

Personal Statement: DSA Scholarship

I am incredibly grateful and proud to serve within the Division of Student Affairs as a Hokie Ambassador. It is my honor to be able to “lead others forward by walking backwards”. This leadership role has provided me with the opportunity to represent the Hokie community and give back to the university that encourages, spurs, and equips me to pursue my dreams, invent the future, and lead with a servant heart. I am confident that my education, leadership experience, service activity and lifestyle, and copious academic and life experience that I have and will receive through Virginia Tech will exceptionally prepare me for a future of living, leading others to live, a life that speaks: “Ut Prosim”.

My personal journey to discovering my passions and aspirations started like this:

"Are we there yet mom?" I exclaimed for the fiftieth time on the three-hour trip to John Hopkins. As the years of bi-weekly trips went by, the questioning decreased, my nerves cooled, and I began to find joy in them. Every trip was the same, three hours, mom, big buildings, white coats, procedures, incomprehensible words, and the occasional subway rides. While the typical Kidney Reflux patient would cringe with terror each time they placed their feet in the monstrous hospital, I felt no fear. Lab coats. Stethoscopes. Test tubes. Latex-free gloves. Every inch of the building excited me, except for the procedures I went through. All throughout my childhood I have made signs, necklaces, and other creations reading "Dr. Allison". The copious time spent in the doctor's offices birthed a passion in me to be just that, a pediatrician. I have learned something from my unique experience that could not have been learned otherwise; how to be truly thankful for someone that you are compelled to be like them.

Growing up in a single parent home, with minimal finances, I am humbly appreciative of opportunities to apply to scholarships. Receiving this scholarship would be very helpful to my family and myself, as scholarships and grants are my financial methods of furthering my education.

When I was 4 years old my parents separated. I hardly remember the days they were together, but I surely remember the days they were apart. Over time my father's selfish desires led him to multiple addictions, irrational and dangerous behavior, and suicidal attempts. In early 2007, at age nine, my parents divorced and my father left the state to attend a treatment center and walked away from everything (his business, home, vehicle, etc.). Thankfully, my mother did an exceptional job protecting my siblings and I from the chaos and would always carry a positive attitude with her. Since the divorce, my family has lived sparingly. My mother chose to stretch out her savings and stay at home with my siblings and I so that we would have a constant, caring parent to raise us. We look for creative ways to make ends meet by recycling, repurposing, thrifting, and couponing. Her savings are exhausted now and my family lives on the small amount of child support and alimony we receive. My sister is in high school and my brother is currently in his fourth year at Virginia Tech. Aware of my financial situation, and determination to achieve my goals, I have intentionally made academics a priority so that I can qualify for scholarships that will assist me in furthering my education at Virginia Tech, and

beyond in the pursuit of becoming a pediatrician. I am genuinely thankful for the opportunity to apply to the Division of Student Affairs Scholarships, which will help alleviate the financial burden of furthering my education and allow me to continue to invest my time into my academics, athletics, leadership positions, and service to the Hokie community, and beyond.

I've always loved spending time with children and want to care for them in the same way many doctors did for me in my time of need. I want to invest and make an impact on children's lives in our country and around the globe. The relationships and conversations I have had with my doctors have inspired me to become an innovative, compassionate pediatrician. At times life is not easy, but as my mom says, "there is always something good to see in every situation." My past circumstances have produced in me a deep determination to achieve my goals, and maintain a positive outlook for my future. I love to serve and with the help of the DSA Scholarship, I look forward to displaying my "Dr. Allison" signs in the future as I serve children domestically and globally.