

Why College is Important to Me

by Claudia D. Carpenter

Sadly all flowers, whether a simple daisy or extravagant bird of paradise eventually wilt and are discarded. Some friendships fade over the miles of separation. Youthful looks can be hijacked by time. Dignity can be sacrificed upon the altar of improper choices. So many things in our lives can be taken from us, by others or through our own doing. But a good college education is one thing that can never be taken away.

My education to date is something I have strived toward, worked for, and earned by my sincere efforts and enthusiasm for learning. I'm anticipating that my college education will be the foundation that the rest of my life will be built upon. Layer by layer, college will be a foundation of strength and permanence that will not fade or be discarded. A foundation to support a life-long journey of learning and years of decisions.

Building a foundation, whether architecturally or academically, is a slow and purposeful task. Carefully created it can last a lifetime, attempted carelessly it could crumble. Many students, me included, have had a few obstacles to overcome through the K-12 school years. Being born two months premature, it seemed that I was always playing catch up to my peers. Always the smallest and often the last to reach those important milestones like losing teeth and getting a driver's license. But in the classroom I found my love of learning let me become my own kind of student with my own timeline of learning. I could advance as far as I could challenge myself to reach, and that is what I hope to do through my college experience.

A quality education often levels the playing field and opens up opportunities for anyone willing to challenge themselves. A playing field that does not judge people based on their disability, face color, size, strength, or religion. It simply opens up rewarding and satisfying paths for successful learning and

exploration. Paths that encourage me to be more sensitive to cultural differences, to be able to respect the beliefs of all types of people and to participate in community service opportunities.

A college education is not something to simply check off my to-do list, or something to help me achieve greater monetary wealth. It is a valuable tool to develop skills that will help me find a fulfilling career, while also teaching me how to deal with a variety of other real life situations. A tool to give me the ability to problem-solve and the ability to communicate with other people in both work related and personal relationships.

A college education is more than a mere stepping stone to a career. It is about learning how to develop a better me so that I can become all that I could possibly dream to be. That is why college is important to me.