



HONORING THE LEGACY

**ADA S. MCKINLEY
COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.**

REVIE SOREY TRUNK SCHOLARSHIPS

2024 Essay Winners & Finalists

As part of our Trunk Scholarship selection process, applicants are asked to submit a short essay expressing why a post-secondary education is important to them. In addition to a trunk filled with the living and learning essentials first-year students need to adjust and achieve success in their new environment (desk supplies, bedding and linens, technology resources, and other necessities), the top essay winners receive a cash award in the form of a gift card to help cover other fees and incidentals. We are proud to recognize this year's winners and finalists and share their inspiring essays!



ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



First Place Winner

Moulaye Cisse

**Graduate of Hyde Park Academy High School
Attending Illinois State University**

Securing a college education means a lot to me because it opens many doors. As a senior in high school aiming to be a computer scientist, my journey has been shaped by life experiences and inspirations. I grew up fascinated by how technology changes our lives, from smartphones to artificial intelligence. This interest led me to love computer science and want to study it further.

My family taught me the value of education. I saw how education can help break poverty cycles and make a better future. My parents stressed the importance of learning and working hard, inspiring me to do well in school. Participating in extracurricular activities also reinforced my commitment to college. I joined coding clubs and attended tech workshops to improve my skills and learn more about computer science. Ultimately, I want to use my computer science skills to solve real-world problems and help people. This is what drives me to pursue higher education.

In conclusion, the pursuit of higher education holds profound significance as it serves as the cornerstone of my aspirations and ambitions. With dedication and a fervent passion for computer science, I am steadfast in my commitment to advancing my knowledge and skills through college. I am eager to delve deeper into the intricacies of computer science, armed with the belief that education empowers individuals to effect positive change in the world. By leveraging the opportunities afforded by postsecondary education, I am poised to make meaningful contributions to the ever-evolving landscape of technology, ultimately striving to leave a lasting impact on society.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Second Place Winner

Martiana Patton

**Graduate of Tilden Career Community Academy High School
Attending Harold Washington College**

Senior year has been a roller coaster of emotions. In August of 2023, my father Mr. Sir Carl Moman was shot and killed in East Garfield Park. He was only 41 years old but was a known entrepreneur who employed many Chicagoans. He had his own security company (Sir Serious Security) which serviced big names like Peoples Gas. He was my go to person for anything I needed. Life without him is not easy, but I have made the choice to be an entrepreneur just like him and name my future company after him.

I would like to be a business major in college and eventually build a Real Estate company. I know that I don't want to work for anyone so it will be in my best interest to go to college and learn all I can about the field of business so that I can be a leader. I know that by attending a city college I can go to school for free, but I am also considering attending Indiana State University. I visited the campus during my sophomore year of high school and fell in love with it.

I am thankful for agencies like Ada S. McKinley Community Services who have provided me with tons of resources to set me on the path to success. Thanks to Ada S. McKinley, I have been to Illinois State University, I visited Arrupe College of Loyola, and now I will be getting the Trunk Scholarship which will help me start my life post high school. I will not forget all the help I have received along the way and most importantly I will make my dad's name "Sir Carl Moman," be meaningful forever!

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ESSAY WINNERS

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Third Place Winner

Jacob W. McGhee

**Graduate of Wendell Phillips Academy High School
Attending Lincoln University**

A postsecondary education is more than just important to me. It is my only way of pursuing my dreams. It's more than just the financial gain. I love football and a postsecondary education is the only way for me to pursue my dreams of going to the NFL and playing the sport I love. It will allow me and the brothers I've made playing football to continue to play the game we have played since kids.

A postsecondary education offers me so many opportunities to live the life I want to live. I've always enjoyed solving problems and numbers since I was a kid. In elementary school, my teachers made me feel so special for being good at math. I've always liked school. It is a place where you feel like you belong but also must hold up a standard of success just like football where I feel super important because of my performance. Getting a touchdown feels similar to getting a A+ on a big test you've been studying for.

