

2022 Michael John Kennedy Scholarship Award-Winning Essay

The second Michael John Kennedy Scholarship award winner, Sarah Dunigan, is a senior at the University of Oklahoma pursuing a bachelor's degree in multidisciplinary studies. She currently works in the health field. To learn more about Sarah, check out [this article](#) from the January 2023 edition of the Hownikan.

I am the proud daughter, granddaughter, and great-granddaughter of veterans. Veteran heroes run in our family.

My mother, Aggie Busby, served as a Registered Nurse, Lieutenant in the United States Public Health Services. Her veteran benefits provided our home and part of her education to get her Master's in Science. She chose to serve at Carl Albert Indian Health Facility (now Chickasaw Nation Medical Center). She wanted to serve her people. While there she assisted in the labor and delivery of over 1000 babies.

My grandfather is Master Chief Petty Officer Ed Hinesley. He enlisted at the age of 17 years old. He rose through the ranks. He served on an aircraft carrier: USS Bon Homme Richard during the Korean War and at the beginning of the Vietnam War, after he survived WWII. He also taught aircraft maintenance and repair at OU south base.

But the most famous hero of our family is Sargent Max Earnest Austelle, USMCR, killed in action at Iwo Jima, following his being stationed at Pearl Harbor. He was only 24 when he died. He was awarded the Purple Heart for his courage. He was the grandson of Lizzie Young, a founding pioneer in Oklahoma, and of the Citizen Potawatomi Tribe in Oklahoma.

Potawatomi warriors have a long history of courage and leadership. According to R. David Edmunds (The Potawatomi's, Keepers of the Fire) both the British and French governments attempted to bring Potawatomi warriors to their side of the battle. They have always been renowned for intelligent and courageous warfare.

I want to be of service, also, by attending Physician Assistant courses, to provide high quality healthcare for our tribal members. I worked as a Radiology Technologist during the Covid pandemic at two metro hospitals. I remembered the courage of my ancestors as I faced an unknown enemy each day. It was difficult, but I watched and participated as we found new and innovative ways to treat Covid and the devastating effects of it. My college career has been long, as I persevered through life's ups and downs. I have never forgotten the lessons of my ancestors; to persevere, and with courage move forward.

I am currently attending the University of Oklahoma, with my graduation scheduled for May 2023. I gratefully have been assisted by CPN Tribal Scholarships. I would be very grateful to be honored with the Michael John Kennedy Scholarship this year. Migwech for considering me.