

Live - Laugh - Love

Olivia's Bears - Jessica Stone Memorial Scholarship

Deadline – April 15th, 2021

Olivia's Bears was started in late 2009 by Olivia Gonyea who had just spent the previous year battling a rare form of bone cancer. After a year of chemotherapy and several surgeries Olivia wanted to give some hope to others that were struggling with their own health issues. During Christmas of 2009 Olivia's Bears was founded and they delivered their first batch of Build-A-Bears to pediatric cancer patients. It is meant to be a sign of hope for those patients and something hopefully they find comfort in. During that year at Roswell Park Cancer Institute Olivia met Jessica Stone who was ironically battling the same cancer. They became dear friends. Unfortunately, Jessica passed away in March of 2013 after her long battle with cancer. On behalf of Olivia's Bears and in memory of Jessica Stone a \$500 scholarship will be awarded to 2 college bound students each year.

All college-bound students face challenges, but none more than those students struggling to overcome a life-threatening illness. A life-threatening diagnosis can have devastating effects on a student and their families. Beyond the physical stresses of fighting the illness, there is an accompanying emotional stress and depression that can derail a promising academic career.

Students fighting these illnesses can sometimes feel that there is little point in continuing their education. Moreover, the high costs of treatments only serve to reinforce the idea that college is no longer a possibility, let alone a priority. But nothing could be further from the truth.

The emotional and psychological benefits of pursuing a personal ambition can have a profound effect on a patient's recovery.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, an applicant must satisfy the following requirements:

1. The applicant must be a survivor of a life-threatening illness or currently diagnosed with an illness. The applicant **does not** have to be currently receiving treatment to qualify.
2. The applicant is enrolled in or accepted for enrollment in an accredited undergraduate school.
3. The Committee requires the recipient of a scholarship to submit a copy of an acceptance letter from the college/university of their choice or a letter of good standing from the registrar.
4. The applicant must complete the Scholarship Application and mail to Olivia's Bears - Jessica Stone Memorial Scholarship Application - 2901 Niagara Street PO Box #287 Sanborn, NY 14132.
5. The applicant must submit two letters of recommendation from two different academic teachers addressing why they should receive the scholarship.
6. A letter from your attending physician verifying your medical history and/or your current medical situation must also be submitted. Medical information will be kept confidential and will only be utilized to support the qualification of consideration for the scholarship.

7. The applicant must submit an essay discussing the following question. **HOW HAS MY EXPERIENCE WITH A LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS IMPACTED MY LIFE VALUES AND CAREER GOALS?** Essays must be a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 1200 words.
8. The applicants and their parents if they are minors, must sign a release, that they agree to have their name and photo published in the news media or any Olivia's Bears publications as a recipient of Olivia's Bears - Jessica Stone Memorial Scholarship and that they agree to have their name, photo and success story to be published on this website or in any Olivia's Bears publication.