

March 2021

Dear <Salutation>:

I have provided for myself financially since I was 15 years old. In high school, I balanced working 25 to 30 hours a week in fast food jobs with academics and extracurricular activities. I had very little time to think about the future, and even when I did think about it, college was never an option in my mind. But during my senior year, a guidance counselor asked why I wasn't applying to colleges when I had a 4.0 GPA. No one had asked me that before, and I really had to think about it for the first time.



*Stephanida Kvokov*

Once I knew I *could* go to college, I had to figure out how to pay for it. I started thinking about how many student loans I would have to take out, which resulted in a lot of anxiety. But then I received a scholarship, which allowed me the financial security to imagine a totally different future. I am so grateful for people like you who decide to support students they have never even met.

When I came to visit WashU, I became convinced that this was the right place for me. The entire community invited me into their university home, and I had an immediate feeling that I would have a support system here. At McKelvey, we discover so much from getting to know each other's stories and learn from our different backgrounds and experiences. Scholarships allow for a more diverse student body and more of such invaluable interactions.

When I graduate from WashU in May, I plan to use my chemical engineering degree to help create more sustainable technologies and practices. In honor of the many people who have encouraged and supported me along the way, I hope to make the world a better, healthier, and more equitable place. And once I can, I plan to give back to help the next generation of students.

Receiving a scholarship gave me a life-changing sense of stability and opened doors I didn't know existed. It really has meant the world to me. Please give to the 2020–21 Annual Fund today to help provide more scholarships like mine. All gifts—even those of smaller amounts—let students focus on learning and making positive changes in the world instead of worrying about having to make ends meet. Your support makes a huge difference in real people's lives.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Stephanida'.

Stephanida Kvokov

McKelvey School of Engineering, Class of 2021