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IWU Student Named Center for Student Opportunity Scholar

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IWU Student Named Center for Student Opportunity Scholar

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – In between cramming for exams, writing papers and finishing projects, first-year Illinois Wesleyan University student Ashley Roberts finds time to complete her Opportunity Scholars blog for the nonprofit Center for Student Opportunity (CSO).

Roberts was selected, along with nine other students from colleges across the country, to write a blog, sharing her college experiences and offering advice to underserved students on how to make it to college.

This St. Peters, Mo. native has endured her share of struggles after being placed in foster care at the age of 11. She overcame her difficult upbringing to become the first in her family to attend college, earning her the CSO's Opportunity Scholarship, a \$1,000, four-year, renewable award.

"I have more of a want and need to go to college than anyone I know," Roberts wrote. "I am putting myself through college and some [people] are still telling me that I shouldn't bother. I refuse to let that happen. I am not, nor will I ever be a statistic. I have reached a point in my life where I have finally been given the chance to show that I am my own person. This is my opportunity to be who I am and show that I am capable of succeeding."

So far Roberts has written two posts on the Web site, the first entitled Hello Reality...Goodbye Fantasy. This post shares Roberts initial college experiences and the things she wishes she would have known before coming to college. The second is dubbed Pick Me, Pick Me and it advises high school students on the best ways to apply and select a college.

"Ashley is a true role model from whom we can all learn how to turn college dreams into reality," said Matt Rubinoff, CSO's executive director. "We hope that this blog encourages the hundreds of thousands of underserved, low-income students who aspire to make it to college understand that the opportunity for college is within reach."

To check out Ashley's blog, please visit: <http://www.csopportunityscholars.org>.