

Tony Hanna (2022)

I am currently 17 years old and finished grade 12 with a top six average of 95% attaining the Cardinal Carter Award (achieving above 90% in all years of high school). I have also achieved the “Amare Et Servire” award (to love and to serve) as an outstanding contributor to the faith and service in my school community. I believe this is very important as Jesus Himself taught us to love and to serve others throughout His life stating, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

I will be attending TMU for engineering in the fall. I am applying for this award for financial assistance, as an aid with my goal to make a greater contribution to help individuals with exceptionalities and to make their lives less challenging. The two paths I am considering each lead to the same target and goal. I am going into engineering at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) and may specialize in biomedical or mechanical engineering in order to help create and innovate devices which are easier for people with disabilities to use. The other direction is medical school after engineering and specializing directly in treating patients with exceptionalities. This award will unequivocally help me achieve either goal.

Being part of All Abilities organization has taught me countless lessons and has overall been an incredible experience in my life. When first joining the program, I was paired with a 4-year-old boy who had difficulty speaking. Previously paired volunteers struggled to make him follow warm-ups and could not get him to play soccer. However, when I was paired with him, I was able to get him to score by doing the things he liked. This taught me to not look straight at my problems but rather look for ways around them which may help me in finding a solution. Later in the program I was paired with a mute boy with ankle-foot orthosis (AFO). At first, we struggled to communicate as he used sign language, however I took the initiative to learn ASL at home. This allowed me to communicate better with him and taught me the important skill of sign language.

Additionally, I had the privilege to volunteer and play with Lucas MacIsaac in my first years of volunteering. Despite his own struggles, he inspired me to continue to help others through his compassion and enthusiasm he had for helping the children. His dedication and service help to motivate me to push through the hard times and to remember that there are always people less privileged and it is my job as a human and a follower of Christ to always lend a helping hand.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my application and considering me as a worthy applicant.