



## **Remarks by Kylie Funkhouser '24**

Thank you, President Fiorentino and good evening everyone.

As President Fiorentino mentioned, my name is Kylie Funkhouser and I am a Junior Cell and Molecular Biology major at West Chester University. I want to start off by expressing what an honor it is to be here tonight at the 40th Annual Presidential Scholarship Community Gala, and to be here as a recipient of the Presidential Scholarship. A little over three years ago, I was a high school student amidst the beginning of the pandemic faced with the decision of where I was going to spend the next four years of my student life. Over the previous few months, I had visited half a dozen campuses and none of them felt right for me, until I visited West Chester. I instantly fell in love with the campus, the atmosphere, the purpose, and the surrounding cities and towns. But unfortunately, my choice in schools was greatly limited by my financial capabilities.

I remember the day I opened my acceptance letter from West Chester University. It was the last school to send me my admissions offer, but it was well worth the wait. Included in this letter was not only my acceptance to the school, but that I would also be a recipient of the Presidential Scholarship. This scholarship, paired with the help of financial aid, made attending WCU very possible for me. For many students like me, financial support such as this scholarship can be the difference between choosing one university over another. I felt as if my hard work was not only recognized by the university, but encouraged, and that is one of the most significant reasons I am here today.

Now, after almost three years of attending WCU, I can gratefully say that the contributions of the university's donors, leaders, and educators have paved the way for excellence in not only my own career path, but in the student population as a whole. I am a part of the Pre-Med Club and Pre-Med program, both of which have provided valuable information and advisors for me in order to achieve my goals and prepare for the future.

I am also happy to say I experienced what the university had to offer in regards to its athletics program, as I was a player on the softball team my freshman year.

In addition to the valuable experiences I had within these organizations, I have also had the privilege of attending classes in the beautiful new Sciences & Engineering Center and The Commons, in which I've witnessed my fellow students utilize the resources provided for us there. I had toured the campus well before it had even resembled a building, and it is astonishing to have watched it evolve into such an enormous technological and educational asset in the heart of campus. I cannot tell you a time that this state-of-the-art building was not filled with students

utilizing the incredible white board space and countless studying areas. Myself and other STEM majors alike are grateful to have had the opportunity to take classes in a setting well equipped to keep up with the advanced technology of our time.

After graduating West Chester University, I plan to attend medical school in order to pursue my dreams of specializing in Emergency Medicine. I fell in love with the hundreds of hours I spent scribing and shadowing physicians in my local Emergency Departments, and I now realize that Emergency Medicine was meant for me. The support of our donors has provided me with the opportunity for a great undergraduate foundation to excel in these future endeavors. I could not be more grateful for the sponsorships that have supported my education and given me access to exceptional resources. The Presidential Scholarship has a significant impact on student lives, encouraging those with a passion for education to continue to strive for greatness. So once again, thank you for all that you have done for me, and for all that you have done for West Chester University.