



Associated Colleges of Illinois

Semaj Robinson
Lewis University
SmithGroup Scholarship

Semaj Robinson started college in 2016 at Chicago university. Costs were high, and she began searching for another school to study nursing. She read good reviews about the nursing program at [Lewis University](#) in Romeoville. Plus, ACI schools graduate twice as many nursing students as other large Illinois higher ed programs combined. "After an initial conversation, I knew that this was the place I wanted to go to because they were willing to help me by any means necessary," Robinson says.



Now a senior, Robinson, who is from Markham, Illinois, expects to graduate from Lewis in May 2020. She plans a career in pediatrics, working with young children. "My heart kind of lies in being able to take care of them when they're the most vulnerable," Robinson says. "That's what I plan on doing, just working in a hospital and working in primarily a low-income community because that's where I came from."

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At a young age, Robinson says she developed a passion to help people and became interested in nursing. "I lost my grandfather to cancer, and I was there for the whole process of grieving and everything. That made me feel like I wanted to do something about it," she says. Robinson also carries a Spanish minor because she is interested in languages and culture. Plus, she was able to use her knowledge of Spanish in a nursing clinical experience, communicating with a patient whose primary language was Spanish. "That correlated with the whole reason why I wanted to be a nurse," she says. "Nursing is more than about making people feel better when they're sick. It's about treating the whole person."

Robinson is the recipient of a SmithGroup Scholarship through ACI. "Without the scholarship, I don't know if I would be here," she says. "I'm just very grateful for this. I've had a lot of transitions in my life, and this scholarship gave me the chance to be able to chase my dreams and to continue my journey. One donation can make the difference – all the difference to one person. You can change one person's life."

Robinson has made the most of her college experience, leading and participating in a number of campus organizations. She is president of the Black Student Union, sharing awareness of African American culture. She works in the Office of Student Activities on events such as Welcome Week for new and returning students. Robinson has worked in student orientation, admissions, the ministry department, and volunteers in the Office of Multicultural Student Services. She is also a mentor in "Flyers Rise" for multicultural students.