Dear National Federation of the Blind of CT scholarship committee,

My Name is Isabel Rosario and I am currently finishing up my sophomore year of college. I attend Southern Connecticut State University and am studying Social work with a minor in philosophy. My goal is to get my MSW (Master of Social work) and become a clinical therapist. It wasn’t easy getting to this point, my visual impairment has thrown many obstacles my way throughout the years. Despite those challenges, I have never let my impairment stop me from going after my dreams; Instead, I use those challenges to fuel myself with motivation and determination.

High school was very difficult for me, I had to overcome many obstacles. During this time, my vision was changing rapidly and I had to make some changes to the way I learned. I have Glaucoma and reading for long periods of time started affecting my eye pressure; because of this, it was decided that I would switch from being a visual learner to an auditory one. This decision was made halfway through my Sophomore year, some teachers had a difficult time understanding my new needs and proper accomodations were not made because of this. Some of my teachers were not sending me my work electronically, they would hand me hard copies; I tried talking to them and explaining why I needed electronic formatting, but after failed attempts I decided to go to the principal to help resolve this problem. I wasn’t always good at advocating for myself, but my grades were being affected and I have always valued my education. This issue was resolved after speaking with the principal and my grades were no longer being affected. In fact, at the end of my Sophomore year I was inducted into the National Honor Society. There were other factors that made my high school experience difficult, but I didn’t let that stop me. I did everything in my power to graduate early and with hard work, I was able to. I graduated at the end of my Junior year and then took a semester off to go to The Carroll Center for the Blind to prepare myself for college and independent living. I was grateful that I attended that independent living program because in January 2019 I lost the remainder of my vision. Due to the training I had prior to attending college, I was able to remain enrolled for that semester. I decided to go part time so that I could deal with the emotional aspect of losing my sight. Although I had that training, there were still things I had to work on like my confidence. However, just like in the past, I did not let this stop me from pursuing my goal and despite the fact that there have been challenges, I continuously moved forward with my head held high.

I decided to study social work because of the challenges I’ve faced, I hope to help individuals that are facing any obstacles and to motivate them to strive for the best. I currently serve as the president of the Connecticut Association of Blind Students and am co-chair of the NABS Fundraising Committee. Before Covid 19 I also volunteered at my former high school working with the blind and visually impaired students that are there. I help to provide braille material as well as any other accomodations the students may need. I never thought that I would step foot in that high school again, but I did so in hopes that I make the student’s high school experience better than mine.

As you can see, I have never let my visual impairment stop me from striving to do my very best. The challenges I’ve faced have only made me stronger and have motivated me to follow my dreams. I hope to make a difference in people’s lives with my degree in social work, and that is why I am applying for this scholarship. This scholarship will help insure that I can conquer my dreams and strive for exolence . I hope that you consider me as  a candidate for  this scholarship.