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Overcoming adversity, WKU junior receives \$10K Horatio Alger Association scholarship

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Monica Hines is a Western Kentucky University junior from Lewisburg and a WKU cheerleader.

Submitted

Growing up under the care of her grandmother after losing her mother at a young age, coming to Western Kentucky University for athletic events and high school graduation felt like coming home for Monica Hines.

The Lewisburg junior has overcome much for a shot at a better life. Hines' father was incarcerated for much of her childhood, and as a biracial person, she didn't fit neatly into her Black or White friend groups. Now though, she's a cheerleader for WKU and is pursuing a career in mental health counseling as a play therapist, hoping to use the adversity she's faced to connect with children.



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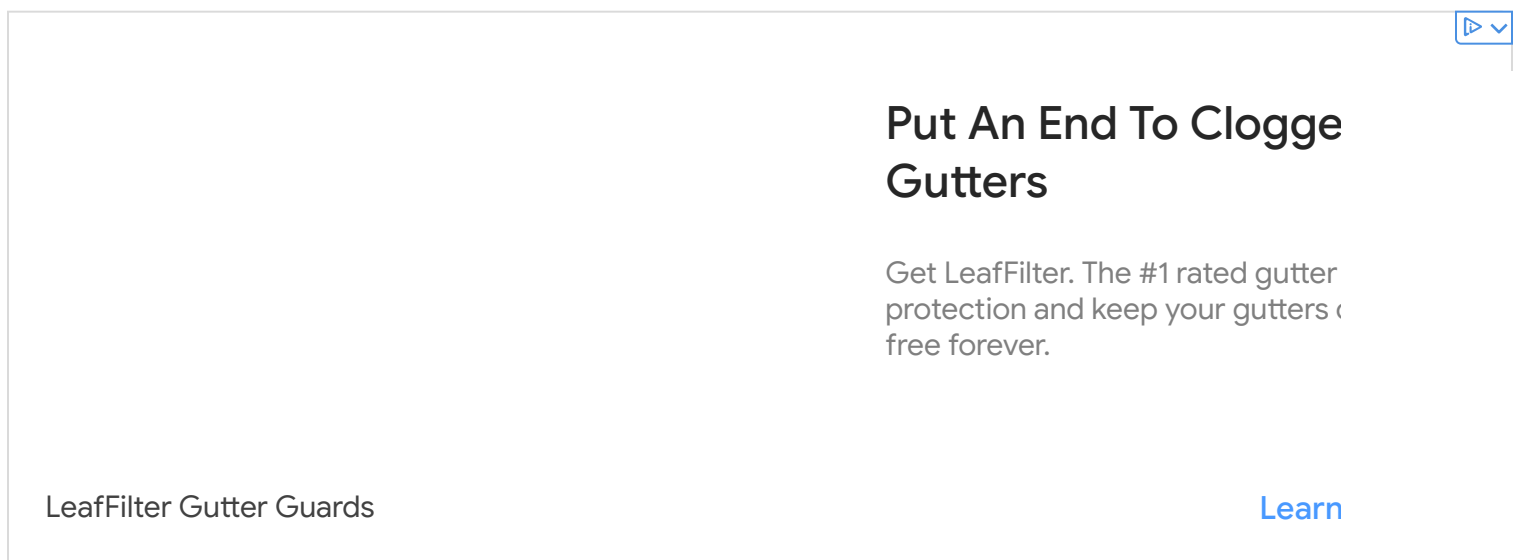
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“I’ve come a long way in terms of going to college and trying to make something out of myself,” Hines told the Daily News. “I have personally experienced trauma at a young age. Obviously, the death of my mom and a few other things play into that as well. So, I just kind of want to give back to children that have also experienced trauma.”

Hines is also among this year's Horatio Alger Scholars, earning a \$10,000 college scholarship for her distinction as an outstanding student. Funded through the Horatio Alger Association, the Patrick P. Lee scholarship that Hines is a recipient of is targeted at students who come from households earning an average annual income of \$22,783 while maintaining a 3.71 grade-point-average.

A first-generation college student, Hines dreamed of coming to WKU, and that was made possible in part by an initial Horatio Alger Association scholarship for her grit and academic excellence during her first two years at the university. She's now received a second scholarship, allowing her to continue her education as a current child studies major. As she works toward her degree, Hines divides her time between a full-time job at Greenwood High School's day care and cheerleading for WKU.

"Receiving both scholarships from the Horatio Alger Association has been extremely helpful. If it wasn't for them, honestly, I probably wouldn't even be in school," Hines said.



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For the Patrick P. Lee \$10,000 scholarship, Hines is one of just eight students to receive the honor this year.

"The 2020 Horatio Alger Specialized Scholars are a remarkable group of individuals who have remained dedicated to furthering their education while facing significant personal challenges," James F. Dicke II, president of the Horatio Alger Association, said in a news release. "Our

Scholars demonstrate integrity and perseverance in all they do, and we are proud to support them throughout college and beyond.”

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