



SHARION D.

Mesa, AZ -age 38

University of Phoenix

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$2,500

Second
Time
Winner!



I am determined to finish my degree, despite financial difficulties. As a single mom of three boys, and a caregiver for my father, I am facing challenges in paying my last semester's tuition. The scholarship would not only allow me to stay focused on my studies but also maintain my 3.5 GPA and pursue a career that will provide financial stability. I am determined to set an example for my children and show them that hard work and dedication pay off."

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It is true that I have wanted to be a nurse for as long as I can remember, but the driving force that pushed me to take this leap is my desire to help those who are struggling with addiction and mental health issues. Having lived the experience in both areas, I know the importance of having that one person who understands the struggle; that one person on your side, that one person who can show you that there is hope for a brighter future. I am a living example of the hope that someone shared with me. As a nurse, I believe this is how I will be able to best help and serve others.”



KELLIE S.

Mesa, AZ -age 42

Jersey College School of Nursing

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000



MELISSA D.

Paradise Valley, AZ -age 45
Arizona College Of Nursing

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000



In the past 20 years, I've experienced more heartache and overcome more obstacles than many people do in a lifetime. It would've been easier to stay broken and give up—and believe me, there were times I wanted to—but I knew I had to keep going. When I look into my granddaughter's eyes, I know every struggle was worth it. I want to be a nurse because I genuinely love people. I am empathetic, hardworking, and will go above and beyond for anyone. I want my daughter and granddaughter to know that no matter what happens, you can overcome and persevere.”

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I'm a Native American in my senior year of my Bachelor's of Science program for Psychology. My goal is to graduate from ASU with summa cum laude academic recognition as well as receive my Psi Chi Honors Cords from my involvement with the Psi Chi International Honors Society in Psychology. I have finished each semester on the Dean's List so I'm adamant on continuing that streak for the rest of my time at ASU. A scholarship would be immensely helpful for me to achieve this goal.”



GABRIEL V.

Chandler, AZ -age 25

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$1,650



AMBIO A.

Phoenix, AZ -age 26

Arizona College Of Nursing

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000

**Second
Time
Winner!**



My passion for healthcare came from being the eldest of nine children and three of them being diagnosed with Sickle cell disease, a blood disorder that affects the red blood cells that carry oxygen throughout the body. My siblings were in and out of the hospital quite a lot when they were younger and that is where my inspiration for wanting to be in the healthcare field developed. There were many times where I had to help translate for my mother, read prescription medications, and teach my mom how to provide it to my siblings when I was not around. Hospital stays and interactions with different nurses and doctors grew my interest in wanting to be someone special to other kids like the nurses and doctors were to my siblings. They changed my mother's perspective on doctors and healthcare because as they went to the doctor monthly, even biweekly, she started to see positive changes in their lives. I was thankful to everyone who helped my siblings, and I wanted to do the same thing for someone else one day."



Hello, my name is Joseph, I'm 48 years of age, and I recently began my senior year at Arizona State University. It was during the covid quarantine that an opportunity came to return to collegiate study. It was the culmination of perfect timing and a deep desire to rewrite the story of my life when I began the five-year journey through the institution of higher learning.

In 2023, I successfully graduated with honors from Glendale Community College with an Associate of Arts degree. Today, I am on target to graduate from ASU with a Bachelor of Science in Family and Human Development. Hard work and dedication to this mission have earned me a 4.0 GPA and the summa cum laude merit.

My story is rewritten but not finished, for my best is yet to come. I have the distinct privilege of returning this honor to my family and to our story. Historically, I will be the first person in my family to ever graduate high school, junior college, and major university. My hope is to inspire this generation and that it begins a lasting legacy of educated individuals within our future family line."



JOSEPH V.

Glendale, AZ -age 48

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$4,600



WILLIAM O.

Mesa, AZ -age 26

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$3,000



My intended major is Community Advocacy and Social Policy. I hope to be considered for this scholarship because of my lifelong personal struggles with mental health, which have shaped my ability to persevere and advocate for others.

I was born in a small village in Vietnam. At the age of two years old, I was placed into the Da Dang Orphanage because my birth parents did not have the resources to take care of me. During that time at the orphanage, I struggled with not having basic needs such as food, water, and clean shelter. Further, I was given little emotional support.

At the age of nine, my twin brother and I were fortunate to be adopted from a family in Arizona, which significantly changed our lives for the better. My adoptive parents are incredibly generous and have adopted eleven children. They gave everyone in our family all their support and love.”



My name is Theresa, and I'm a single mom raising my teenage son to be a respectful young man by teaching him the importance of giving back.

