

February 26, 2024

Abdollah Hajikandi, Chair, Professional Staff Caucus  
2024 Professional Staff Caucus Scholarship

Dear Donors,

I want to express my deepest gratitude for being selected as the recipient of the Professional Staff Caucus Scholarship.

I elected to attend Buffalo State to pursue earning my initial teaching certification in art education because after working in a school for a few years in my hometown within the Hudson Valley. I grew to not only recognize the importance of education, but also how much of an impact it had on myself as it was the first time I felt fulfilled within a career.

As a returning adult student having already earned a B.A. in Art History, I am ineligible for the majority of scholarship opportunities available to my peers and have taken on the cost of higher education as a personal investment in my future. Upon learning I had been selected as a recipient of this scholarship, a tremendous weight was lifted off my shoulders. It was not only a recognition of my academic achievements, but also a validation of the path I am now on.

This scholarship represents much more than monetary assistance. It symbolizes the belief and support of individuals like yourself who recognize the value of education and invest in the dreams of students, both of my own and the future students I will one day have after my long-anticipated graduation this spring.

Your generosity has provided me with an incredible opportunity to focus on my studies and personal growth, having renewed my motivation to excel academically and to make a meaningful impact in my chosen field of art education. It has inspired me to push my boundaries, explore new opportunities, and strive for excellence in everything I do, one such venture being my involvement in my local community with Buffalo Arts Studio where I volunteer and hope to one day teach a class of my own.

I am committed to making the most of this scholarship and using it as a steppingstone towards achieving my aspirations. Your support has instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility and gratitude, and I will carry that with me throughout my educational journey and beyond. I am

honored to be associated with your esteemed organization, and one of the many recipients of the Professional Staff Caucus Scholarship.

Thank you for investing in my education and for making a difference in the lives of aspiring students like me. I will forever cherish this opportunity and strive to make you proud.

With sincerest appreciation,

Melanie Girdlestone

