



Associated Colleges of Illinois

Jada Sims
University of St. Francis
ACI General Scholarship



Jada Sims once witnessed something in a hospital situation that inspired her to become a nurse.

"I had a family member who was in the hospital, and I noticed a communication barrier between my family and the health care professionals," she says. "I want to be able to fix that communication barrier. And, I like being around people, helping them during a difficult time in their life, and being there as a support for them."

Jada, a first-generation college student from Romeoville, is completing her sophomore year at the [University of St. Francis](#) (USF) in Joliet. She chose to attend nearby USF because she liked the small class sizes and that she was known and appreciated as a USF student. She also appreciates the university's liberal arts curriculum and has been introduced to many new ideas and disciplines. "I found that having a liberal arts education helps me to think about later on in my life, like being on the hospital board," she says, adding that it helps to "understand multiple areas and not just one nursing."

[Click to see video!](#)



Through a campus organization for first-generation students, University Success Scholars, Jada learned about ACI scholarships. Her ACI General Scholarship helps her stay focused on the rigorous nursing curriculum. "It helped me have to work less and focus more on school. Especially now with more demand on my nursing classes, I can focus on that more and not have to worry about working to make tuition," Jada says. She has an older sister and lives with her mother.

For a minor, Jada chose psychology. "I like the brain and how it works, so getting to understand how people function and how they are, I think, is what attracted me to psychology," she says.

At USF, Jada is a member of the Augustus Tolton Society, dedicated to nurturing intellectual ability, promoting leadership and service development, and fostering self-knowledge among USF's students of African descent. She also works at an after-school program with elementary school-age students three days a week, helping with homework, playing games and leading other activities.

After college, Jada plans to work, probably in a hospital setting, and then return to school to get a graduate degree or certification that leads to becoming a nursing instructor or a nurse practitioner.

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