

Volleyball has had a very important role in my life. I started playing volleyball by doing camps through community education programs at my school. The camps were taught by the varsity volleyball coaches and were available for first-seventh grade, so I did my first camp in first grade. When I was younger I played every sport you could think of including soccer, football, basketball, softball, karate, track and field, and gymnastics. My favorite at the time was gymnastics which I started when I was 4 years-old and continued until I was in fourth grade when I decided to quit because I kept getting hurt. When I decided to quit gymnastics it really when I started playing volleyball. I did more camps in fifth grade and even played on our school's community ed team. I started playing club my sixth grade year for JVB Rush a small club founded for Annandale Volleyball Players. My mom was my coach my first 2 years of club and then she finally decided to coach my younger sister instead of me my eighth grade year. That year for club I got moved up to play on the 16s teams instead of the 15s team with the rest of my grade. After that I started to really take volleyball seriously. That summer I signed up for every camp imaginable and went to any practice I was invited to. I would even practice at home by myself when the roof of our house or the side wall, which my dad did not like very much because of the damage it did to the house. During that summer my back started to hurt really bad and would prevent me from doing anything active, so I started going to physical therapy. I went for 6 months and then stopped going and did the exercises by myself because it wasn't helping. By that time fall had come around and it was time for school ball. I ended up making the C-Squad team and we finished the season only losing to other teams. After school ball ended, we realized that I needed to go to a different club to help myself improve more and get better competition, so I tried out for Kandi Elite Volleyball Club in Willmar, Minnesota. I ended up making their 14-1s team and had a very successful season finishing 9th in a 15s division at AAU Nationals. I came back for my sophomore year of high school and made varsity as the first sub outside. We made it to state and finished 5th in class AA.

That year I went back to Kandi for my 15s year, but unexpectedly got placed on the 16-1s team instead. Around that time my back started to really hurt again and I was told that I had a herniated disc in my lower left side of my back, that was hitting my spinal cord causing my left leg to go numb. I was told that I either needed to get fusion surgery every 10 years or go to physical therapy for the rest of my life. The doctors and specialists also told me that I should quit any physical activity including volleyball. I took around 3 weeks off of volleyball before it became unbearable to not do anything active, and I decided to go back. We had a rough season and that year at Kandi, and I started seriously debating quitting volleyball. My team was not bonded the way we had the year before and we weren't performing at the level we were supposed to be. I came back from Kandi for my Junior year of high school where I was placed as our starting right side and ended the season second in kills, digs, and aces for my team. We ended up going to state again and we finished 6th that year where I led my team in kills and aces at the state tournament. I went back to Kandi for another year of club and made the 17-1s team. Our team finished 17th at nationals and we bonded really well. After that year I found my love for the sport again, and committed to University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to further my academic and athletic career. I went back for my senior year and was the starting outside for my team. However, we got moved up a section and were playing teams with student bodies twice the size of ours. We

made it to the section final and ended up losing 13-15 in the fifth set of the game. It was a heartbreaking loss and not the way I expected to end my senior season. I went back to Kandi for my 18-1s year and just finished my season last year. Overall, volleyball has had a very big impact on my life as it taught me never to take things for granted because you never know when it might come to an unexpected end. It also taught me to keep trying even if everyone tells you that you shouldn't. I am very grateful for all the people and memories I have gained from the sport of volleyball, and I am very excited to keep making more!

At La Crosse I plan to major in Radiologic Technology Science and Services or Radiation Therapy with a minor in Business Management. With this education I hope to work in either a hospital or a clinic as a Diagnosis Medical Sonographer, MRI Technician, or a Radiation Therapist. I hope to be doing those things until I can work my way up to a management position which is where my minor would come in handy.

I deserve this scholarship because during the summer of 2025, my dad told me that I was not getting any assistance with the financial aspect of college and that I would have to pay for it myself, whether that was with money that I had saved, scholarships, or loans. However, finding out that I was not getting any financial assistance this late into my education journey was hard. By that point, I had already committed to the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to play volleyball with a major in Radiation Therapy, and was not going to switch to a cheaper institution. Along with being a student athlete, I have been employed at the Annandale Care Center since March 2025 to save for college. I have come to realize that the best way for me to pay some of my college expenses without taking out a ton of loans would be to apply for scholarships to help fund my tuition. I believe that I should receive this scholarship because I have demonstrated responsibility, determination, and a strong work ethic by balancing academics, athletics, and a job while actively working to fund my own education. I am attending a 4-year university and the additional money from this scholarship would help reduce the stress and burden of having to pay for tuition.