

Points Support Gives Budding Engineer

A Boost!

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Bellevue LifeSpring's Grads-On-Track program awards scholarships to high school students who are in need of recovering class credits so that they stay on track to graduate on time.

Grads-On-Track serves Bellevue students who are enrolled in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program or who have demonstrated financial hardship, as summer school and online credit recovery courses come at a hefty cost. Even at the sliding scale rate for students living in poverty, just one summer school class in the Bellevue School District costs \$140. This cost alone is prohibitive for many families. Bellevue LifeSpring covers these costs so students can focus less on the financial stress and more on the important task of passing and recovering their credits needed for graduation.

Taylor's Grads-On-Track Story

Taylor, who is similar to most Grads-On-Track scholarship recipients, is a student at Bellevue High School. Born and raised here in Bellevue, she lives with her baby sister and her parents in a one-bedroom apartment.

Taylor's parents both work in the service industry at local restaurants in downtown Bellevue. Since the time Taylor was born, they have been living the struggle of surviving paycheck to paycheck. Taylor, a smart, bright and compassionate teenager, is determined to be the first person in her family to go to college and pursue her dreams.

Taylor grew up in awe of the booming tech frontier that has come to her hometown. She often finds herself dreaming of coding and becoming an engineer for a company here in Bellevue. She dreams of growing her own roots in Bellevue and, one day, buying her parents a house.

Taylor has faced struggles that most of her peers have not. With both parents working long shifts, seven days a week, she has had to grow up fast. She often takes on the extra responsibility of caring for her sister and is in charge of preparing her own meals and getting herself to and from school.

As soon as Taylor turned 15, she got a job to help contribute to the growing family expenses that came with her new baby sister. Working, completing her course work, and navigating the waters of being a teenager was a lot for Taylor to manage. She found herself slipping behind on key courses she needed to graduate. Even worse, these were STEM courses, which are important to excel in when striving to become an engineer. When Taylor failed two classes during her junior year, she was devastated.

After learning about the high cost of making up the credits, Taylor considered turning her back on her dreams and just giving up. There was no extra money for situations like this. But then Taylor's school counselor told her about Bellevue LifeSpring and that she could get a scholarship to cover the cost of summer school. Internally optimistic, Taylor's hope was restored and she filled out a scholarship application the next morning.

Not only did Bellevue LifeSpring provide her with a Grads-On-Track scholarship, but her family was also able to stock up on some much-needed items from our pantry. In the life of a teenager with very little home support, a little community support can go far. Taylor not only passed her summer school courses but also got all A's! This small success motivated her to continue on her quest for greatness.

Thanks to the investment of Points community members, Taylor is on track to graduate and is applying to the University of Washington. Bellevue has a new budding engineer who is sure to make waves in the tech industry!

Grads-On-Track Puts Graduation in Reach for All Bellevue Students

The Bellevue School District has reported that up to 78 percent of students in need of credit recovery are living in poverty. Unfortunately,

that means that the students most in need of recovering credits are also least likely to be able to afford to do it. With the support of Points community members, Grads-On-Track scholarships help even this playing field and support students pursuing a college education.

Failing a class is an early indicator of a student dropping out of school. Students living in poverty are at increased risk of class failure due to many factors beyond their control including experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, insufficient resources, or trauma.

Bellevue LifeSpring is currently the only organization offering credit recovery scholarships to Bellevue students. A second chance at passing a course and graduating on time can be potentially life-changing for students experiencing poverty. Graduating on time sets a student up for continued successes after high school and throughout the course of their lives.

Grads-On-Track positively benefits all citizens in Bellevue by contributing to an educated population, a stronger workforce, and a brighter future for students. When all members of a community are able to thrive, we all benefit.

How Can the Points Community Continue to Support Grads-On-Track?

Thanks to your support, Bellevue LifeSpring provided 183 students with 304 credit recovery scholarships last year. Your investment can help students in need, just like Taylor, graduate high school on time and pursue their dreams.

The Points community's continued partnership is vital if we are to continue meeting the full need for credit recovery scholarships in our community. Visit www.bellevuelifespring.org and make a donation today!