through my studies and future endeavors! I love to learn! participate! and be a good peer!

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #16

Age: 34

Major: Biological Sciences

I am a pre-pharmacy major at Parkland College, working toward my goal of becoming a clinical pharmacist. My passion for pharmacy began when I worked as a medication reconciliation pharmacy technician and saw how proper medication management can dramatically improve patient outcomes. That experience gave me a deeper purpose: to ensure underserved communities receive safe, effective, and affordable care.

Since 2016, I've worked in both hospital and retail pharmacy settings—reviewing prescriptions, supporting pharmacists, and assisting patients. These experiences taught me that medication is often a lifeline. I plan to specialize in medication therapy management to help prevent errors, educate patients, and promote health equity.

While I'm proud of my progress, financial hardship has been my greatest obstacle. I am completely self-supporting and currently work two jobs while attending school full-time. It has been mentally and physically exhausting, but necessary to cover tuition, rent, and daily expenses. A scholarship would ease this burden and allow me to better focus on academics and preparing for pharmacy school.

I chose Parkland for its affordability, strong science curriculum, and student-focused environment. Smaller class sizes and supportive instructors have helped me succeed in rigorous courses like Calculus and Biological Sciences.

Outside of class and work, I remain active in service and leadership. I've completed over 100 volunteer hours helping low-income families access food and essentials. I also train new pharmacy technicians—an experience that has strengthened my leadership and deepened my commitment to patient care.

Though financial stress affected my grades in early college, I refused to let it define me. I've since improved my GPA and built strong time-management habits to balance my many responsibilities.

This scholarship would relieve financial stress and help me stay on track toward becoming a pharmacist who educates, empowers, and advocates for accessible healthcare.



## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #17

Age: 19

Major: Nursing

I immigrated from Mexico at age three. Watching my parents rebuild their lives—despite language barriers, limited education, and financial hardship—taught me two lessons: hard work opens doors, and it's my turn to honor their sacrifices. I will do that by becoming a pediatric nurse serving families like mine.

Compassionate care once turned my own fear into hope, and I want to do the same for children. After earning an Associate Degree in Nursing at Parkland College, I plan to complete a BSN and specialize in pediatrics. On a women-and-children's unit I hope to guide mothers through childbirth, comfort premature infants, and support kids facing illness—caring for both body and spirit, especially for those who feel small or unseen.

Finances remain a hurdle. My parents work 12-hour shifts yet still struggle with rent, college fees for my siblings, and medical bills from my father's heart attack. Since fourteen I have worked to ease their load; today I am a CNA at Carriage Crossing, saving for tuition while helping at home. A scholarship would let me reduce work hours, focus on coursework, and gain hospital experience ahead of clinicals.

Despite limited resources, I have thrived. In high school I balanced cheer and soccer captaincies, NHS membership, class office, drama, and top grades. I logged 40+ service hours tutoring, translating, painting dugouts, and running blood drives. At college, time is tighter, yet I still read, hike, and volunteer when possible.

Personal adversity shapes my empathy. My sister's childhood seizures triggered severe anxiety; by senior year I sought therapy and was diagnosed with anxiety and recurrent depression. Managing mental health has made me more perceptive and determined to guide families through crises.

I bring drive, creativity, and leadership to every task. A scholarship would lighten my family's financial burden and propel me toward serving children and parents with the compassion that once lifted my own family. Thank you for investing in a future nurse ready to pass that generosity forward.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #18

Age: 19

Major: Engineering

My major is Engineering which will likely become chemical engineering once I transfer to a four-year university. What I have to offer is an account of who I am as a person and why I should be considered for scholarships. I frequently volunteer to help at my local high school and help at events on parkland campus. My job at the Rantoul Family Sports Complex helps me in finding events that I can volunteer for and do community outreach. Such an event of note recently was helping at the Science Olympiad hosted here at Parkland where I was helping children test ball launchers they made. I typically volunteer a minimum of ten hours a week of my time to help give back to a community that helped raise me into who I am. The remaining time I have in my week is spent between working on classes, work, and tutoring. I receive minimal financial assistance outside of grants to help pay for schooling. I tutor several high school students in various topics from the sciences and mathematics. I learned the hard way that it is essential to have somebody that you can be completely honest and comfortable with when trying to learn new topics and I am to be able to fill that role in young minds. It is based on my commitment to the community, helping others, and the strong opinions of my character offered by those around me that I wish to be the recipient of additional scholarships so that I can spend more time improving myself and those around me and I thank you for giving me your consideration.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #19

