

Essay 1 Example

I wake up and think, "One foot in front of the other," and that is how I live life. A defeatist attitude never helped anyone. I am back to school at 46 years old, ready to earn my degree in English. My primary goal is to work towards my BA and keep going until I have my Ph.D. I can change careers and become a teacher on this path. As a mother of five and the proud wife of a disabled veteran who served his country with honor, we know how to overcome challenges. My husband has a permanent back injury that gives him constant pain. He had a spinal stimulator in his back to help with that pain, along with PTSD, a traumatic brain injury, and other medical conditions.

Being an immigrant plays into my classes as well. I am from the tiny island of Barbados and have lived in Charlotte for the last 15 years. Still, our culture is very prominent in my life, and the fact that education is essential to how I was raised, it was an easy choice to go back to school, again. I wake up with a set plan for the day. Keep it moving. Get the kids out to school and make a list of things for my husband, so he doesn't forget to take his medication or eat the lunch. I go to school, home to dinner and homework for the kids, my own homework, and many other little things that must be done in a day.

I've continued class through surgeries on my hands and eyes. I have an eye disease called Keratoconus, and I have had corneal transplants. On December 29th, 2021, after I finished my semester, I had my 6th surgery on my eyes to add a special lens behind my cornea to help me see better. I keep pushing forward even though sometimes I'm so exhausted I want to crawl into bed and sleep for an entire day. But one step in front of the other, and we keep moving forward. I show them that nothing can defeat them.

My daughter tells all her friends her mom has a 3.5 GPA and is her inspiration. I have a grandson I nicknamed "the toddler overlord" and I want him to see nothing is impossible. My husband looks at me with the same pride I feel when I look at him. He holds my hand and says, "We're doing it, doll," and I know that the challenges of the day were well worth it. I can't say I am any more worthy than anyone else to receive the scholarship because anyone who applies has a need. If awarded, I can focus more on my education and not worry if my books or supplies are taking resources away from the family. That would be a blessing.

Essay 2 Example

At sixteen, I was already a mother; fighting my way out of a world that didn't care for my struggles. My family, friends, and teachers all agreed I should quit school, get a job, and that I would not amount to much in life. From that moment forward, I made it my mission to prove them all wrong. I knew I could do more with my life and was ready to fight tooth and nail to provide a better life for my daughter.

Ultimately, that decision brought me to Gaston College in the spring of 2021. While still dealing with disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, I simultaneously began taking classes as well as homeschooling my children. Those first few months brought their own challenges: handling seven courses, teaching elementary school, and finding

new ways to entertain the children during a quarantine. However, it became clear that nothing would stop me in my pursuit of an education.

All my hard work has paid off and in May of 2022, I will once again be graduating this time with my Associate in Science and transferring to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. During my time at Gaston, I have been able to discover so much more than what I originally imagined I would be involved with. I joined the SPARC program at Gaston and was involved in three different research projects which helped me develop an even stronger love for the biomedical field and I am eager to continue this amazingly engaging journey.

I have undergone plenty of hardships, failures, and defeats, but I will not let any of those stop me from being the best role model for my daughters. My oldest beams with pride every time she tells someone, "Mommy is going to be a doctor and I am going to be a scientist." The fact that I can provide this encouragement for them makes me proud and eager to finish my education. It is an accomplishment not only for myself but for my girls, and it will teach them to always strive to become more than even they believe.