

## **Women of Value 2017-2018**

This woman of value is remarkable. She has had many obstacles to overcome but is determined to receive her degree in Business Management and Leadership. She started her journey later in life after struggling with drug and alcohol addiction but wanted to provide a better life for herself and her children. She said that without our help there is no way she would be this far in reaching her goals. We are proud to have helped her the past four years.

This amazing woman grew up in a single parent family of five. Drastic changes in her home life resulted in her being removed and put into the foster care system. She did not let this set her back, but continued to take advanced courses her junior and senior years in high school. She has maintained a 3.0 grade point average, graduating from CSCC with an associate degree in 2018 and will start at OSU summer quarter to study Social Work and Psychology. Her supervisor at CSCC says that she is an exceptional leader in the Scholarship Network who encourages others to stay in school. She has advocated for former foster youth at the U.S. Department of Education in Washington. She has a bright future! She says, "I come from an area where you have to do whatever you can to survive. I don't believe I have to take that route. I can either become a product of my environment and end up in a never-ending cycle of poverty, abuse and neglect, or I can become a person who is successful enough not to have to depend on others for help. I want to be an active member of my community. I have a purpose to be here and help others and I am going to do that and not let any obstacles stand in my way!"

A first-time scholarship recipient, this woman of value is the first in her family to attend college. She is enrolled at CSCC working on an associate degree and then plans to attend OSU to earn a bachelor's degree in Engineering. She works part time in the Trio office at Columbus State. She said, "My heritage is working class and I am so grateful for the lessons that has taught me. Each generation before me has worked to get ahead, but fallen behind in later years. I want to break that cycle. It isn't easy going back to school as a 38-year-old adult. I've struggled with making less money and sacrificing time with family and friends, but I want to be an engineer more than I have wanted anything in my life. I am determined to succeed in this goal." SOS is thrilled to be able to help her achieve that goal. She was awarded the Jerry Haller Memorial Scholarship, funded by the many donations that were received in memory of Jerry.

This woman of value is a first-time scholarship winner. She is a 27-year-old single mother of a 3-year-old. She works part time in a latchkey program at a Columbus Public school. She received an associate degree from CSCC and then enrolled at Capital University, majoring in Psychology. She has a 3.7 grade point average and is a member of Phi Chi, an International Honor Society in Psychology. She plans to graduate in May of 2018. Her goal is to become a clinical psychologist specializing in forensics.

SOS has been helping another recipient for the last four years. She received an associate degree from CSCC to become a Legal Assistant. She is currently working on a bachelor's degree from Franklin University in Accounting and hopes to become a CPA. She has a 3.25 grade point average and plans to graduate in May of 2019. She is determined to get her degree and refuses to give up even though she struggles with lupus and its side effects. This recipient said, "Thank you for the opportunity that SOS has given me to continue toward my educational goals. I am truly thankful for the support and believing in me."

Another recipient is one of our past winners. It has been almost 10 years since she aged out of foster care. Now, at age 26, she is a first year doctoral student at Franklin University, studying Health Administration. She has come a long way both academically and professionally. She amazingly balances motherhood (she has a 6 month-old baby boy), being a full-time student who maintains a 4.0 grade point average, and working full time. According to her reference letters, "she is a first class individual with a high level of dedication, knowledge, and determination." She is a highly motivated learner, one who believes in her personal power to give back to her community. We admire her drive to continue pursuing her doctoral degree and become a reputable leader.

Another woman of value is one of our past winners. She is a survivor of childhood abuse and is actively fighting PTSD. At one time after leaving her damaging family, she was homeless and living out of her car. Her journey to Columbus is a miracle. Now at Columbus State, she is actively involved in Scholar Network, an organization that provides mentoring and support for former foster youth. She was selected to be a Student Ambassador, promoting the face of Columbus State Community College and sharing CSCC cougar pride. She was also selected "Woman of the Year" at CSCC. She has a 3.96 grade point average and plans to complete her associate degree at CSCC and then transfer to a university to continue toward her bachelor's degree. She is currently living with a loving family and is employed at Starbucks where she works to pay for gas, clothing phone, and health insurance. She is on her way toward being self-sufficient.