Age: 18

Major: Dental Hygiene

For my particular field, I have chosen the path of studying Dental Hygiene. Once I finish college and have earned my certification, I plan on becoming a pediatric dental hygienist. I am applying for this scholarship as I am an out of district student trying to make college as affordable as possible. Any scholarships will make my career goals possible, and assist in paying for my dreams to come true. I have chosen Parkland as I think it is a wonderful program, school, and city. Additionally, my local community college lacks the program for an associates degree in dental hygiene. I am currently employed at a local coffee shop in my city where I am a barista at local farmers markets and events. I have been in various leadership roles in high school such as class president, class treasurer, student council funds director, Red Cross club vice president, and student volunteer tutor. As far as additional extracurricular activities I have been involved in the swim team, Beta Club, Yearbook, and Future Family and Career Leaders of America. In my high school career, I was very committed to volunteering within my community. I have been a weekly volunteer preschool leader for one hour a week during the past three years. Additionally I have spent 20 hours tutoring younger students within my school, and 50 hours a year on a week long mission trip for young children, and 20 hours setting up youth group at my local church. I believe that I should be selected for a scholarship as I am a hardworking student, with secure career goals. Additionally, I plan on using my certification I will receive from Parkland college to give back to my community by educating the youth on oral hygiene and inspiring the next generation of dental hygienists.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #20

Age: 26

Major: Psychology

I am pursuing a Psychology degree at Parkland College because I am passionate about strengthening mental health in youth—our future. After earning my associate's, I will transfer for a bachelor's and seek an entry-level position as a school psychologist or therapist to launch my career.

As a single mother of three, I shoulder tuition, rent, and living expenses alone, hours away from extended family. Returning to school was daunting, but I wanted a better life for my daughters. Despite long work hours, I maintain grades of 89 percent or higher and expect straight A's this semester. A scholarship would ease financial pressure and let me focus on coursework and campus involvement.

Parkland's strong academics, supportive faculty, and affordability drew me here. I use advising, the writing lab, and TRIO, and plan to join student clubs. Beyond classes, I love reading, writing, and creating new memories with my girls.

My passion for psychology is rooted in lived experience. As a teen I survived multiple suicide attempts and periods of homelessness—attending school by day, working until 5 a.m., and sleeping wherever I could. Losing my father, my only parent, deepened my depression. Moving to Urbana gave me a fresh start: therapy, a five-year plan, and renewed purpose. These hardships fuel my commitment to ensure others can access help before they feel hopeless.

I have persevered through adversity with determination, resilience, and a drive to uplift those around me. A scholarship would allow me to continue advancing academically while serving my community. Your investment will help me become a mental-health professional who turns personal pain into hope for the next generation.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #21

Age: 23

Major: Business Admin/Marketing/Management

At 18, I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. A major surgery and the pandemic ended my senior year. I graduated alone, then took CNA classes online, but struggled with depression, anxiety, and PTSD. Eventually, I found purpose in marketing—first through social media for a bakery, then working full-time in nonprofit marketing.

I returned to Parkland in 2023 and now maintain straight A's in my Business and Marketing courses. I've also earned a Mental Health First Aid certificate. My goal is to work in mission-driven marketing and help others feel seen and understood.

A scholarship would ease the burden on my single mom and grandparents. It would allow me to keep thriving without sacrificing my mental health. I plan to graduate in 2025 and eventually work in Chicago, combining my lived experience with creative communication.

I've overcome more than I ever imagined. But I've learned that "when I grow up" doesn't mean fitting a mold—it means making a difference. I'm proud to be a third-generation Parkland student and ready to empower others through storytelling and advocacy.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #22

Age: 19

Major: Pre-Veterinary Medicine

I've wanted to be a veterinarian since age seven, when I lost my dog Bandit. That experience made me want to protect other people's beloved pets.

I'm pursuing Animal Science through Parkland's Pathways program, then transferring to UIUC and eventually veterinary school. I work two jobs: one at a dog daycare and another at a veterinary clinic. These roles give me hands-on experience and help me save for school.

I've also completed over 100 hours of community service: helping at food pantries, making blankets for children, and volunteering at a horse rescue. I've played softball, been in NHS, and dealt with test anxiety, which I continue to manage.

I'm the first in my family to pursue a four-year degree. Vet school will be expensive—likely more than our house. My parents and I are saving, but a scholarship would help cover immediate costs like books and transportation.