Earning an Electrical or Mechanical Engineering degree is also a big accomplishment. These degrees are not just lucrative, but also very helpful in the world. I can be someone my family trusts with their cars or electricity in their homes.

I want to be a star college football player and be able to provide for my family financially. A postsecondary education is the only way I can do either of these things.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Ella Bentley

**Graduate of Tilden Career Community Academy High School
Attending University of West Florida**

It's hard for me to believe I was a shy, awkward middle schooler. My middle school years of my life were my least favorite; the years were filled with one negative experience after another. I was tired of school and I wanted to quit. I was bullied for being chunkier than the other kids, and because of this, I always stayed to myself.

One Christmas, my mom, sisters, and I went to visit my brother in Indiana, and I opened up to him about my problems. He listened attentively. But, he did more than just listen; he took action. My brother moved home and became my own one-man cheerleading squad. He brought my sister and I closer together. He hounded me to push myself harder and to stop avoiding my problems. Because of his encouragement, my grades improved, too.

I was so happy to have formed this new, close relationship with my brother. My world came crashing down in July of 2020 when my brother suddenly suffered a tragic accident, leading to his untimely death. I had lost my protector and a part of my soul. After hugging his body goodbye, attending his funeral, and burying him, I wanted to push myself to succeed in more than just school. I realized I wanted to succeed in life, for him. I wanted to always remember him smiling and telling me he was proud of me.

My dream is to become a marine biologist; a dream I never would have thought of if my brother hadn't encouraged me to explore my interests. I want to study ways to protect our oceans and our aquatic life. In a way, I want to be a protector to our earth the way my brother protected me. I bloomed beautifully due to the special attention that my late brother gave me. I know that my pouring into the health of our oceans and aquatic life will yield phenomenal results.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Zaria Julia Ruby Harrington

Graduate of Dunbar Vocational Career Academy

Attending Illinois State University

Obtaining a post-secondary education offers amazing opportunities for career choices, the ability to improve more on personal skills, and to make more money in the future. Post-secondary education can help with maintaining security in your adult life.

Growing up with an older sister who obtained a post-secondary education and is currently successful in her career was very educational to learn from. My sister is one of my biggest inspirations when it comes to a post-secondary education. She inspires me to seek a higher education and achieve my career goals. My sister has always told me to pursue a career that I enjoy.

To achieve a goal for a post-secondary education, I have decided to enroll and pursue a degree in Psychology while taking coursework in Criminal Justice. After reading through the course content, I discovered that Illinois State has exactly what I need to reach my goal. I am confident that it will give me the tools and guidance needed to excel in my career pursuits. Having a career in Criminology and Psychology has been a goal of mine since I discovered the T.V. shows “Law and Order” and “Criminal Minds” with my Auntie. That’s saying something because I was only 10 years old when I started watching. I didn’t know at the time the exact field of study, but I knew even at a young age that I wanted to be involved in criminal justice in some way.

I’m fascinated by people’s behavior patterns and how they spend their lives. Certain conditions, behaviors, mental illnesses, and diseases can sometimes lead others to commit specific crimes. I particularly enjoy through observations and researching how investigators can develop criminal profiles to narrow down potential suspect lists. The career path that I want to pursue after studying these two majors is became a forensic psychologist.

A forensic psychologist should possess empathy and be trustworthy towards their patients. I consider myself a person who possesses unique attributes such as honesty, humility, and optimism. These characteristics help with the career path that I have chosen.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Passion Iyani Harrison

Graduate of Percy L. Julian High School

Attending Illinois State University

As a first generation college student, the importance of obtaining a post-secondary education cannot be understated. Growing up in a low-income household, financial struggles were a constant burden for my family. Despite these challenges, I knew that pursuing a college education was the key to unlocking a brighter future for myself and my family.

