



SOS Announces 2016-2017 Women of Value

Since its beginning in 2001, **Scholarship Opportunities for Success** has awarded almost \$400,000 in financial aid for education to women of low income. Sixty of our winners have obtained degrees. Our graduates say, "I couldn't have done it without SOS."

And SOS couldn't have done it without your help!

We congratulate the following women – the 2016-2017 Women of Value:

Tedossi is a single mother with two sons, 20 and 22. Her oldest son is attending law school at the University of Missouri and her youngest son just completed his freshman year at the University of Akron. This is the fourth year for her to receive scholarship help from SOS. She is taking classes at Franklin University. Her goal is to become a CPA. She continues to be on the Dean's list with a 3.5 GPA. She hopes to complete her course work in 2018-2019. Despite an ongoing battle with lupus she maintains a positive attitude and makes no excuses for herself. She says, "Challenges no longer hold me back. They are just obstacles I have to overcome and I do daily. I feel like I have been given a second chance at life. I feel so excited about my future because I feel capable and confident to finish what I have set out to do."

Krista is a new scholarship recipient. She is a student at Columbus State working on an Associate Degree in Science. She is the single mother of 2 preschool age children so is balancing part time work, school, and being a mom. She struggled with learning in school but through the guidance of a caring teacher she became hooked on science. During her high school years she made some bad decisions that slowed down her progress. She is now back on the right track and determined to make a better life for herself, her children, and the world. She says, "I am determined to show the world I can do what I sought to do in high school."

One recipient has overcome a learning disability that was not diagnosed until she was a junior in high school. Her hard work after that enabled her to graduate from high school with honors and earn her associate degree with a 4.0 GPA. She's now working to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Development and Family Sciences. Her choice of study is not surprising given that she also overcame the emotional effects of rape, abuse, and bullying. She has taken on leadership roles in several mentoring activities while being a single mom, working, and going to school full-time. She is incredibly optimistic and shares her knowledge in programs for both her peers and recent high school graduates entering college. She is an amazing role model for her child.

Christine is a very determined and motivated student who is currently in the OSU Master's in Nursing program. Her goal is to become a pediatric nurse practitioner. Under constant financial constraints, she succeeded in obtaining her bachelor's degree by working several part-time jobs, while also finding time to volunteer in a program that serves children with life-threatening illnesses. Christine is working as a graduate assistant to help cover tuition costs. The support of student loans and SOS aid provides Christine much-needed time to focus on her graduate studies, to fulfill her passion to care for children in need.

Kelly, a past two-time recipient of our scholarship, has come a long way raising three children as a single parent. Through programs to help her with career goals, she has overcome the fears that once controlled her. She received an associate degree from Columbus State Community College and is working to obtain her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Franklin University. Without help from SOS, Kelly has indicated she would find it difficult to continue with her studies.

Holly, age 26, graduated summa cum laude in spring 2016 from The Ohio State University. She has overcome lifelong academic struggles with determination and will continue her success as she enters graduate school. Throughout her school years, she felt she was smarter than her grades reflected and knew she did not learn the way her teachers taught. She tried CSCC but became discouraged and dropped out after a few semesters. Determined not to fail, she re-enrolled three years ago and through Disability Services learned that she was dyslexic and with the assistance of SOS she was tested by a neuropsychologist and officially diagnosed, allowing her to receive help when necessary. Her success at CSCC enabled her to enroll at Ohio State and achieve her degree with academic honors. Holly now plans to graduate in May 2018 with a Master's degree in Social Work. She hopes to intern with a counseling center and also explore research in that field.

Thelma quit the corporate world to start on an educational path that would eventually lead to a career in nursing. In the beginning, there were so many roadblocks that it was tempting for Thelma to turn back. However, Thelma lives by the standard that "nothing good comes easy". Thelma is a busy woman. The mother of two daughters, she works at least 40 hours a week. To avoid any further debt, Thelma takes one or two classes per semester. Her oldest daughter is also in college and Thelma has some financial responsibilities for her schooling as well. Thelma's goal is to be a role model for her daughters...mission accomplished for sure! With the support of family and friends, Thelma looks forward to sharing her story about how, against all odds, she became a nurse. It is a difficult journey to take on the many challenges of being a nurse. Thelma is a second-year scholarship recipient and we are proud of her integrity and tenacity. We look forward to hearing her story in the next couple of years.

Another woman of value, age 43, is a previous scholarship winner. She is a mother to one son, age 18. She and her husband experienced tough times when she was laid off and she has bravely changed her career in mid-life. She has been studying nursing at CSCC and is currently in the OSU-CSCC Dual Enrollment program where, as a licensed RN with an associate degree, she'll participate in an accelerated bachelor of science program.

Micaela, age 34, is a third-time recipient. She has three children and attends Columbus State Community College. She is a loving and compassionate mother, who expects her children to do their best at all times. She plans to become a middle school teacher so she can help many other students succeed as well. After CSCC, she will transfer to The Ohio State University to obtain her bachelor's degree.

