

Dear Betty and David Jones:

**As a Jones Scholar, it is with pride that I reveal Fall 2015 as yet another successful semester in terms of academic achievement, as well as an important milestone as I finished my first semester in computer information systems (CIS).**

The decision to pursue a dual-degree in CIS and political science provided me with a unique set of opportunities, along with new challenges to overcome. By every measure, I came out of the semester as a stronger student, and woman. As society continues to realize the advantages of STEM majors with liberal arts training, the educational path I have forged will prove to have great value. It's certainly an exciting time to be a woman in STEM, and I am eager to share my progress with you.

Consistent Academic Growth

After accepting your scholarship, my interest in academia was suddenly reinvigorated, and I strove to live up to the name of “Jones Scholar.” While my courses have been challenging at times, particularly since my move into the CIS department, I have seen a steady rise in my performance in college.

More importantly, however, these years at UofL revealed my true passion for learning. While I was devoted to doing well in my classes, I became even more committed to the development of my mind. This thirst for knowledge went in every direction, and I took courses in history, English, and economics. As I approach graduation, I narrow my focus to primarily CIS and political science topics. Nevertheless, my experience in a variety of fields of study has shaped me into a diverse and critical thinker.

Expanding Technical Knowledge Base

The world of information technology is rapidly changing on a day-to-day basis. Beginning my CIS degree in my fourth year of college meant I had much catching up to do. Immediately, I was thrown into a world filled with spreadsheets, programming, and databases. I was able to overcome by keeping up with classwork, working on personal projects, and reading the latest tech news. Since then, I have formed a clear picture of what I want to do after graduation—front-end development. With this, I hope to make end-user experiences enjoyable and highly functional.

Combining front-end development with my experience in political science might make for a very interesting career, as political organizations are finally beginning to utilize I.T. innovatively. Hopefully, my dual degree will leave me gainfully employed, and capable of making difference in the world we live in.

A Thank You

As my opportunities grow, I never forget the help I have received through your scholarship program. At the beginning of my college career, few had confidence that I could succeed. I was unsure of what I was interested in, and I had nearly no financial aid. You provided me with the support that rose me to the forefront of my classes, gave me confidence in my abilities, and pushed me to work harder every day. For your long-term support, I say thank you. I hope you continue to believe in me as I reach the end of what has been a wonderful journey.

Sincerely,

**Sara Attarzadeh**

Jones Scholar Recipient