

2022-2023 Tom Arnold Scholarship

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Introduction

Indian Hills alumnus Tom Arnold awards two scholarships to Indian Hills students each year. The scholarships award tuition, fees, required books, and required supply costs for one year. In addition, if the winners are students residing in the dormitories, an average of room and board costs will be included as part of the scholarship award.

To be eligible for the scholarships, you must compose a brief written piece (600-1,000 words) on this year's subject theme. An Indian Hills faculty committee will screen initial entries and Tom Arnold will choose the final selections himself.

2022-2023 Theme: *"How have you made a difference in someone's life?"*

Please Note:

You must compose a brief, written piece (between 600-1000 words) following the subject theme established by Tom Arnold.

You should avoid the obscene and exaggerated use of profanities.

The screening committee will eliminate any applications with distracting grammatical, mechanical (spelling and punctuation), and typographical errors from further consideration. Therefore, it is advisable for all applicants to proofread, or have their papers proofread.

The screening committee members will disqualify themselves from judging any entry they have previously seen or proofread.

The two scholarship winners will be contacted by the Indian Hills Foundation Scholarship Coordinator in June with details of their award.

Students will retain all rights to their scholarship entries.

Deadline to complete the essay is **April 4, 2022 at 4:30 pm.**

Essay

How have you made a difference in someone's life?

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ANYWHERE ON THE ESSAY. The screening committee will eliminate any applications with distracting grammatical, mechanical (spelling and punctuation), and typographical errors from further consideration.

Therefore, it is advisable for all applicants to proofread, or have their essay proofread.

Min Length: 600 words
Max Length: 1200 words

The walk was brief and direct.

As I made my way through the locked door I wondered if this would be a good or bad day. Would she remember me? Would it make any difference if a dietary worker who knew her from the assisted living dining room took time to visit her in this new location?

I had treated her with utmost kindness and respect when she left her apartment to come to the dining room. I aided her in washing her hands after she had been holding her beloved chihuahua. I pretended that her jumbled conversation made sense as I led her to her assigned dining table. After helping her fill out her meal menu, I checked back with her several times to ensure she was eating and drinking. After finishing the meal, I directed her back to her apartment and her spoiled chihuahua. I confirmed that the dog would be okay while momma took time to eat.

Her recent move to the Alzheimers/dementia unit was necessary for her safety. Too many evenings she had left the assisted living facility to wander the campus. One bitterly cold day she had made it to the independent cottages. She was not dressed for the elements, nor was she orientated to her surroundings. Going from window to window she begged to be let inside. Some kind soul called 911 and she was returned to her warm, efficient apartment.

She had been a ham while wandering the halls with her chihuahua nestled in the crook of her arm. Her sense of humor and love for life had not diminished with the onset of Alzheimers/dementia. With a smile on her face and an eagerness to chat with anyone that wandered by, she would often stop by the kitchenette to talk. As I finished my daily tasks I would try to converse with simple yes or no questions. There is no better therapy than to make an individual feel like they are important, and their gibberish conversation makes sense.

I had come to appreciate her, and our daily "conversations" brightened her day. Now that she had relocated this would be my first time visiting her. I entered her room, and she was standing like she was expecting me. She had no way of knowing that I was going to choose this time to visit. Her face instantly brightened, and she proceeded to hug me. A smile framed her face, and she began to converse in a pleasant tone. We "talked" about family, her sons and husband, siblings, racing, and a host of other topics that her mind wandered to. She even showed me her wallet and the loose change that jingled from within. The deck of cards that was haphazardly laying on the counter was gathered and stuck inside. Her fancy scarf turned out to be a nightshirt that was buttoned incorrectly. Laughter rang throughout the room as she proceeded to inform me that she had cut her hair (earlier a beautician had done it).

Before long it was time to say goodbye and go home. My dietary shift had come to an end. As I brought the "conversation" to a close she told me to visit again. Even though she will not remember that I visited her, it still makes her feel human when she has company.

The personal interest in one's life never diminishes with age and diagnosis. To be human is to need love and acceptance. If I can fulfill that while working as a dietary aide, in college, then I have accomplished a worthy goal.

This is excellent preparation for my upcoming career in the occupational therapy assistant field. Above the daily demands of the career, another important aspect is realizing that I am dealing with unique individuals who long to feel kindness and respect. I will not be working with machines or robots. Personal connection is important so I can build rapport with my clients. At the end of my life, if I can say that I have been effective by loving people and respecting them for who they are, then I have lived a fulfilled life.