The pressure to go to college was always looming over me, especially as a high school senior. I felt the weight of expectations from my family, teachers, and peers. There were times when I questioned if I was capable of succeeding in college, given my limited resources and lack of experience navigating the education system. Yet, I knew that I had to persevere and push through these doubts and fears. I wanted to break the cycle of poverty that had plagued my family for generations. I wanted to prove to myself and others that I was capable of achieving more than what was expected of me.

Obtaining a postsecondary education is not just a personal goal for me, but a means of creating a better future for my family. I wanted to set an example for my younger siblings and show them that with hard work and determination, anything is possible. I wanted to be able to provide for my family and give back to my community in meaningful ways. Despite the challenges I faced as a first generation college student, the decision to pursue a postsecondary education has been one of the most rewarding and empowering experiences of my life. It has opened doors to opportunities that I never thought possible and has allowed me to grow and thrive in ways I never imagined.

In conclusion, obtaining a postsecondary education is important to me as a first generation college student because it has the power to transform not only my own life, but the lives of those around me. It is a testament to my resilience, determination, and belief in the power of education to change the trajectory of one's life.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Myara Jones

**Graduate of Ben Davis High School
Attending Ball State University**

Obtaining an education is important to me so that I can live out my dream of becoming a special education teacher. My main goal in life is to make sure that people with special needs get the education they deserve. One day I want people to view special education and IEPs differently.

I decided I wanted to help people with special needs in 3rd grade. I noticed that people teased kids with special needs. I could relate. I knew what it was like to be teased. I was always different than my peers and got made fun of for that. So I decided I would make a difference and help out in their classrooms. I loved it because I've always liked helping people and I finally felt like I was making a difference.

But it wasn't until 4th grade that I thought about becoming a teacher. I was introducing myself to a teacher asking if I could volunteer in get classroom. We were getting to know each other and I was telling her about myself when she asked if I ever thought about becoming a teacher. That day something sparked in me. I finally felt like I knew what I was put on this earth to do. And every since then I've been volunteering year after year in classrooms and helping students and teacher.

I want more than anything to help people with special needs whether it is kids or it is adults, I'll make sure they get what they deserve. No longer will people be seen as "different". We are all unique and that's a good thing.

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ESSAY WINNERS

2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Brian Munoz

**Graduate of Tilden Career Community Academy High School
Attending Malcolm X College**

As I reflect on my childhood, I cannot remember knowing an adult in my family with a college degree. My parents, who migrated from Mexico to the U.S., never attained their college degrees. From the union of my parents, there are four children, and unfortunately my older sisters did not finish college due to financial issues. I want to break the cycle. By finally being the first Munoz to finish college, I can enter the medical field with a goal of positively impacting cancer patients and I can also improve the financial status of my family.

Cancer is not just something that I hear about on the news. Cancer became a personal issue when my dad was diagnosed in 2014. As an 8 year old, I didn't quite understand what cancer was all about. I just remember my strong hero looking very weak when he went through his chemo treatments. By watching him, I knew that one day I wanted to help individuals experiencing the horrible disease that is cancer.

My Ada S. McKinley rep at Tilden invited me to see Malcolm X College last fall. I could not believe all of the state of the art equipment that Malcolm X has for individuals interested in studying medicine. I was able to envision myself studying at Malcolm X and being one step closer to helping cancer patients become healthy again. I applied to Malcolm X College and was accepted.

I will be attending Malcolm X College in the fall of 2024. I believe that I will inspire my sisters to return to college once they see me enrolled. I plan to get my Associates degree at Malcolm X and then go on to get a Bachelor's degree. As I begin to earn money as a medical professional, I will most certainly financially take care of my dad who not only beat cancer but has worked very hard to take care of his family. Being able to both positively impact cancer patients and take care of my dad will make me feel as though I have fulfilled my life's purpose.

