

Donor Memorial Letter

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The future is a fascinating concept. As children we grow up and determine what we'd like to do with our lives, whether it is to be an astronaut, a professional athlete, the president, or a doctor. All of this seems possible at such a young age, but then we grow older and realize some of those things are less likely, and our goals change to something more realistic. We don't give up on our dreams, but rather spawn new ones that we work and strive towards every day. These goals give us something to think about and work on throughout our lives, however one concept that most don't think about is "what impact can I leave after I have passed?" This question has been a topic of interest for me since we completed our anatomy course. How will I change the world around me and what impact will be left after I am gone? This question has been answered for the people who gave us this incredible opportunity that we will always celebrate and remember. Every single student belonging to the occupational therapy program, physical therapy program, physician's assistant program, and school of medicine have received the opportunity to learn and grow due to the ultimate gift that has been given to us by these wonderful donors and their families. The amount of gratitude and value that we have for this opportunity cannot be measured and will never be forgotten. Our impact on the world and our entire careers will be due to the information and knowledge that we have gained from the people who wanted to invest in the future. We would not be where we are today if not for this gift. The way that this opportunity impacted me personally is difficult to speak on, but is beneficial for loved ones to hear. I was never a 4.0 student, previous educators did not believe I could progress to college and definitely not graduate school, and I did not think much higher of myself. After getting through my undergraduate program and being accepted into graduate school I would constantly tell myself

that this is a mistake and it cannot actually be happening. On our early class periods of anatomy I remember going into the class thinking I do not belong here and how will I make it through. The people and families who are being honored at the memorial service brought me out of this mindset. Even if I did not think that I belonged here or that I was not the most worthy candidate, these donors gave everything to ensure that I knew I was valued and that I would make an impact in the future. This gave me the pride, value, and ability to move forward in my education and to strive to be the best practitioner I can in order to pay respects to this gift I had received. To the families of the donors: now is a time to celebrate who these people were and to understand that they wanted to invest in the future of those around them. Each donor that assisted this class in learning will be attached to each patient that is treated or saved by the future practitioners they inspired and educated, and for that we all thank you. One Greek proverb comes to mind when thinking about everything that we have received from these amazing families and donors is written as follows: “a society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in”. These donors had no expectation of payment, reward, or personal gain from giving us this gift and yet they are responsible for the next generation of health care. They also gave the opportunity for each student in this room to be more than they thought they could, achieve the dreams they may have had since they were children, and be the people the donors thought we could be. For that we are forever grateful.