

AMH Scholarship Winner Taryn Wallace Has An Inspirational Mother

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ALTON - Alton Memorial Hospital's first two Health Equity Scholarships will consider those honors a very special Mother's Day gift this year. One of those honored with the scholarship is Taryn Wallace, an Alton High School senior. Samara Helton, a senior at Edwardsville High School, is also being honored. There is a separate feature on Samara on Riverbender.com.

Wallace was raised by a single mother who has been a steady influence in her life. Taryn's mother is Amanda Wallace, a nurse in Alton Memorial Hospital's Intermediate Care Unit.

"My mom has been raising me on her own, with some help from family on occasion, since I was born," Taryn said. "She went back to school and got her nursing degree when I was 8 years old to not only better our lives but also to help people. My mom is the epitome of a hard-working and amazing individual. I will forever look up to her and her strong qualities.

"Growing up, I've always had great role models in the medical field (Taryn's cousin is Megan Flowers, manager of the AMH Inpatient Pharmacy, and she also has an aunt in the medical field). Combining that with my love for chemistry, I've become determined to be a pharmacist."

Taryn, who will graduate from AHS later this month, is enrolled at Lewis and Clark Community College to complete her pre-pharmacy courses and then will transfer to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Pharmacy to pursue her Pharm D degree.

Alton Memorial's first two Health Equity Scholarship winners have succeeded during unprecedented times, completing the last two-plus years of high school during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

"My high school years have definitely not been a cake walk," Taryn said. "I was moved to online school starting the second semester of my sophomore year, and I remained that way all of my junior year. Remote learning was one of the worst experiences. Teachers hated it, students hated it, and it was overall mentally taxing. I'm glad my senior year has been as close to normal as it can get. It's still been very difficult for me to keep my grades up along with my spirits during the pandemic, but I've done it. I'm glad that I pushed through and am graduating with honors, and many other personal achievements. I'm also very grateful for the scholarship I have received and am so excited to see what the future holds for me."

Madison County high school seniors or recent high school graduates who are part of historically marginalized populations could apply to Alton Memorial for scholarships of up to \$5,000 this spring. The scholarships could be renewable for up to three years beyond the initial term (up to four years total) and could include employment while in school.

“As we continue our journey to improve health equality, it’s an honor to offer these scholarships to some of the brightest local youth to ensure they are able to pursue health care careers without a large financial burden,” said Brad Goacher, chief operating officer for Alton Memorial Hospital. “The funding for these scholarships is being made available from generous donations to the hospital from members of our community intended to support training and education.”

Recipients will be asked to consider employment at Alton Memorial Hospital during and upon completion of their degree or certification. Annual renewal will be based on documentation of progress toward completion of the program and a minimum 2.5-grade point average.

