

Scholarship aids students of all types and ages

By Sandy Illian Bosch

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Just one semester of classes loomed between Felicia Moore and the job she dreamed of. One semester and the money to pay for it.

"I wasn't sure I was going to be able to go back to finish my degree," said Moore, who was completing a degree in graphic design at College of DuPage when she heard about a scholarship available from the Assistance League Chicagoland West.

That \$1,000, Moore said, made all the difference.

"It was a life changer for me," said Moore, who is now working in her field of choice, thanks to the Assistance League Chicagoland West Scholars Support Program.

Each semester ALCW, a philanthropic group based in Hinsdale, awards \$1,000 scholarships to two College of DuPage students. Unlike many scholarships, the Assistance League awards are available to students of

all ages — from traditional high school graduates to adults pursuing a long-desired degree.

The program began several years ago as an extension of the Assistance League's primary goals — transforming lives and strengthening community. By supporting people in their pursuit of education, the Assistance League is providing the community with a more skilled workforce.

"College of DuPage is the community's college," said Sharon Miller Malek, scholarship committee chair.

As a longtime professor and dean at the school, Malek can speak to the quality of the college's many degree and certificate programs.

To qualify for the award, applicants must have completed at least 12 credit hours toward a degree or certificate at the Glen Ellyn community college. They also must be enrolled in at least six hours for the upcoming semester

and carry a grade point average of 2.75 or higher.

Financial need is a big consideration when choosing the scholarship winners, Malek said.

"We do consider extenuating circumstances," she said, such as family obligations, personal situations and, in Moore's case, previous student loans.

While completing a degree in fashion marketing, Moore discovered a love for graphic design. She soon realized she would need a second degree to pursue her goals.

"COD was an easy choice," she said. The college not only was close to her home, it also was home to one of the country's top graphic design programs.

Moore's advice to scholarship applicants is to be open and honest.

"You have to be willing to put yourself out there, to share your story," she said.

Applicants for the next pair of awards have until March 23 to apply. Go to the assis-

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Making a Difference is a partnership between The Hinsdalean and Assistance League Chicagoland West, whose mission is to deliver education and outreach programs that address needs and help transform lives in local communities.



tance league website at alcw.org, to find the scholarship application. The deadline for the spring 2019 semester is Nov. 1.

"Most of the time, the students don't think it's for them," Malek said. But this award is for anyone, no matter their age or area of study.

College of DuPage is the largest public community college in the state of Illinois, with options for nine associate degrees and more than 170 career and technical certificates in over 50 areas of study.

Some applicants are picking up where they left off years ago. Others are starting

A \$1,000 scholarship from Assistance League Chicagoland West helped Felicia Moore finish a second degree at the College of DuPage and pursue a career in graphic design. (photo provided)

something completely new. And all are working toward a goal that Assistance League Chicagoland West wants to help them reach.