I want to provide compassionate care to animals and comfort to their owners. This scholarship would help me stay on track to becoming a vet who makes a difference in people's lives.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #23

Age: 17

Major: Psychology

I've attended twelve schools in seventeen years—from one-room classrooms in Costa Rica to college-level courses at UIUC by age 14. These experiences taught me adaptability, shaped my identity as a migrant, and inspired me to pursue psychology at Parkland College. My long-term goal is to attend medical school and specialize in psychiatry focused on migration trauma.

Each summer, I volunteer in La Carpio, Central America's largest informal migrant settlement. While my stepdad conducts research, I teach English and support local initiatives. There, I've witnessed the emotional toll migration takes on families—trauma that often goes untreated. This inspired my passion for addressing mental health in underserved communities.

Locally, I've worked to uplift migrant voices. I founded my high school's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, which drew over 200 attendees and local media coverage. I interned at the YMCA New American Welcome Center and lead bilingual story-times through the University of Illinois' Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. These efforts helped connect immigrant families to resources and built cultural understanding in our community.

In 8th grade, I was diagnosed with POTS and OCD. These health issues impacted my daily life until I began treatment in high school. Managing my health while staying academically engaged taught me resilience, discipline, and empathy.

My family also faces financial hardship. My mother, who has a chronic illness, attends college online and can't work full-time. Her health limits our household income, making a four-year university unattainable for now. Parkland's affordability and Pathways program provide the best route to achieving my goals while staying close to home.

This scholarship would ease financial strain and allow me to continue serving my community. I bring lived experience, academic drive, and a commitment to mental health and equity—and I hope to keep building bridges and healing through education.

## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #24

Age: 19

Major: Associate in Arts

My major is general studies right now, but next year I will pursue education. I have chosen this particular field because growing up I had outstanding teachers who have changed my life, and I want to have the same impact on the students I will teach. After Parkland I will transfer to a four-year university to continue my academic studies. I need a scholarship to further my academic pursuits to get me closer to achieving my dream of becoming a teacher. I have chosen Parkland because of the close-knit community it offers. I am currently using money that I have saved up to pay for college, as right now I am unemployed because of my basketball schedule. My hobbies include writing, camping, playing pickleball, drawing, and working out. In high school I was on the high honor roll and in the national honors society. I was a team captain for high school cross-country and basketball teams. During high school I volunteered at Catholic charities and at my church picnic. I have also volunteered at local soup suppers and bingo nights in Effingham, Illinois. Throughout high school I have completed over 60 service hours. During high school I participated in volleyball, cross country, basketball, the school musical, track, softball, and the bass fishing team. It was a struggle to keep my grades up and manage a routine in order to get my studies done. Coming from a small school, I wanted to use my talents and gifts to help out my school in any way possible. I should be selected for a scholarship because I am a continuous hard worker who will not stop until I get the results I want. I am committed to learning, as I have not had a report card in my life with more than two C's. I have managed a 3.8 GPA in high school while being actively involved in extracurricular activities. A scholarship will help me inch closer to succeeding in the field of education and achieving my long-term academic goals.



## Women of Impact Scholarship Applicant #25

Age: 18

Major: Nursing

Growing up with a nurse for a mother, I learned early that caring for others is powerful work. After I finish my general-education courses, I will apply to Parkland's Nursing program. A summer research internship at the Cancer Center at Illinois confirmed my goal of becoming an oncology nurse; my own project explored the link between bile acid production and liver cancer. Watching my mom pursue nursing while working full-time and raising children showed me that perseverance and goal-setting pay off, and I'm determined to follow her example.

I match my mother's work ethic with a record of leadership and service. In high school I served as Science Club president, class vice-president, and basketball captain while staying active in nine extracurriculars including Spanish Club, student council, and golf. I also devoted 100+ hours to community service: coaching Special Olympics, raising \$450 through the Polar Plunge, reading to children at the public library, assembling food baskets for the homeless, and organizing blood drives. Volunteering with Salt & Light, a local anti-poverty organization, opened my eyes to economic hardship and reinforced my commitment to helping people in need.

Parkland is the ideal place to begin my nursing path. Its highly regarded program lets me complete prerequisites while working part-time to fund my education—critical since I pay my own college expenses and four-year nursing programs are currently out of reach. A scholarship would cover tuition and let me focus on coursework, clinical preparation, and continued community service.

Nursing embodies compassion through action. By combining my research background, leadership experience, and passion for service, I aim to make a meaningful impact in oncology care. With your support, I can devote myself fully to my studies and, ultimately, to patients and families facing cancer.