

Alexa at Pensacola State College Health Professions Opportunity Grant

A huge thank you to the entire staff of the HPOG team! I was privileged to be selected and qualify for this grant my last semester as an ultrasound student. HPOG allowed me to not have to work as many late night shifts at my job while in school and attending clinics five days a week. It enabled me to focus more on school and on my profession and less on whether or not I needed to pick up a shift at work. As a mother of one, full-time student, and full-time employee, I found the stresses of everyday life took a toll and hindered me from always performing to my full potential. However, with the opportunities made available by HPOG, everyday stresses were dramatically lessened.

The major assistance I received was for childcare coverage. My son's school welcomed the grant to its facility, thus enabling me to receive almost complete coverage for monthly daycare. This in turn allowed me to take off from work and to be home with my son after a long week in school. In addition, the gas cards enabled me to drive the hour and a half to my clinical sites as well as school. I am incredibly thankful to have been selected for this grant. I actively speak to coworkers and students, explaining how much help I received to achieve my goals. I can say without a doubt that HPOG helped me to get where I am today.

In my field of sonography, I am required to pass multiple registries in order to work. HPOG covered every expense needed in order for me to become registered. If I did not have the funds to pay for testing, I would not have been accepted as an applicant for my current job. An HPOG workshop helped me to put together a well-written résumé. My registries and résumé together enabled me to be chosen as a candidate for hire. I am now a full-time employee at a local hospital. I work 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and I am required to take call. I was allotted \$1,500 in relocation pay to help with my moving expenses, and I am now receiving all the benefits of a full-time employee. Within my 120 days post-graduation, HPOG facilitated funds that allowed me to take and pass a third registry, and because of that I was awarded a \$1.50 per hour raise.

I cannot say enough about the grant and how it helped to pave the way for my future. The staff was always welcoming and made sure that I had every single tool necessary to succeed. A huge thank you to Ami and Tracie, who were by my side checking on me, and a huge thank you to the entire HPOG staff! They really have helped to change the lives of many students. I can only hope that this grant will continue to improve the lives of other students and to improve the fantastic college from which I am proud to say I earned my degree.