

Grace Anne Ludvik MinneAnalytics Scholarship Essay

I am a good candidate for this scholarship because I am a hardworking student, motivated individual, data-driven scholar, and am extremely passionate about achieving my career goals as a way to use my education to promote social justice. This has led me to pursue becoming a Physician's Assistant (PA) as a way to help people live the best lives that they can, using both my compassionate personality and scientific mind to integrate data analytics into quality healthcare. As I have rigorously worked toward achieving my career goals, I am currently pursuing a degree in Public Health, grounded in the health sciences and have a 4.0 GPA. In addition to my coursework, I also balance three jobs, frequently attend personal development and educational conferences, and partake in leadership within my faith. Receiving this scholarship will vastly impact my ability to graduate as an empowered student, free from the weight of debt and able to begin PA school without a financial barrier.

Public health relies on data science and analytics heavily. Within public health, interventions are created based on data collected and analyzed regarding occurrence of a health outcome to identify and reduce risk factors for a population. As an individual who strives to be the best that I can in all that I do, prioritizing my understanding in data science and analytics has been and will continue to be of utmost importance for me as I continue my education. This dedication to data analytics is demonstrated by my commitment to participating in Summer Scholars. Starting in June, I will be doing a systematic review of research on homelessness with Dr. Meghan Mason and a team of researchers nation-wide. A large component of this will be analyzing several thousand articles and synthesizing the data to create a tangible and accessible report to be used in healthcare settings. In order for this to be successful, a heavy reliance on analytical data and analysis will be crucial.

As a PA, I will have access to a multitude of data about each patient I see. Having the background and knowledge in how to properly discern and apply the data combined with medical knowledge and the authority of being a PA will be crucial to making patient care decisions that will lay the foundation for exceptional healthcare. Additionally, being able to work with and apply data analytics will strengthen my collaboration abilities and assist in the creation of a strong healthcare team; thus, helping not just the patient, but the entire clinic to function at its peak performance ability.

I began attending St. Catherine University this fall as a transfer student and have since become heavily involved in a variety of areas on campus. I intentionally sought a job within the Center for Spirituality and Social Justice as a way to assess and provide for the justice and spirituality based needs of the community. After gathering data through conversation with students, I utilized this information and am currently a part of the creation and planning of programming events about women's health and education along with a listening circle to discuss controversial social justice issues. I also identified a need for the formation of a Bible study, which I am leading, to serve the women desiring to grow in faith on campus.

Additionally, my commitment to community engagement is demonstrated through my work as a Peer Health Educator on campus. Through this job, I collaborate with a team of students to analyze the health needs of our campus through conversations and national data. From this, we then plan educational programming events to meet the needs and interests demonstrated. These events include tabling on eating disorders, education on the health risks of vaping, a healthy breakfast event during finals week, a sexual health education forum, the *Do you Like to Party?* alcohol awareness event, the *Me Too* sexual abuse/harassment event, and the *Tea Time Talk* programming on sustainable living and health.

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In addition, I also work in the Alumni Relations office where part of my job is collecting data on alumni interests. I also attend many activities on campus, from cultural nights to educational discussions. In addition, I have attended the YWCA's Women's Leadership Conference, in Mankato, Minnesota for two years, along with additional workshops on leadership and collaboration offered at my previous University. I also provide emotional support at Carondelet village by frequently visiting the facility and having conversations with the residents.

As a student who is hoping to attend graduate school after my time at St. Kate's I am working to graduate debt-free as a form of empowerment for future education decisions. This is something I am very passionate about pursuing for not just my future education goals, but also to lead by example as an alternative way of attending and paying for college. I believe a college education is a very valuable investment that goes far beyond just a degree. Learning and being within a college environment provides a priceless opportunity to meet people, explore new experiences, and grow to be the best version of oneself. Graduating and being bound to debt has the adverse effect that an investment in education is intended to have. Seeing this as a problem to be overcome rather than an obstacle to be deterred by, I advocate for hardwork and sacrifice in order for freedom and the true empowerment of a debt-free (or minimal debt obligation) pursuit of education.