

Grateful, Esther H. Strickland Grant recipient, Marie Dean, shares her experience of student teaching . . .

I am beyond grateful to have been a recipient of this award from such a noble organization. The scholarship given to me lessened the financial burden that was given to me as a second-year graduate student earning my degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders with a concentration in Speech and Language Pathology from Bowling Green State University.

This semester, I am student teaching with Sylvania City Schools. I spend four and a half days a week at Northview High School, and a half day at LEAP which is a school for students with emotional disturbances. I greatly enjoy going to my student teaching placement every day to help students improve their ability to communicate with others, understand/use oral and written expression, succeed in school, as well as improve their social skills to gain friends and get a job.

I have gained incredible experience collaborating with my SLP mentor, teachers, the Occupational Therapist, guidance counselors, parents, and the students themselves. The relationships that I have built with the students at school have been incredibly inspiring, eye-opening, and serve as a reminder as to why I am excited to begin working as an SLP following graduation. For example, I have been targeting friendships in a social skills group that I teach. One student was so excited to tell me that one of her friends from taekwondo had a conversation with her in the hallway, and that it was clear that their friendship was developing. One student, after teaching him how to use his iPad to communicate, communicated to a peer saying, "I am bored, how are you?" A sophomore student who stutters, indicated that he is thinking about disclosing his stutter in a job interview instead of continuing to live in fear. One student at LEAP who was unable to understand people's emotions could identify in a book when the characters were 'happy' or 'sad.' After working with students week after week, some students have learned to advocate for themselves and come to speech therapy during their lunch or study hall because they know they will get help practicing a speech, editing a paper, or offer advice about friend problems.

The money that was given to me from the Esther H. Strickland Student Teacher Grant has truly lessened my financial burden, so that I am able to give myself entirely and be present to the students I work with. I am able to use the expertise I gained at BGSU combined with the grant that I was awarded to provide speech and language services to help children improve their skills, advocate for their needs, give them a voice, answer their questions, and succeed in school. In the end, Alpha Delta State Ohio Educational Foundation has generously given me financial assistance, and I am able to generously give back to students in Sylvania to improve their speech and language with the hopes of improving their quality of life and academic success.

Marie

"With GRATITUDE:

Thank you, Marie Dean for your excellence in working with students. You are changing their lives! We are proud to know you and have you in the classroom as an educator. We wish you continued success!

OSO members - YOU are the ones giving support to this blossoming teacher! Your generous hearts BUILD the funds, so Foundation awards are possible. ADSOEF is continuing to fund educational excellence."

Our HOPE in Troubled Times

In case you were wondering, Marie began her student teaching this January and continued until the lock down for all Ohio schools on March 16. The preceding letter was written before that date. She was stopped and felt badly that there was no closure to her teaching. In a recent email she explained, "During this time, I am in correspondence with my supervisor and have found some materials for lessons." Like all our sisters and brothers in education, she and those around her have had to find alternative paths to accomplish their goals – and they are doing it! Marie will be getting her degree and is fully prepared to teach our students of the future!