Sabrina is now 22 years old. At the age of 4, she was adopted into a family of 14 children, some of them with special needs. Overcoming a lot of adversity, she is maintaining her financial and emotional independency. Having no family support, she finds herself working 20-30 hours per week at Starbucks while also attending classes. She now is attending CSCC and maintains a 3.75 GPA. She is getting her Associate degree in Arts and will then attend The Ohio State University for a bachelor's and master's degree. She has overcome a lot of hardships including losing her father to cancer and, just recently, having her laptop, textbooks, and other high-value items stolen. She is a deserving person for our scholarship. We wish her much success.

Another recipient is 29 years old and has an 8-year old son. She is expecting to graduate in December 2016 from CSCC. She has struggled most of her life, being put in foster care at age 6. She and her sisters were the children of a drug dependent mother. She is majoring in Photography and is working part time at Children's Hospital taking photos of newborn babies. She says she was born to photograph; her instructors say that she is a skilled photographer and an excellent student who is at the top of her class. We are so happy to help her realize her dream.

Arnetta is a busy mom to two children ages 9 and 14 but doesn't let their busy schedules interfere with her dream. This past December she reached one of her educational goals when she graduated from Columbus State Community College with an Associate Degree in Business Office Applications and earned Certification as an Office Specialist. She will continue her education at Franklin University to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Web Development. She is considered a Generation One Trailblazer as she is the first of her six siblings to graduate from college.

Chasiti's work at Nationwide Children's Hospital as a Patient Care Assistant is the catalyst for wanting to become a Registered Nurse. She is currently attending Columbus State Community College and will transfer to Chamberlin College of Nursing in fall 2016. She plans to graduate in 2018. This past year proved to be very stressful for her and her family as they moved from Columbus to Circleville. Her children had to change schools, her commute to school and work became longer, and she was further from her family support system. While the move was difficult, it strengthened her desire to realize her educational goals.

Angela recently completed her GED and was chosen to be the student speaker at her graduation based on her passion, commitment, and vision for how education could continue to improve her life. She planned to enroll at Columbus State Community College, but was burdened with past student loan debt. She successfully negotiated a repayment plan, and is currently enrolled in classes to prepare her for a career as a substance abuse counselor. She also volunteers at Let Her Rest Ministries, assisting women struggling with addiction. She knows it is never too late to make positive changes, and is working hard to be an inspiration to others, including her sons and grandchildren.

Adia is a young woman who has overcome significant financial difficulties in order to pursue her dream of completing an Associate degree in Business at the Columbus State Community College. She is currently enrolled in classes focusing on human resources management and expects to graduate at the end of 2017. She has worked multiple jobs and sought assistance through Pell grants and other scholarships in order to single-handedly finance her education, and maintains an excellent academic record while still finding time to give back to children and the community. We are proud to be able to assist Adia with her educational expenses.

When Heidi, now age 46, was merely seven years old, she told her mother that she wanted to be a Social Worker. At an early age, she experienced distress that led her to want a path out. It would be many years and additional traumas before Heidi could begin to fulfill that dream that would enable her to escape. She has three children and is currently pursuing her Associate of Arts degree from Columbus State Community College maintaining a 3.87 GPA. She then will set her sights on a Bachelor of Social Work at Capital University which will prepare her for her ultimate educational goal of a Master of Social Work from The Ohio State University. Heidi currently works as a Peer Mentor to new students in addition to many hours volunteering for several local area entities that focus on food insecurity. Heidi's goal is to become a therapist incorporating whole mind and body wellness.

As you can see, we have awarded scholarships to remarkable women. Many have overcome homelessness, physical and mental abuse, drug and alcohol addiction or financial hardships, yet most embark on careers that help others. They realize that an education is their way out of poverty and a way to set examples for their children.

ABOUT SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS

- Scholarship Opportunities for Success has a non-profit 501(c) (3) designation. Contributions are 100% tax deductible.
- SOS is a grassroots organization with eighteen board members and numerous volunteer helpers. Administrative costs (such as printing and postage) are donated by the members.
- The financial aid provided may be used for tuition at universities, colleges, and technology and trade schools. It can also be used for supplies, equipment, books, bus passes, fees and for child-care to enable parents to attend classes. The amount awarded is based on need and generally does not exceed \$5000. It is paid directly to the institution or organization offering the needed services. In May of 2016, SOS was able to award \$67,000 to 21 deserving women.
- Applicants are screened carefully. The recipients must be adult citizens of the United States. They must show financial need and evidence of likelihood to succeed in achieving their goals.
- The number of scholarships awarded each year depends on the amount of money raised that year as the treasury is almost depleted each year.
- SOS holds an endowment fund at The Columbus Foundation.

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Find out more about SOS at: SOSgrants.org**