Another woman of value is currently enrolled in Central Ohio Technical College, pursuing a bachelor's degree and is preparing to apply to the Nursing program at OSU. She is a single mother with two beautiful children, ages five and one. This semester has been difficult as she lost her father in September but through it all she managed to stay focused and finished the semester strong.

Another woman of value, age 45, is a previous scholarship winner. When she arrived to the United States as a small immigrant child, she did not speak English. She faced a great deal of prejudice and worked very hard through elementary and middle school to master the English language. She is the mother of one son, age 19. She and her husband experienced tough times when she was laid off and she bravely changed her career in mid-life. Last year she completed her associate degree at Columbus State in Nursing and is currently enrolled at OSU in an accelerated bachelor's program with plans to graduate in spring 2019. This fall she successfully passed her nursing boards and is now a licensed registered nurse.

A new recipient, this 21-year old woman of value finished her associate degree in December 2017 in Graphic Design from Columbus State. She is a first generation college student of Ecuadorian immigrant parents. In addition to her studies, she works many hours to provide for her mother and four younger siblings. She noted that her college path is fueled by her need for independence. She speaks three languages fluently and is a talented photographer. She will continue her studies at Franklin University in Information Technology.

Another recipient knew from an early age that she wanted to be a nurse. “It has always been in my heart and desire to provide care for others and to give back.” She is a single mom who worked as a nurse’s aide while raising three children, including one with special needs. She returned to school and earned her LPN degree, kept going and attained her RN degree, all while struggling with personal and family setbacks. Her determination continues and she has just begun her studies at Ohio University, working toward her BSN degree. She maintains her drive and motivation, believing that “it’s not always how fast your run the race or who is in the race, it’s how you run the race and that you complete it.”

This woman of value is a graduate of Columbus State with an associate degree in Social Work and a 3.8 grade point average. She is attending Capital University to complete her bachelor’s degree in Social Work. She is divorced, a mother of a 10-year old girl, and on disability because of several back surgeries. She recovered from a drug addiction of 15 years and has been clean for four years. Her struggles and recovery have shown her that what she wants to do is help people in similar situations. She plans to obtain her social work license and work in a drug treatment clinic and then possibly open a clinic of her own. She already has her Chemical Dependency Counselor’s Assistant credential and she ultimately intends to further her education to get her master’s and doctoral degrees.

Another woman of value is a first-time SOS scholarship recipient, returning to school after a 20-year break. She struggled with depression after the death of a child. She and her surviving son have had to overcome many challenges. She has worked to rebuild a solid foundation that is allowing her to develop dreams and aspirations. She hopes to graduate in the summer of 2018 with a bachelor’s degree in Applied Psychology, and then continue on to obtain her doctorate in Clinical Education and Research. She plans to work in the field of child and adolescent mental health, as she has seen first hand that there is a lack of resources for children like her own.

One of our recipients is a recent graduate of Columbus State, with an associate degree in Human Resource Management. She is the first member of her family to attend college, and through financial aid from SOS and other sources, was able to graduate from Columbus State debt-free. Her college experience awakened her to the opportunities that education can afford her as she pursues her career plans. As a result, she has enrolled at Franklin University to pursue a bachelor’s degree. SOS has again provided financial and moral support for her to continue her education. While earning her degree, this recipient is also working part-time, and using her talents and resources to give back to the community, particularly focusing on young children and the homeless. SOS is proud to sponsor students like this, and give them the extra support they need as they follow their dreams.

Last semester, another recipient maintained a 3.6 grade point average while working six to seven days each week, tutoring two to three days weekly, and attending Franklin University. She has applied to graduate in May 2018 with a bachelor of science in Communications and a minor in Human Resources. She has a very heavy course load for her last semester, but is hard-working and very driven. She is forever thankful to SOS

for contributing towards making her dream come true and believes that it has been SOS's encouragement and belief that has allowed her to carry out her mission. She looks forward to being able to giving back and helping other.