

Jay Holstine Scholarship Application

My father, uncle, and grandfather are all proud members of the FDNY. While we may joke that firefighting is “the family business,” I realize that the true legacy they embody is the dedication to a life of service. Through witnessing their experiences, I have realized that I too want a career that provides me with fulfillment, a sense of purpose, and the opportunity to give back to my community. They’ve inspired me to lead a life of service of my own creation. This upcoming fall, I’ll be attending NYIT’s PA Program to fulfill my dream of working as a healthcare provider who ensures that every patient feels that their voice is heard.

I first discovered my desire to work in the medical field through my role as an undergraduate volunteer in the Lori’s Hands organization. I was paired with three community members who lived with a chronic illness and assisted them with chores that they had difficulty completing. While I mopped floors or did laundry, I was paid in stories. I came to understand the realities of living with a chronic illness, and was granted insight into a patient’s experience after they leave the hospital. I witnessed people who were isolated, discouraged, and who felt unheard by healthcare providers that they had placed their trust in. It was these clients that inspired me to pursue a career as a physician assistant, so that no patient would feel that their painful realities were dismissed.

I also had the opportunity to shadow PA Robert Brown, who founded a practice to serve the needs of FDNY members post 9/11. Mr. Brown expertly compared arteries to hose lines, and valve replacements to Brownstone fires. While his analogies were lost on me, I watched patients immediately relax and nod in understanding. Suddenly the unknown topography of healthcare was transformed into something within their grasp. I hope that my future patients feel like they did: empowered and knowledgeable about their health. During my time at NYIT I look forward to learning within their Institute for Clinical Competence, where students engage in interactive standardized patient simulations. This unique hands-on style of learning will allow me to continue to understand how to connect with patients of all cultures and backgrounds. I hope to connect with each of my patients just as PA Rob Brown did, and present health findings in a way that is accessible to all.

Through my work as an Ophthalmic Technician and medical scribe, I’ve also understood the importance of being a culturally competent healthcare provider. So often I’ve witnessed Spanish-speaking patients who rely on a child or family member to serve as a translator. Many patients don’t have access to these resources, and hiring a personal translator who charges by the minute is an expense that often patients simply cannot afford. During my undergraduate career I minored in Spanish with the hopes of one day becoming fluent. I’ve continued to work on my own to improve my Spanish so that I may help to overcome the language barrier that can so often separate provider and patient.

I graduated from the University of Delaware with an Honors Degree in Biology, minors in English and Spanish, and finished with a 3.98 GPA. My time at UD has allowed me to develop the academic skills necessary to thrive in a PA program.

As one of four children in a middle class family, I knew that my parents would not be able to support me while I attended college. During my undergraduate career, I worked part-time as a receptionist, a private tutor, and as a Physical Therapy aide to pay for my living expenses and textbooks. While PA school is an incredible opportunity, it also poses a large financial burden. I am honored to be considered for this scholarship, and if I was selected, I would use the funds to help advance my PA education. It would allow me to have additional time to dedicate to my studies, so that I can grow closer to my goal of becoming a part of the next generation of physician assistants.

NYIT's PA Program will allow me to fully pursue my dream of becoming a compassionate healthcare provider. Not only will my courses there deepen my understanding of the medical field, but I will also be exposed to new clinical environments where I can discover where my skills are best applied. Clinical rotations widely vary, and I'll have the opportunity to work in sites such as rural private practices and inner city hospitals. My determination, discipline, and empathy for others will lead me through this next chapter. Every patient that I've been fortunate to work with has inspired me to keep going, so that I too can join the "family business" and lead a life of service.