

“Explain Your Financial Need in 500 or More Words”

My name is Brandon Noviello. I am currently a sophomore, and I am on track to earn my Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in two years. I'm in need of financial aid because I do not have a family to contribute to my education. I was in foster care for two years before I aged out of the system, and now I am pursuing a degree completely on my own.

I was raised by a wonderful woman who didn't always have a wonderful life. My mother got pregnant after a sexual assault, but she was determined to raise a smart, successful man. She went through an accelerated program to graduate high school before I was born. She devoted the rest of her life to supporting me, both financially and emotionally.

My mother had no contact with her family. They cut ties with her the moment she became pregnant. Life wasn't easy for us, but I never wanted for anything. She always found a way to keep me fed, dressed, and in school. Unfortunately, she lost a long-term battle with depression when I was 16, and I was put into the foster system until I reached adulthood.

I did not have a positive experience with foster care, but I admit, I had no desire to. My mother's passing weighed heavily on my mind, and I felt an overwhelming sense of anger, regret, and frustration. There was one gleam of hope in my experience though. I had a great social worker. I fought her decisions every step of the way, and she still managed to find a family that would help me get through high school. My social worker attended my graduation ceremony. She was the only person I invited.

She helped me realize how much one person's efforts can make a difference in the lives of others. I was only one of the countless children she had helped over the years. I researched how to become a social worker so I could help other children like me. My plan is to work with the Department of Human Services in the foster care and adoption division after I graduate.

In order to make my dreams a reality, I need financial aid. I am working as a server to pay for food, utilities, and basic necessities, but I do not earn enough to pay for college as well. Serving gives me the flexibility to go to school during the day and work at night. Furthermore, I have a maximum Pell Grant to cover most of my tuition, but I still need help with other expenses.

I did not do well in high school as a result of my mom's passing, but I have done well in college. I have a 3.25 cumulative GPA, and I have never made less than an A in a degree-related course. As such, I am committed to being successful despite my circumstances, and I want to help young people find that motivation within themselves. I look forward to working with children and teens in the foster system, so I can be the hope that someone else was for me.