

Hello, my name is **Mariah Banks** and I am from Johnstown Pennsylvania. Funeral Service was something I was always interested in but was discouraged from pursuing.

After getting my bachelor's degree from Slippery Rock University in accounting and then attending Thomas Jefferson School of Law, I found myself completely miserable in my career choices. I was speaking to a friend when they told me a quote by Alan Keightley, "Once in a while it really hits people that they don't have to experience the world in the way they have been told."

After our conversation, I decided to follow my own/made path. I applied to Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science and never looked back. There have been some bumps in the road but I have never regretted my choice. I have found my calling in funeral service and I love the sense of pride and satisfaction of helping people through one of the most difficult times they face in life. I have never felt so empowered by what I do. My only regret was that I waited so long to pursue this dream.

I'm so honored to be receiving this scholarship. I'm looking forward to what the future holds for me and the plans I have for the funeral service industry.