

Hello! My name is Josiah Jesse. I am 16 years old and live in Orlando, Florida with my 2 brothers and parents. I am currently a Junior in High School. Another thing about me is that I have Alport Syndrome. I was diagnosed in the Spring of 2017. Because of the kidney disease of Alport Syndrome, I have to wear hearing aids. This has had a huge impact on my life. With wearing hearing aids and having a renal diet, I am different from the majority of people I know. Being diagnosed, I realized that everyone has something different, and that something makes them who they are. After my diagnosis my Mom started to research Alport Syndrome. She found about the Alport Syndrome Conference being held in Miami earlier this year. We marked the date on the calendar and the time came to go. At the conference I was able to hang out and get to know some other kids that also have Alport Syndrome. Over the weekend we connected with one another and we all wanted to stay for another week. I still stay in touch with them via text. It was cool to see that there is somebody else that is going through what I am too.

Just like any other kid I have hobbies. I love to play baseball and have been playing since I was about 8 years old. My parents allow me and my brothers to have one extracurricular activity. I chose baseball. Last year I made the varsity baseball team in the Fall and Spring seasons. So far this year I am on the Fall varsity squad again. Our season ends on the 24th of October and the Spring season doesn't start till late January. I also play on a travel ball team that I have been involved with since I was 10 years old. In the off-season, I will be training and having some fun with friends and

family. Another special interest I have is basketball. I love to play basketball with my friends. On weekends that I don't have a tournament or any commitments, I play outside for hours on end. Usually we go down to the basketball courts to play some competitive pick-up games.

The reason I wish to receive this award is to primarily help for a missions trip I am going on to Ecuador from June 18-27, 2019. The cost per person is \$1,500. This pays for the roundtrip flight, food in Ecuador, lodging, travel insurance and tickets to attractions in Quito. I am going with my Dad. He works at a Christian private school called Calvario City. Last year he went with the same group from his work to Ecuador and Peru. This year he decided to take me. He would like for me and my brothers to go on at least one missions trip before we move out of the house at the age of 18. The assignment while in Ecuador is to restore a shelter for children suffering with cancer. With the leftover money, I will put it aside for baseball equipment for when it is needed and extra pitching lessons with my travel ball coach. This will give me the competitive edge that I need to become a better baseball player, which will open doors in high school and college.

Being a recipient of this award would be a complete honor. It can help show that just because I have a disability or disease, doesn't mean I'm not happy. I hope that every kid and adult who gets diagnosed with Alport Syndrome will not worry, but have the determination to continue pursuing their dreams. Also, I want to say it doesn't

matter how many curveballs life will throw, always be ready to bounce back and crush it the next time. Alport Syndrome was the curveball life threw me, and so far I am crushing it.