

Dear Derek,

First of all, I really hope this made it to you. I had to grab your address from Tim, and quite honestly, I have no idea if it is the right one or not. Assuming it is, and that this letter has successfully made it to you, I would like to take a moment and thank you for putting together that amazing Bucky scholarship and for everything else you have done with GBO.

This thank you is long overdue, and I must apologize for that, but I wanted to make sure that I took the time to properly thank you for everything you do. Unfortunately, with this last semester being as chaotic as it was, I have not gotten a good chance to do that until now. Truly everything you have done, for both us and for the children's hospital, is phenomenal and it deserves a proper thank you.

First, thank you so much for the scholarship. I never would have expected it during a year like this, but it hit at just the right time and allowed me to finish the semester financially independent of my parents. My family has been incredibly lucky as both of my parents were able to keep their jobs throughout the pandemic, but my mom does own a small vet clinic which has lost a lot local farm clients recently, and I didn't want to be an extra financial burden on top of her having to deal with that. Unfortunately, I had not been able to continue working in my research lab on campus for most of this last semester, and without a steady income I thought I would inevitably have to turn to my parents to borrow money for rent. Thanks to your scholarship though, I finished strong and didn't need to put any extra financial pressure on my family, and I really can't put into words how much that means to me.

Also, thank you for simply putting in the work to make GBO happened this year. Once Covid hit and everything in my life shut down, things sucked for a while. All it seemed like I ever did was sit in the house and study, and for someone as social as me, it was very hard to stay focused and find the motivation to get my class work done. Summer came and summer went, and this whole time I was just sitting in Madison hoping that Jo would be able to put together some events for us, but that never happened. Then I got the news that GBO was still happening, and even though it was arguably the worst performance of my life, getting in suit in front of the webcam and hearing the people recognize Bucky and cheer me on made it worth it. I really felt like I was a part of something bigger than myself again, and I love that feeling. Knowing that we were helping raise funds to support the children's hospital during such difficult times was really the cherry on top of the whole experience.

Lastly, I want to say thank you one last time for everything else you do for the program, including bucky appreciation night (which I am really looking forward to next year). I hope that everything is going well for you and I cannot wait to see you again next year.

Stay safe, and I wish you the best.

Alex Nelson

