

# Meet Chandler Brestel, One of This Year's Recipients of The Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship Fund



This spring, The ALS Association awarded \$470,000 in scholarships to 94 students across 35 states for the 2020-2021 school year through [The Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship Fund](#). Established in 2019, the fund was created to support post-high school education for students whose lives have been financially impacted by ALS. Scholarship recipients receive \$5,000 per year to help cover the cost of education.

While the ongoing pandemic continues to put schools across the country at a disadvantage as they are trying to figure out distance learning and quarantines, we continue to do what we can to make sure the students in our ALS community are able to overcome the devastating financial impact of ALS.

The Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship Fund was established by Mark Calmes, vice chair of The ALS Association's National Board of Trustees. The scholarship fund is named in honor of his late wife, Jane, who lived with ALS for eight years until her passing in August 2017. "After she died, I began to think of ways to honor her courageous spirit and compassion," said Mark.

“The idea of a scholarship program resonated with me because Jane was always keen on the lifelong benefits provided by education.”

We recently talked with Chandler Brestel, one of this year’s award recipients, to learn a little more about her connection to ALS, what receiving the scholarship means to her, and what her future plans are in healthcare.



**The Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship Fund was established to help people who have been impacted by ALS pursue their education. What’s your connection to ALS?**

My mother was diagnosed in May 2016 and passed away in May 2019. I was my mom's primary caregiver, so I know the struggle of the day to day while trying to have a "normal" life. I am very blessed to have been able to care for my mother and the relationship that we had.

**60 percent of people don’t know what ALS is. What do you wish people knew about the disease?**

I wish they knew that the disease is 100% fatal with no cure and the impact it has on families. It takes away your ability to talk, walk and breathe. It is so hard to watch your loved one go through this and there is nothing that anyone can do to help make them better.

**How will the Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship Fund impact your future?**

With the help from the Jane Calmes ALS Scholarship I will be able to finish my bachelor's degree debt free and for that I am forever grateful.

**What are you planning to study and why?**

I am currently studying to get my bachelor's in healthcare management, and I plan to further my education by getting my master's in business with an emphasis in healthcare. I have always loved working in the healthcare industry. When I was taking care of my mother, I saw the need for strong willed administrators to make sure families are getting what they need in a timely manner and with all the resources they can get. My dream job is to be a CEO of a hospital.

**What do you like to do when you aren't in school?**

I love to spend time with my family, my husband and our two dogs, Hei Hei and Pua. I enjoy spending time volunteering for the MDA and the Oklahoma ALS association. I attend monthly support groups to help families that are newly diagnosed and families that I have known that are still going through their ALS journey. I am also on the committee for the Tulsa Walk to Defeat ALS.