

Featured Scholarship Recipients

The AMBUCS Scholarships for Therapists program has helped thousands of students all around the United States since it began in 1955. Award recipients are selected based on financial need, educational performance and a desire to help others. The following are excerpts of the narratives written by award recipients.

"My professional desire is to obtain both Master's and Doctoral degrees in speech-language pathology. I am committed to completing all of the necessary requirements to obtain my professional goal...I am enrolled in Spanish classes outside of my graduate school curriculum, to help me obtain my long-term goal of becoming a bilingual speech-language pathologist."

--Dawnyale is a Speech-Language Pathology graduate student at UNC Chapel Hill. She is working to receive specialization in working with children with disabilities in socially inclusive settings.

"I decided to become an occupational therapist after meeting a young woman named Barbie. Barbie was one of the first campers in my cabin during the first summer I was a counselor at a camp for children and adults with special needs... From the first day she arrived at camp, Barbie changed my perspective (on people with disabilities). She did not believe in her own limitations. She made her thoughts and feelings as clear as if she could speak. She also tried to be independent, despite many physical limitations. I decided to become an occupational therapist the day she pulled a spoon from my hand as I fed her and laboriously worked to bring it to her mouth. It was not easy; mashed potatoes were all over her face and in her hair. After a long time and tremendous effort, the spoon went into her mouth. I had never seen such joy. At that moment I knew without a doubt that this was my life's calling. I do not know if I will ever see an achievement as great as that one bite of mashed potatoes again, but I hope to help more people make steps towards the independence that I believe is an important aspect of humanity."

--Jennifer is an Occupational Therapy student at Western Michigan University. After working as a counselor at a camp for children and adults with special needs, Jennifer realized that she wanted to be an occupational therapist

"Throughout my first year of physical therapy school, I have begin to understand the connection the local AMBUCS chapters and the therapy profession have on the children suffering from disabilities and disease. The opportunities and motivation AMBUCS provide children came to life for me at a local parade with the children riding their bicycles provided by AMBUCS. The joy and fun each of their faces had in being able to ride in the parade was unbelievable. I want to be able to continue that excitement through the partnership of physical therapy and the AMBUCS community."

--Richard is a Physical Therapy graduate student at Andrews University in Ohio. He said that his interest in physical therapy and exercise philology began when he was 14-year-old and broke his pelvic rami while playing soccer.

"After observing the many areas of employment for OT's I feel that I am called upon to work with pediatrics. I hope to be able to make these special children feel and function to the best of their abilities... I hope to one-day make a difference in the lives of these special young boys and girls. I would love to work in a clinic for low-income families to provide therapy that they would normally not be able to receive. Children are our future and I feel that it is very important to allow them to make the most out of life."

--Kari is an Occupational Therapy student at Texas Tech University Heath Science Center. She said that she was first introduced to the field when her grandfather had to receive therapy and said that it opened a new door for her and provided her with a list of life-long goals.

"In 1996, I had carpal tunnel surgery, which uncovered a degenerative bone disease in my hands. When the doctors told me that I would have to change careers, I was devastated... Within weeks of the doctors' decision, I was back in school, headed towards a degree in Occupational Therapy. I have not strayed for a moment from that decision... It's perfect, if you think about it. I want to help others do what I am learning to do for myself. I like the phrase 'life style redesign.'"

--Connie is a 47-year-old single mother of two sons. After working for 25 years as a violinist and floral designer she began taking classes in Occupational Therapy at Texas Tech University Heath Science Center.