

Dear Ms. Phipps,

My name is Darwin Gaskin. I was recently awarded the Master Leadership Program Scholarship and the General Robert T. Herres Masters Leadership Scholarship. I would like to share a brief personal story about myself and explain how I plan on using the money to further my educational goal.

First, I would like to share with you some background about my dream. I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. I ran cross-country and track throughout middle school and high school, eventually lettered as a state ranked runner for my Junior and Senior years. I went to college via scholarship for track and cross country at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas. Once in college, I wanted to do something in math and was told engineering was the thing to do if you loved math. So I majored in engineering but found myself unsure of what I was doing and unclear on my future. After three years, I left college and got a job. I worked for a couple of years doing accounting and customer service for Source Net which handled accounts for Compaq, Alpo, and some other Fortune 500 companies. Then it happened. On September 11, I was sitting on my couch, decided I wanted to help in any way possible, and volunteered for military service with the Army. While in service I found my focus and my passion for a career: helping others as a Medic and Health Care Professional. During training in my career I found my focus and my passion for life, my wife Amber. Then two years later we had the joy of both of our lives my daughter Ashlynn.

My career in the military lasted four years. I ended my tour of duty by going to Iraq where I encountered different cultures, different beliefs, and many friends. The atmosphere was dangerous at times. I survived several IED and ambush attacks while acting as the Senior Medical Advisor for Personal Security Detail for the Command Sergeant Major of my Battalion. I am proud to say we survived with some minor injuries but no fatalities. After my adventures in the land of sun and sand, I decided to place the military career on the shelf and do what I love to do in the civilian world. Three years later, here I am, ready to graduate an Associate Degree Nurse with one year left to graduation.

Secondly, I want to thank you for supporting my dreams of becoming a nurse. I would like to personally thank you from the bottom of my heart. This has been a reality that has progressively become more difficult the closer I get to my goal but the scholarship will help towards training for the major obstacle that lies in the way of my accomplishment, the State Nursing Exam, NCLEX.

Thank you, again,

Darwin L. Gaskin, SAC, SN

