

Goal to Help Children Aided by SSA Foundation Scholarship Award

By John Dunlap – Editor, SSA Globe

MacKenzie Roberts is a winner with a heart of gold. She's played competitive volleyball in high school and in intramural competition at the University of Florida and now coaches for a local Gainesville, Florida, club team. She also has an interest in physical therapy, especially as it applies to children. With that in mind she is pursuing a doctor of physical therapy at the University of Florida.

But she also became a winner this past summer when she was chosen as one of the SSA Foundation Scholarship recipients, and the \$2,500 she was awarded will go a long way toward helping her out with her first year of graduate studies.

"This money is going to be extremely helpful with school," she says. "Currently the cost of tuition is over \$21,000 a year and my books are going to total around \$1,200 for the first year. I plan on using my scholarship to pay for all of my books for the first year and use the remainder to assist with room and board costs."

You could hardly find a more deserving person than Roberts. While she clearly loves athletics, her heart goes out to the children who don't have that ability and can use some help.

"My interest in physical therapy began in high school, where I volunteered at a pediatric outpatient clinic for a class." She adds, "I was so inspired by the influence that the therapist had on the lives of her patients and I quickly realized that I wanted to be able to provide this same thing for children in the future.

"From there, I began volunteering at a research study on UF's campus, the Kids STEP Study, that investigates walking recovery for children with incomplete spinal cord injuries. It was fascinating for me to watch a child who was unable to walk prior to the study gain the ability to take independent steps with a walker. I spent three years volunteering and working for the study. During my time there, I began the application process to multiple doctor

of physical therapy (DPT) programs. In January 2011, I received the email of my dreams. All of my hard work had paid off and I had been accepted as one of 55 students into the DPT program at UF, my top choice school.

"Once I am done with school, I hope to become a board certified pediatric physical therapist. My goal is to do physical therapy with children in either an inpatient or outpatient facility. I would also love to continue working with the Kids STEP Study, or another research study after graduation."

The Self Storage Influence

Roberts's appreciation for self storage also has risen quite a few notches over the years. Among those she most appreciates are the folks at Metro Self Storage in Lakeland, Florida, who literally came to her family's aid in a time of need.

"They [Metro Self Storage] not only gave my dad a job after my parents business was closed and after we lost our house, but they also gave us a home," Roberts says. "I am eternally grateful to them for that. Also, we have had such a wonderful response from the entire Metro family sending well wishes to me and my family after they heard the news that I won the

scholarship. I just feel so lucky that my dad is surrounded by such wonderful people and that he works in such a positive workplace which understands the importance of teamwork and family."

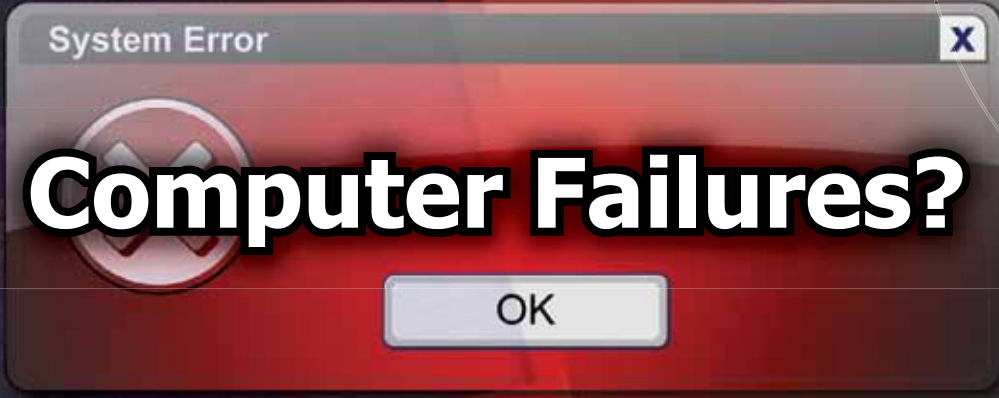
And how did Roberts find out about the SSA Foundation Scholarship? Through *SSA Globe*, of course, thanks to the fact that her dad is a regular reader.

"My dad discovered the scholarship information as he read through the *SAA Globe* magazine that is delivered to him monthly at Metro Self Storage. It took me two weeks to



MacKenzie Roberts and her father enjoy a University of Florida football game.

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get the recommendation letters and during that time I completed the rest of the application. I found out I was selected as a scholarship recipient in the middle of my street at midnight! I had just returned to Gainesville from a trip to Lakeland to visit my parents and I checked the mail. When I saw the return address was from the SSA Foundation, I opened it immediately and ran into the house, ecstatic with the news!"

Before the scholarship, her appreciation of the self storage industry was ahead in place, thanks to her dad's work.

"Prior to my Dad having this job, I really wasn't very familiar with self storage, but now I can appreciate the important role it plays within the community," she said. "I never really thought about the use of self storage outside of needing it on a temporary basis when moving. I have gained a great appreciation for the other services it provides for businesses, churches, and non-profit organizations, just as examples."

When Roberts isn't dealing with schoolwork or volleyball, she's ready to cheer on her Florida Gators. She also enjoys spending as much time with her family as she possibly can, watching Walt Disney movies ("I'm a huge kid at heart!"), playing with her dog Chester, listening to country music, doing crossword puzzles and spending time outdoors."

But for right now, she's still thankful that she was able to get some extra financial help from the SSA Foundation Scholarship and looks forward to someday making a difference in the life of kids much in the same way self storage has made a difference to her family.

"Being an SSA Foundation Scholarship winner means the world to me," Roberts says. "It is going to be so very helpful with school and it will alleviate some of the financial stress. I had always been very thankful for self storage as it has given my family the opportunity to have a home and my dad a job, and now I am even more appreciative after receiving this scholarship."

"Thank you SSA and Metro Self Storage!" ❖



Help Us Help Them!

To make a tax deductible donation to the SSA Foundation Scholarship Fund, please mail a check to:
SSA Foundation Scholarship Fund, 1901 N. Beauregard Street, Ste 450, Alexandria, VA 22311.
For more information about the program, visit www.selfstorage.org.

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