

Mya
Grade 11
Sentinel Career and Technology Center

Hello, my name is Mya M. _____, I am a junior at Mohawk High School. I also attend Sentinel Career and Technology Center and am enrolled in the Careers In Education program. I would be a good candidate for this scholarship because drugs have impacted my life greatly. My entire life I have been surrounded by a variation of addicts to both drugs and alcohol. For example, my father was addicted to heroin and my mother had abused painkillers. Most of my life, they have been in and out of jail, but when my dad was not in jail, I would always go visit him. Even though being with him had always put me in unsafe situations, I did it because I thought I was helping keep him clean. When I would go weeks at a time without seeing him, he started using again. This always made me believe his addiction was my fault because I was not there to help him. At the age of four, I was living with my grandparents. I do not have much recollection of those days other than visiting my mom in prison. Shortly after a year, she was released and came back home. However, she then relapsed. My sisters and I always came third in my mom's life. It was always drugs, boyfriends, and then us. At a young age, my sisters and I had to learn to take care of ourselves. We were latchkey children for the majority of our elementary days, coming home to an empty house everyday. I can recall moving a lot because we were always evicted from our homes. Often, we would stay with people I had never met before. Most nights, we weren't sure where we would be sleeping or when our next meal would be. The only thing my mother was worried about was how much money she had to purchase any drug she could get her hands on. A few times, I was sent to ask people for money for food and new clothing. I had not had a meal that day and my clothes were filthy. However, when I rounded up a few bucks, my mom turned the situation around and used it for drug money.

When I was 10, I moved in with my aunt and uncle. For a long time, I despised them because they tried to get close to me. I thought they tried to replace my mom and dad. But as I grew older, I realized all my aunt and uncle wanted for me was to be successful and not end up going down the same path of my mom and dad. I realized I was given an opportunity not every child in my situation had. That's when I started to turn my life around. My grades started to increase and my attitude became more positive. I started to appreciate what I had in life and am proud to call my aunt and uncle "my parents." They showed me that I could be more than what my mom and dad were and that I didn't have to let their addictions affect where I end up in life. As weird as it sounds, I think my mom and my dad's addictions have impacted me in a positive way because I would not have accomplished as much in life if I were still living with them. I am as successful as I am today because of my aunt and uncle.

Because I am enrolled in the education program at Sentinel, I have been given the opportunity to be a part of the Drug Free Clubs of America. Being a member of the DFCA has helped me stay on the right path for my future. After graduating from high school and Sentinel, I plan to go to Heidelberg University to obtain my teaching license. As a teacher, I believe I can help my students start on the right path as well. Having a rapport with my students is key. I want to show my future students that they can trust me and I am there for them. It is a goal for me that they understand that no matter their situation, they are important, loved, and can be whatever they want to be. They just have to want it, I will do my absolute best to help them get where they want and need to be.