Scholarship Video Transcription

Speaker: Wendy Johnson, 2012 Rising Scholar Scholarship Recipient

“I have to tell you that I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to receive this scholarship. Many of the reasons I did not attend college early after high school were due to poor choices and very hard upbringings. My childhood was not, as you could say, very average. I was with a single mom who went from job to job. We probably moved around 15 times throughout my childhood and with that, was a lot of chaos and a lot of getting used to environments very quickly. We had several men in and out of our life, and I never really had a sense of belonging, or a sense of safety and security.”

Words on screen: The Wrong Path

“In order to cope with my childhood, I, unfortunately in my teen years, turned to drugs and alcohol, and I barely graduated high school. I believe it was by the grace of God. And I, shortly after graduating, became pregnant, and I tried desperately to be a stay-at-home mom and stay away from alcohol and drugs, but the pain of my childhood kept rearing its head, and eventually I turned back to alcohol.

About four and a half years ago, after seeing a really wonderful counselor, I decided to stop drinking and start a new life for myself. I stopped drinking and have been sober since October 13 of 2008, and what that has done for me, it has changed my perspective on life.”

Words on screen: From Despair to Role Model

“Being a good role model for my children means they get to see mom change her entire life. They get to see me come from this sad kind of person, but they get to know that no matter what, they can achieve anything. I'm the first person in my whole family to go to college. Most did not even graduate high school.”

Words on screen: My Path to Success

“One of the things I believe is, nursing is the ability to take somebody, whether they're sick or whether they're mentally down, and you can transform them. Nursing is not just taking care of somebody's body, it is taking care of somebody. It is taking care of their spirit, their mind, their body, all of that. And the reason I'm passionate about becoming a nurse is because, if you hit all the aspects of who somebody is, you will see them get well.”

Words on screen: You Make a Difference

“It is by people like you that have truly brought me out of what was a horrible, horrible life and brought me into something so much greater.”

Words on screen: The Sky's the Limit

“The sky's the limit for me, not because of who I am, but because you've made it possible by your gift-giving. Thank you.”