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Finalist

Brandon Rivera

**Graduate of Whitney M. Young Magnet High School
Attending University of Miami**

My goal is to be an inspiration to future generations, specifically to students such as myself who are part of communities that experience a lack of academic achievement, either due to a lack of resources or information. It isn't easy to see the power education holds when you find yourself in a space where it isn't both promoted and seen.

I attribute many things that I have achieved to my parents, who, my whole life, have pushed me to achieve more for myself. I personally don't know where I would be in life without their encouragement. I would like to act as that voice and figure for others who may not have had the same luck as me. There is no other voice to encourage their aspirations. My ultimate goal when it comes to my community is to show them that a higher education leads to a more successful life.

Specifically for my education, I plan to eventually become a psychiatrist later in life. To do so, I'm currently looking forward to majoring in biology and then getting into medical school. Ever since I can remember, I've always had a fascination with two things: learning how people think and helping those around me. I would enjoy learning about not just who someone was, but why they were the way they were. That homeless man that I just passed by would have been home with his wife and children, gardening outside. That woman lying under the bridge could have been a successful architect, astronaut, farmer, or anything else that wasn't what she was at that moment. Maybe she could have accomplished her dreams." I'm sure there was some point where she could have had someone steer her in a better direction. How different would their lives be if someone—maybe I—offered their support?

Obtaining a post-secondary education is important to me because it will allow me to achieve my lifelong goals.

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2024 Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships



Finalist

Julian Alexander Rivera

Graduate of Lincoln Park High School

Attending Boston University

Growing up in Chicago as a first-generation Latino American is an array of rich culture, various experiences, and the continual struggle between heritage and assimilation. The journey of a Latino immigrant family and their children as they navigate the difficulties of cultural heritage, societal integration, and the pursuit of the American Dream takes place in Chicago, a melting pot of cultures and identities.

The immigrant experience is central to the Latino story in the United States. Many first-generation Latino Americans, begin their journey with their parents' dreams of a better life. Their homeland's sights, sounds, and smells remain in their home, becoming a vivid image of traditions, language, and customs. Family reunions are a time to celebrate one's ancestry, with the scent of handmade tamales filling the air and vibrant music setting the tone for stories and laughing. Enlightening the children to dream and obtain a more prosperous future than the next generation.

I have come face to face with the reality of generations of poverty and the sheer determination that my family has shown in order to overcome it. My mother's experience of working a job, taking care of the house, and pursuing a high school education inspires me greatly. It highlights the true grit and discipline that my family embodies. As the next generation, I am committed to continuing my family's legacy of striving for higher education and knowledge.

As this pursuit of higher education grows closer to becoming a reality. Faced with the challenge of financing my education. To achieve a goal larger than myself, an endeavor for myself and my family. To break that barrier of generational struggle to thrust myself into success. It is necessary to receive scholarships for such a dream.

The immigrant story is based on struggle and determination, I will use my determination to seize my opportunity of being the first generation college graduate.

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2024 TRUNK SCHOLARSHIPS



HISTORY OF THE TRUNK SCHOLARSHIPS

The Revie Sorey Trunk Scholarships are named in honor of our former Educational Services Director and Chicago Bear who launched the program 16 years ago when he learned that our college-bound students were burdened by the expenses of dorm room and school supplies not covered by grants and scholarships. The Trunk Scholarship program is an important extension of our acclaimed College Preparation & Placement Program that has placed more than 75,000 youth in more than 400 colleges and universities throughout the United States. This includes assisting graduating seniors in securing billions of dollars in financial aid and scholarships over the last six decades, representing \$20 million in 2024 alone.

ABOUT ADA S. MCKINLEY

Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc. is one of Chicago's largest, most respected and impactful human services organizations. Serving more than 10,000 people annually at over 70 program sites in the Chicago, Wisconsin and Indiana, the agency provides wide-ranging programs. Services rendered daily include tutoring, mentoring and college placement, foster care, housing opportunities, mental health services, youth and family counseling, employment training and placement, and head start programs. The organization's mission is to empower, educate and employ people to change lives and strengthen communities.



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