



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Jess Kean, Communications Director

jkean@childrenscause.org

LAKELAND GRAD NAMED CHILDHOOD CANCER SCHOLAR

WASHINGTON, DC – The Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy (CCCA) is pleased to announce that Melissa Peace, a graduate of Lakeland High School and Colgate University, is a CCCA College Scholar award recipient. Melissa is a young adult cancer survivor and a medical student at George Washington University's School of Medicine, Class of 2021.

As a CCCA College Scholar, Melissa will receive a \$2,000 academic scholarship and will complete an advocacy project that benefits children with cancer. This is the inaugural year of the College Scholars Program and we had a competitive slate of impressive applicants. Melissa was selected as one of two award recipients based on her academic achievements, letters of recommendation and chosen advocacy project.

Melissa was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma during her freshman year at Colgate. When she returned to college after seven months of successful treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering, she shifted gears academically and began to pursue a degree in Molecular Biology. She became a Research Assistant at NCI, where she had the opportunity to study drug-resistant Ewing's Sarcoma and Rhabdomyosarcoma in children and young adults.

"Despite all of the pain I endured, I see the good that came from having cancer because ultimately it led me to my purpose: pediatric oncology," wrote Melissa in her application. "I want to participate in the College Scholars Program so that I can be an advocate for children with cancer and work to better the field of pediatric oncology from a legislative perspective."

At George Washington, she serves as the Vice President of the Latino Medical Student Association and sits on the executive committee of the GW School of Medicine's chapter of the American Medical Association. For her College Scholars Project, Melissa plans to create a pediatric oncology advocacy group at her medical school to empower her fellow students in the DC area to become childhood cancer advocates.

"It is my hope that this collaboration will continue to grow over the years, expanding to other medical schools around the country," wrote Melissa. "The creation of this interest group in alliance with CCCA will create a local population of medical students who are eager to support a shared mission. Bringing our white coats to Capitol Hill will demonstrate that the medical community stands in solidarity with the CCCA mission of advancing childhood cancer research and care."

The Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy (CCCA) is the leading national advocacy organization working to achieve access to less toxic and more effective pediatric cancer therapies; to expand resources for research and specialized care; and to address the unique needs and challenges of childhood cancer survivors and their families. CCCA leads efforts to ensure that these needs and perspectives of children with cancer are integrated into the highest deliberations on health care and cancer policy at the Federal level.