

“My scholarships are such a blessing to me because, without them, I would be graduating with tens of thousands of dollars in debt. Achieving my goals to get these scholarships was amazing, but it would not be at all possible if the scholarships were not available. I’d love to thank every single individual, including the community, that played a role in making it possible for students like me to get the opportunity to take part in the educational process,” said senior biology major, Jakob Jitima.

Residing in Ona and growing up close by, Jakob expects to graduate this December. He intends to continue his studies in Marshall University’s College of Science and hopes to attend the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine in the future.

Jakob recalls both of his parents attending Marshall during his childhood, which is part of why he decided to attend the university. He recalls the sense of community that comes with being a member of the Marshall family and believes the people of Marshall, students, faculty and alumni, are the best part of the university. The “kindness and inclusion” of these individuals does not compare to other schools he visited.

“The people I have engaged with have all been admirable and appreciative of what this community has given them, and I’m appreciative of the opportunities they have given me,” he explained.

Citing his biggest challenge as a student as time allocation, Jakob is active on campus and “always wanted to do everything.” He is a member of the Student Government Association (SGA) and during certain quarters, he plays on a team for slow-pitch softball in Marshall’s intramural league.

The SGA office is Jakob’s favorite place on campus, as he likes giving students a place to come on campus to have a voice.

“As a member of the SGA, I have surrounded myself with dozens of other students who want what is best for the members of this community. These people actively want to make beneficial



Fun Facts

Name: Jakob Jitima

Class of 2020

Hometown: Ona, West Virginia

Major: Biology

Favorite color: Red

Textbooks or eBooks: I prefer textbooks. Tangible copies of course material keep my attention better than e-books. Textbooks also keep me more accountable over how much I study since I can see how much material I'm not studying. Unfortunately, many people like textbooks more, but they do not have the ability to cover the costs.

Favorite thing about Huntington: The people. No matter where I go, people smile and chat. Even though Huntington has been hit with many stressing matters, the people always have hope for better times. The people continually push for the good that tomorrow will bring.

change for the faculty and students on campus and reach out to members of the Huntington community to do the best for the area,” he said, adding his is most thankful for the friendships formed during his educational journey.

Jakob credits his mother as his biggest supporter, as she has always been by his side, and most aspires to be like his grandmother who “always tries to brighten someone’s day.”

“I know I will never have to make a decision without the support of my mother and I am eternally grateful for that. My grandmother, she is always trying to make sure everyone is okay and that they get the help they deserve,” he explained. “Marshall has been the place where I really began doing social events of a sort for the betterment of society. From getting the opportunity to work with the Marshall Food Pantry to playing a role in the quality of student life, I have been gifted the chance to help many people in my community.”

Creating connections that will allow him to help people in the tri-state after graduation is one of Jakob’s priorities. He strives to work across various groups and organizations to create a better environment for all residents. He is thankful for generous alumni who continue to make Marshall better for each generation of students.

“The students of Marshall University and the people of Huntington have created such a glorious and resourceful environment for people to continue their education. Donating to Marshall keeps this resourcefulness that has been given to so many past students and allows future generations to continue their endeavors in similar environments.”