



Associated Colleges of Illinois

Gracia Neema
Quincy University
A. Montgomery Ward Foundation Scholarship

Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gracia Neema's family settled in Galesburg, Illinois, where she grew up. She wanted to attend a small college close to home and chose [Quincy University](#), Quincy, Illinois, where she is planning a career as a pediatrician, majoring in biology with a minor in chemistry.



Neema was inspired to become a doctor by her own pediatrician and her mother, who wanted to be a pediatrician but became an accountant instead. "I kind of want to do it for her. My pediatrician when I was a child was very nice, very helpful, very calming. I like helping people. I like kids, especially," she says.

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"I want to be able to go back to my country in Africa and build a hospital and maybe a school next to it," Neema says. "I also want to practice somewhere here in Illinois at first and try to go to med school or P.A. school in-state, too." Neema says the hospital she wants to build will focus foremost on patient care.

The A. Montgomery Ward Foundation scholarship has helped Neema pay for tuition expenses at Quincy. "Being from a family of five, it really helps my family to know that's a couple of hundred more dollars off that they don't have to worry about," she says. Neema has other scholarships to pay for tuition and is thankful for donors who make the scholarships possible. She hopes one day to provide scholarships for future students. "We really do appreciate it," she says.

Neema is involved in a variety of activities at Quincy University. She participates in the Black Student Union, Quincy University Special Olympics, is a multicultural ambassador, a resident assistant and is participates in the Campus Activity Board. She is also in chemistry club and a Connect Mentor, serving as an ambassador for the school.