Nursing has been my passion for as long as I can remember. It all started when I was young, watching my mom, an LPN, preparing for work by making sure her white shoes were spotless. She was a hard worker, raising seven of us with little help from my dad. She was dedicated, and I admired her deeply. She always told me, "If you want to be a nurse, make sure you go all the way to an RN." That advice stuck with me. Sadly, my mom passed away from cancer at just 48 years old, but her words never left me."



THERESA L.

Phoenix, AZ -age 54

Chamberlain University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000



KATHERINE N.

Phoenix, AZ -age 30

Grand Canyon University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000



My ambition to overcome hardship and have a significant influence on other people's lives is what motivates me to pursue higher education. Being the first person in my family to go to college and get a degree, my goals in education are transformational and personal. I'm presently enrolled in PVCC's nursing program, and in March 2025, I'm expected to receive my Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN).

I am concurrently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at Grand Canyon University, intending to graduate in December 2025. My objective is to become a Registered Nurse (RN), with a focus on Pediatric or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Nursing.”

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I thought I was too old to go back to school at 27 years old, but I knew I had little eyes looking at me. My son did not ask to be here and so I realized I needed to provide for him in the best way I possibly can financially, mentally, and physically. I want to show him that no matter what you are facing in life, you can overcome the challenges.

I decided to pursue an Associates Degree in Respiratory Therapy and I have 9 months left. It has been hard. I work full-time, go to school in person full-time, and have tried to be the best mom I can possibly be for my 5-year-old.

When I walk across the graduation stage, I will be in tears because I never thought this would be something I could make it through. I cannot wait for my son to watch me because he knows how hard I worked. He knows that no matter what age you are, what you're going through, or what your situation is, you can complete and succeed at anything you give your best to.”



EMILY L.

Queen Creek, AZ -age 28

Pima Medical Institute

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$4,800



ERICA M.

Mesa, AZ -age 37

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$2,700



In 2006, I began a career in banking as a part-time teller at Wells Fargo Bank. Within a year, I was promoted to a management role and decided that it was what I wanted to do long-term. At that time, I did not think that going back to school was too important. As I have continued my career and now have teenage children, I realize how important education is and what a privilege it is to have an opportunity to pursue a college degree.

My previous academic goal was to complete my associate degree in business which I accomplished in January of 2024 and graduated with high distinction. Now that I have transferred to ASU, I will continue working towards my bachelor's degree."

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Driven by the dream of building a better life, at the age of five, my family moved from Sonora, Mexico, to Phoenix, Arizona. Growing up in a household where my parents worked minimum-wage jobs with limited English, I quickly learned the value of hard work and resilience. While they provided for our basic needs, saving for my college education was never an option.

After graduating high school, I entered the workforce, thinking that college was beyond my reach. However, the desire to better myself and provide for my family led me to pursue higher education, despite the financial challenges.

Today, I am a single parent working part-time to support myself and my children. Balancing the demands of work, parenting, and school has not been easy, but I am determined to provide a better future for my family.”



GLADYS H.

Phoenix, AZ -age 41

Arizona Christian University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000

Second
Time
Winner!



MICHAEL V.

Phoenix, AZ -age 47

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$2,600



A scholarship is important to me because I spent a year homeless myself between 2021 and 2022 when my carpentry business went under. This hardship gave me new motivation to expand my skills and knowledge through education. In hopes to better myself and strengthen my foundation through education, I hope to place myself in a position where I never experience homelessness again.



One of the personal characteristics that has shaped me the most is resilience. My journey hasn't been easy, but I've always found a way to keep pushing forward. I learned early on that nothing comes easy, and you must fight for the things that matter. Whether contributing to my family's bills, supporting my mom and sister after my parent's divorce, or finding my way back to school after setbacks, I've always relied on my determination to guide me through.

Another experience that sets me apart is my ability to juggle multiple responsibilities. I've worked full-time jobs while attending school part-time, balancing financial obligations with my education. I know how to manage my time, stay focused, and never lose sight of my long-term goals, no matter how difficult things get.

My journey has taken longer than most, but I believe this path has made me stronger and more prepared for the challenges of medical school and beyond.”



CHLOE R.

Gilbert, AZ -age 28

Arizona State University

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000



RACHEL G.

Mesa, AZ -age 31

University Of Phoenix

Keep Your Chin Up Scholarship: \$5,000

**CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT
RACHEL'S COURAGE AND STRENGTH**



Returning to school has been expensive, and we were already behind financially after being out of work for almost a year. We have completely exhausted our savings but being able to spend the past 6 months with my son in the hospital before he passed is incalculable. I would give anything to just have one more day, one hour, with our sweet baby boy.

I am now enrolled in a Bachelors of Science in Management program, and hope to one day manage my department (Business Operations) at the Arizona School of Dental and Oral Health. Receiving the scholarship from Keep Your Chin Up would be a tremendous help for myself and my family, emotionally and financially.”