

# Katie Marie Nelson Memorial Scholarship Fund

## Purpose:

To provide \$1,000 non-renewable scholarship to a Mars Area High School student seeking post-secondary education in a STEM-related field that embodies Katie's spirit of philanthropy, scholarship, compassion for others, and zest for life. Prior award winners are eligible to re-apply. Funds should be used to defray the cost of post-secondary-related expenses.

## Criteria:

To apply for the Katie Marie Nelson Memorial Scholarship Fund, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Must hold a 3.5 GPA or above
- Must be a current Senior at Mars Area Highschool
- Must be pursuing a B.S. degree at a four-year accredited college in a STEM-related major. Preference will be given to applicants seeking medical-related degrees.
- Submit a letter of acceptance to a four-year accredited college
- Submit a letter of recommendation from a teacher, mentor, employer, or other non-familial affiliate
- Submit a cover page, with a name, address & contact information
- Submit a short essay

## Essay Criteria:

In 750 words or less, please describe how you will “DO as KatieDID” by describing how the following concepts impact your future plans. **Please incorporate at least 5:**

- Philanthropy
- Faith
- Family & Friends
- Academics
- Medical/Dental-related fields
- Adventure

- Athletics
- Fun

### **Submission Instructions:**

- Read *Who Was Katie Nelson?*
- Please submit your essay, cover page, proof of acceptance, and letter of recommendation to the Mars Area High School Guidance Office.
- Exclude your name from all essay submissions (thus cover page). We'd like to review your essay without knowing any identifying information.
- All submission will be reviewed by the board of the KatieDid Foundation and/or John & Dee Nelson.
- Your application must be submitted by March 31<sup>st</sup>
- Scholarship will be formally awarded at the Mars Area High School Academic Excellence & Awards Banquet
- All questions about the application should be direct to the Guidance Office

### **Who Was Katie Nelson?**

Katie Marie Nelson met god at the age of 23 after a brave battle with Acute Myeloid Leukemia ("AML") on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Katie was a truly magnetic person that radiated light, compassion for others, unshakeable faith, and a love of life.

Whether she was bungee jumping in New Zealand, Skiing moguls in Utah, or eating the spiciest Thai she could handle, she was a person that loved life and lived it fully, no matter the circumstances. All her fun and adventure never impeded her drive. Her natural intelligence & affinity for science afforded her acceptance into a highly competitive accelerated hybrid undergrad/dental school program at Westminster & Case Western University. Katie quickly excelled in the program, maintaining a 3.5 GPA and becoming a TA for a Head NClass at Case Western. Despite her incredibly demanding school schedule, Katie made time for many extracurricular activities during her time at Westminster & Case Western.

Katie's care for people inside and outside of her close circle of friends drew many people to her. An incredible friend & family member, someone in Katie's life could expect a kind ear when times were tough, homemade cupcakes, and thoughtful birthday gifts accompanied with her winning smile. Even at a young age, her philanthropic efforts made an impact. She participated in many charitable events during her time in high school, Kappa Sig, and at Case Western. However, her time spent in Haiti on a dental mission trip left the largest impact on her and led to Katie's aspirations to lead her own dental mission trips after she graduated Dental School.

Although she was one of the most fun-loving, driven, and compassionate people we knew, Katie's poise and courage through her cancer journey was incredible to everyone that witnessed it. Katie possessed an unshakable faith, even in the wake of unimaginable darkness. Her AML diagnosis was met with her affirmations of "Gods" and "I'm just going the ride". Katie was often the person that comforted friends

and family during the early days of diagnosis. Despite undergoing aggressive chemo and being stuck in the hospital, she continued her dental school coursework, spent time with friends, and even enjoyed her favorite spicy Indian & Thai foods. Her confidence and plans for the future continued during her darkest days of treatment. At points, it seemed her cancer diagnosis only complicated her philanthropic vision. How could she balance leading dental mission trips *and* help those affected by cancer? Would she combine them?

Although the loss of such a special person has been incredibly challenging for her loved ones, we are encouraged by applicants like you that help us “**DO as KatieDID**”

