

Henrih Alikaj Memorial Scholarship



Some Background Information:

Henrih Alikaj, an intelligent, funny, kind, respectful, and enthusiastic person, was the beloved son of Migena Alikaj (Mrs. Alikaj is an English teacher at Dakota's Ninth Grade Center) and Altin Alikaj, and the beloved brother of the amazing Julian Alikaj. Henrih would brighten everyone's day with his smile, laughter, his polite manners, his caring personality, or simply with a joke, meme, or some advice. Everyone who was fortunate enough to have known him feels that they should live their life the way Henrih would. Henrih Alikaj always lived his own life by, *"Be the best you can be and have fun along the way."*

The Alikaj family came to the United States in 1997 from Albania. They came to this Land of Opportunities to secure a better life for their son Henrih, who was only two years old at the time. Henrih would always make his family proud. Henrih always excelled academically. He attended the Utica Academy for International Studies (IB - International Baccalaureate Program), always working very hard; he graduated as a Valedictorian in high school. Then Henrih attended University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. After graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in Neuroscience, Henrih continued his education at the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSUCOM). Throughout his educational career, Henrih always volunteered his time to help his community. He has also been involved in research while at the University of Michigan. Henrih was part of a research team who did some research on "Lung Dendritic Cells Drive Natural Killer Cytotoxicity in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease", and the team's findings are published in the National Library for Medicine. Henrih's dream was to help others, and he wanted to be a pediatrician who gave the best care to his patients so that they left his office feeling better. In one of his essays, Henrih wrote: *"Unwavering positivity in a field that can be so dreary is what I want to bring to the table."*

Unfortunately, Henrih could not fulfill his dream of helping others by providing his best care as a future pediatric doctor. He had a massive heart attack (caused by an undiagnosed condition called Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy) while he was working out in the gym, and his dreams were cut short at the age of 27. Henrih was in his third

year of Med School at MSUCOM. We are certain that Henrih's patients would have left his office smiling and feeling better because he always had that contagious positive energy.

Henrih Alikaj LOVED HIS FAMILY, and he was the type of person who always wanted to help others, so we, his family, want to honor Henrih by allowing him to help students at Dakota High School with a \$500 Scholarship offered to TWO Dakota High School Students. This scholarship honors Henrih's life and keeps Henrih's name alive, while helping someone (a little) with his/her financial needs.

To read more about Henrih's life, click on this link:

<https://www.heartsforhenrihalikaj.com/henrihs-story>

Criteria to get the \$500 Henrih Alikaj Memorial Scholarship:

- The applicants must have a GPA of 3.2 or higher.
- The applicants MUST TYPE an essay (**at least one page**) responding to **ONE** of these prompts:
 1. *"How does Henrih Alikaj's life story and life motto inspire YOU to be the best version of yourself? "*
 2. *After reading Henrih's story, how do YOU plan to help the community?*
 3. *How are YOU similar to Henrih Alikaj? What are some traits that you have in common with Henrih Alikaj?*
 4. *Henrih Alikaj's life was short but very well-lived. Henrih was SO LOVED and RESPECTED by everyone who knew him. Henrih's legacy will definitely live on. What will your name be remembered for? What legacy will you leave behind?*

Complete the essay along with the required scholarship resume and return to the guidance office by March 1, 2024.