



Dear Sheffield graduate

My name's Salma and I'm a second year medical student at the University of Sheffield. I've always dreamed of becoming a doctor. I want to help people in the UK and around the world. That's why I'm so grateful to have got a scholarship. It's meant I can study at and take one step closer to achieving my goal.



I grew up in South Yorkshire, in an area where people don't usually go to university. Most of my classmates left school and went straight into work or started families. I didn't know if I'd be able to get into uni, let alone study medicine.

But I took part in a scheme run by the University of Sheffield which encourages students from low-income families to apply for university. It was really inspiring. And the help I got with my application was incredible.

Getting into university is my proudest achievement.

And it's a really big deal for my family too. We don't know anyone who's a medic and it's such a prestigious job! But I was worried how I'd afford to live whilst at uni.

I did a lot of budgeting to work out the costs. But it was looking like I'd have to work several jobs alongside my studies. I had to work full-time in a shop before my A-levels. It was so stressful. I didn't know how I'd cope balancing work like that with my course.

That's when I found out I could apply for a scholarship.

I couldn't believe it when I found out I'd be getting a scholarship. I know how competitive they are so I was overwhelmed! It lifted such a huge weight off my shoulders.

Getting a scholarship means I have a choice over what part-time work I can do. I work as an ambassador for the medical outreach programme that I was part of at sixth form. It fits around my studies and I love inspiring students to apply to university. I've also been able to travel to a volunteer role at a local charity and join the Women's Health Society.

Without opportunities like these, I'd feel very lonely.

Knowing that people have donated because they believe in me and want to help me achieve my goals is really heart-warming.

Alumni donations have helped so much with day-to-day things like rent and buying food. And it also means that I can join in with my friends on special occasions like a birthday meal. It means I don't have to constantly worry or make it known to my coursemates that I don't have as much money as them. I can be a normal student, just like everyone else.

I'm the first generation to go to university and I'll be the first doctor too. I'm so grateful to everyone who donates because it wouldn't be possible without them. To be able to give even more students the chances that I've had would be amazing.

Please give what you can, every gift really does make a difference to students like me.

Thank you.

Salma Qhafoor

2nd year medical student