

LGWFCU 2010 Scholarship Essay Contest
Top Essay Selections

The following high school seniors have been selected to receive \$1,500 scholarships for their freshman year of college, university, or trade school.

Elise Heuberger

William Shakespeare and I have been in love for three years; however, before we realized our passion for each other, our relationship was platonic. I read his plays analytically, understood them as well as Harold Bloom, and appreciated his iambic pentameter and clever wordplay. However, not until a mutual friend, the Tennessee Shakespeare Company, brought him to life, did I begin to see what true potential lay in our lackluster relationship.

Recently formed as a Southern Shakespeare theatre troupe, the TSC has become the center of my life. After witnessing Shakespeare performed, I began to devour his plays, reading them aloud so that I could feel Helena's pain when Demetrius scorns her, so I could inhale Othello's jealousy as Iago poisons his mind, so I, as Hamlet, could feel Yorick's skull in my hands as I ponder death. A passion for literature erupted in me that night. Never have I felt so connected to my life as when I read Shakespeare, whose plays reflect universal, immortal themes: unrequited love, jealousy, insecurity, revenge, hatred, foolishness, and wisdom. This infatuation with Shakespeare, a piece of a greater infatuation with literature, has opened another door for my intellectual side—a love of the English language. Mr. Shakespeare has been my devoted mentor and teacher, and for that, I must return the favor. My decision to become an English teacher manifests itself in my recent studies—I devour the written word, memorize it, analyze it, and apply it in my AP English and creative writing classes. Never have I missed an opportunity to discuss John Keats with my peers, quote Mark Twain, or pick up a new novel that burns the bookshelves in its ardor to be read. In ten years, I hope that I will have inspired someone—at least one person—to fall in love with language the way I have, the way Shakespeare has made me fall in love. I want to be the teacher who sees her student understand the complexities of *Othello* and *The Brothers Karamazov* and appreciate these works for their historic value, literary merit, and overarching themes that have touched her own soul.

From time to time, Will and I have our petty arguments when his motifs are less than obvious, or his poetry confuses me, but never have we had a falling-out, and for this, I know that in ten years, I will make a group of high-school students, wide-eyed and mesmerized, realize that our language is universal, comprehensible, and beautiful, something I did not know until the TSC and my devoted English teachers brought me to Shakespeare. I want to bring people closer to our language. If I can make just one person realize the worth of our language by presenting them with an understanding of its greatest successes—novels, plays, poetry—then I will feel more accomplished and satisfied with life than ever before.

David Salkowski

The Ancient Greeks had a different perspective of time than we do; instead of “facing the future” they believed that humans plunge backwards into the future while watching the past recede slowly out of sight. In this way, I cannot say for certain where I will be in ten years, but I can approximate my general direction and my velocity in getting there.

In ten years I could be in Des Moines, Iowa. I have long wanted to take a bicycle trip from Portland, Oregon to Portland, Maine, experiencing the details of the American continent and its people with thoroughness that modern modes of transit block out, and to share it with the world in a book. Or I might be in St. Petersburg teaching English or translating at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Then again, the future might take me to California to compose musical scores for films. Judging by the past, as an Eagle Scout, I also see some form of public service in my life, either in the Peace Corps or for environmental causes.

These widely varying projections reflect my belief that to make the world better in one way makes it better in all ways. I will prepare myself to do this by immersing myself in studies of communication, specifically, music and Russian language. By majoring in music composition, I hope to not only deepen my musical knowledge, but to also expand my ability to bring people together through music like cavemen at the campfire. Russia is an enigmatic mass on the globe for most Americans; I hope that studying the language will help me cross this great divide into such a vibrant culture and further fulfill my duty as a human to share my experiences as broadly as possible.

My chief goal in life is to help people see themselves and each other better. While music and language are the mediums through which I hope to do this, I prefer to be a person defined by an attitude of optimism and a studious rigor dedicated to human interaction rather than a place, profession, or paycheck.

Karlee Jo Wakeley

Where will I be in ten years, you might ask? To get a sequential answer, let us first compare where I was ten years ago to now. Ten years ago, I was in Ms. Hancock's 2nd grade class. I was learning how to write cursive *j*'s and *f*'s; I was developing my youthful faith with Jesus; I was learning how to share on the playground; and of course, I was looking for my prince charming.

Although growing up for me was not necessarily easy, the precious things in life have encouraged me to do great things, even at such a young age. When my sister Kelsey was born with Down Syndrome, my parents were not "planning" for me to come along; but I did. God was sure of it. I was born 18 months after Kelsey so we learned to walk and talk at about the same time. I taught Kelsey to be physically strong (e.g. Special Olympics, swimming, dancing) while over the years, she has taught me to be strong at heart.

Currently, I am just one of 60 students in my graduating class anxiously waiting to shift to the next phase of life to further my education and move confidently in the direction of my dreams. I am a member of the National Honor Society and various other clubs where serving others, as well as keeping character and integrity among the community, has been essential. I have also broadened my understanding of people with Special Needs by coaching my own Special Olympics basketball team and keeping up with the latest Buddy Walks around the nation with Kelsey's dance company. Being a leader and giving my time to those who have blessed me dearly will never be enough to repay!

As for my future, I would like to think of it as being "unwritten." I plan on attending Mississippi State with Computer Science as my major and Special Education as my minor. Through MLGW, my mom has been able to show me the importance of technology in everyday life. So where will I be ten years from now? I will be carrying on my mom's legacy and wisdom in the field I choose by studying hard, perfecting my cursive *j*'s and *f*'s, making my relationship with God even stronger, projecting my leadership skills, and of course, finding my prince charming.

NaToya Douglas

“When I grow up, I want to be a nurse!” The meaning of such a simple statement that was reiterated often and a love for toy medical instruments during my childhood have both taken a complete turn. Now, the statement is something that I am striving for in life and the toy sets are replicas of tools that I will soon be using on an everyday basis. I feel that I have been dreaming of this long enough, and I am ready to make my dreams a reality.

I’m aware that majoring in nursing will require a lot of hard work academically. I started preparing myself for this early by giving my all in grade school. It has paid off tremendously and has helped me to be inducted into numerous honorary clubs. National Honors Society, Beta Club, Key Club, and National Society of High School Scholars are a few of them. I take being a member of these clubs as a great privilege. They are a sign of my hard work, and will forever be treasured.

I am a patient, caring, and loving individual who loves to be around people and help them as much as possible. These are all helpful qualities that a nurse must possess. Serving people is something that I feel like I’m meant to do, and nursing is the career that will let me do it to the best of my abilities.

Being a member of CRASH course nurse camp helped me confirm that this was the profession for me. During camp we would spend half the day in a classroom and the other half shadowing nurses from various units. Shadowing was always the highlight of the day for me. It played a huge role in helping me decide that after college, I want to specialize in obstetrics so that I will be able to work in the Labor and Delivery Unit.

In ten years, I will have successfully completed these goals and be well into my career. I see myself married, with children as well. I know that with a determined and positive mind, my career will help me get places I can’t even imagine. To make sure of it, I am making sure to take the right steps now that will result in the bright future that I deserve.