

Feb. 15, 2011

Re: BCCPAC Educational Award

To whom it may concern:

My name is Mariah Williamson, and I am a graduating student at South Kamloops Secondary. I am writing this letter to introduce myself to you and to highlight the characteristics of myself that I feel are the most defining and make me who I am, as well as make me a candidate for the BCCPAC Educational Award. Although I was born in Burnaby, BC, I have spent almost my entire life growing up in Kamloops. I live with my mom Donna, who is a Territory Manager for Dare Foods, and my younger sister Tianna, who is in grade 10 at South Kamloops Secondary. Parental involvement has always played a huge role in my life. I have always been very close with my family, and with my grandparents, who also live in Kamloops. My dad Allen also lives close by, and I see him on a regular basis. My family is unlike most others in how well we get along with each other. We are more than satisfied to spend an evening playing Scrabble together or just talking in the living room. We love to travel together, and have visited Greece and Turkey as well as Costa Rica together.

To help me reach my career goal of becoming a pharmacist or medical specialist, I have spent the last three years volunteering at the Royal Inland Hospital as a candy striper. I spend two hours every week assisting patients and nurses with whatever tasks they cannot perform for themselves or do not have time to attend to. It has brought me great joy and a feeling of pride to be able to bring even a small amount of pleasure to a patient's day that could otherwise have been very miserable. I also have a project that I am currently working on to raise money and needed supplies for a non-profit breast cancer clinic in Mexico that supplies women with a free check-up with an oncologist and other items to make their life more comfortable such as hats, wigs, and prosthetic bras. Women in Mexico who have one or both breasts removed because of cancer or who have lost their hair due to their treatments are treated as outcasts in society, so this project brings a lot of joy and acceptance to these women.

I have also spent time volunteering in my school and my community. I have dedicated many hours volunteer tutoring kids in my school and my community in math and science courses, and this has earned me recognition through my school. I have also done some volunteer work through a science teacher at my school, Mr. Comita. I spent some time volunteering at the Big Little Science Centre, doing dissections of multiple animals and sharing my knowledge and passion for science, and I was a volunteer judge at an elementary school science fair. Within the community, I spent a year working with Hybrid Interact, a youth rotary group in my community, raising money to build fog catchers in a mountain village in Chile to provide them with a source of fresh water. It makes me feel very proud to say that my contributions within my school and the city of Kamloops have earned me the respect of my teachers and peers.

I am proud to say that I have achieved many things in my lifetime. My greatest achievements that I am most proud of are vastly different; on one hand, my athletic achievements, and on the other, my mathematic accomplishments. I started playing volleyball in grade 6 as a member of my elementary school team, but it wasn't until grade 8 that I really began to get more involved. I have played on my school team every year since grade 8, and was the team captain of the Junior gold volleyball team and named the season's "Most Valuable Player" in grade 10. I also play community volleyball on Kamloops' elite team. I have been to nationals twice in the past 5 years, and am looking forward to another successful season this spring. I also am an accredited volleyball referee, a task that requires great concentration, quick thinking, and a stiff resolve. I find refereeing truly gratifying because it shows me an entirely different side of volleyball, something I am very passionate about. With mathematics, I have been a contestant in all the math contests since grade 8 and have had great success. I have placed well in the TRU Math Contest every year since grade 8 and went to the final round each year, with my best final round finish, 2nd, last year. I won the Gauss contest, placed 2nd in the Pascal contest, and won the Cayley contest in grades 8, 9, and 10 respectively. I also won the American Math Competition 10 in grades 9 and 10. I am very proud of these achievement in mathematics because they represent not only my strength in math, but also my inquisitive, problem-solving nature.

In conclusion, I feel I am a very well-rounded student with great aspirations, and that I have the attributes that will ensure my success. Please consider me for the BCCPAC Educational Award, and thank you very much for taking the time to read what I have to say.