

Acacia N Gaz

Grade:10

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My passion is to become a licensed cosmetologist supporting myself from a business I want to make myself. This plan includes a 17-month course at Davis Tech, and an 18-24-month course for a business degree. I have been practicing cosmetology for the last 4 years independently, and I am very motivated and interested in the science behind the subject, but more importantly it works with my personality type and if I can manage to start my own salon, I would be able to support not only myself, but my dad who has no financial stability. I think that helping people feel better about themselves and giving them a safe space to be open about their insecurities. I want to better my skills as well because I enjoy doing my own hair, nails, and makeup. I want to help society break down some barriers and uncertainties with beauty standards and help regulate the feedback and criticism given by society. I strive to make sure everyone regardless of race, sexuality, gender, disability, and body type, can get what they want done without judgment, and with confidence.

Self-image is one of this generation's biggest insecurities, leading cause of eating disorders, and one of many reasons for bullying. If we can teach people that only their opinion of themselves matters, we can give some of our confidence back, and let them realize that they deserve to be treated human. We depend heavily on other people for validation, but if we could break down that manifestation of what other people think, then we can change the way we look at the world. My cause may not be detrimental to saving the planet, but with help I can save people, and help them feel better about their place in life. The whole economy is dependent on trade and opening a salon could help people realize that they want to pursue that in their lifetime. It also opens more spots for employment considering the numbers of unemployed in just our state alone. We are giving more opportunities to people who may need them.

Personally, I have had many hardships with my self-image and many of my friends as well. As someone apart of this generation, I understand the perspective, and I witness and experience first-hand the insecurities that social media and even public society have pushed onto our youth. I want to push back on the societal expectations and reclaim our confidence and personal safety for the future of our children. One of the biggest challenges I believe I am going to face on this journey to reclaiming my individuality is lack of support, but also lack of resources. I have set unrealistic goals for my level of funding, and the probability of being successful. Neither of my parents are involved heavily in my life, and they can barely take care of themselves. I live with my grandmother, and she supports me as much as she can, but she will not be there forever. This scholarship is important to me because I really want to break the cycle of addiction and failure in my family that has been consistent for decades. I'm tired of people assuming that just because we come from low class families or pasts, that

we cannot create a future and help change the world. But because of this stereotype of the lower class, it's harder to gain funding like loans and scholarships because we are often looked past for more fortunate candidates.

Thank you for your time and consideration in reading this submission. I am grateful to have this opportunity.