

My name is Dominique Guinn. I'm getting my doctorate in Health Studies at Texas Woman's University, and I'm a recipient of the Food Scholarship Program. The Food Scholarship is a program that Texas Woman's University has in partnership with the Houston Food Bank that helps students to supplement their food. You know, it's all types of food: fruits, vegetables, meat. 11/15 of 2016, I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. That was a life changer for me. But it changed my life in many ways. Financially it's tough to feed my family. And the food scholarship program was very helpful for me because as far as income, I may not qualify for many programs. But regardless of income, I was eligible for this. So, at a time when my finances were pulled left, right and upside down with not only hospital bills, but medication, you know, and I still had my family to feed despite the fact that I was now living with cancer. So the food program came for me came through at a time that I really really really really needed it. And you know, of course, eating healthy is an expense within itself. But for me, eating healthy I had to do with my new diagnosis moving forward if I want to live and live healthy. I had I had to make a lot of hard decisions, you know, financial decisions about what I was going to do in my household. And oftentimes it was, you know, deciding between, you know, groceries, bills, or if I bought my medicine. I would make those sacrifices, but to make sure, of course, that my kids - that they had different things. But there were times when I went without, you know, so that they would have. The Food Scholarship Program - it's been everything to me because it was what I need, what not just what I needed, but what my family needed it at a tough time. When I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, you know, my prognosis was not good, you know, and I'm still living fighting with it. But you know, it's an everyday struggle. An average day means, you know, I work full time, I go to school, doing different things with my children and run to hospitals if I need to, and on many days, doing chemo. I used to always say, "pay it forward". You never know when you will be on the other side of the desk. Do whatever it is that you can to help out because you never know when it when it will be you or when it may be someone that you know 'cause you don't know how much you help. You don't know the reach. Food truly is medicine. My hematologist tells me how important you know, eating right is. And that that food is medicine. This - the Food Scholarship Program helped me because things that I may not have been able to financially buy at that time, those were things that were given to me. I wouldn't have - The last year would not have been the same for me or my family without the program.