

WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship: Realizing Your Dream...And Paying for It



Evelyn Park (2017 WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship Recipient), 2017

The WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship is different than most scholarships, as the WTS-LA board personally underwrites it every year. But this year, the board faced a conundrum. They found two truly deserving candidates. So, they did something unusual. They contributed enough funding to award two young women the 2017 WTS-LA Directors' \$3,000 Scholarship. And Evelyn Park is one of those winners.

"I did not always know that my educational and professional paths would lead me to logistics and supply chain management, but with some experience and higher education, I now realize that I chose the right path. I was a Communication Studies major during my undergraduate days and I attended school full-time while working full-time at Disneyland and remained there for almost six years before I realized that I wanted to do something different. I landed a customer service job at a textile design and distribution firm called Leslie Jee Textiles in 2013. I had no idea where that would lead me, but was willing to take a risk."

The risk paid off. She worked her way up to *logistics specialist*. Unfortunately, she didn't know exactly what that job entailed. At first, she thought she was filling in for someone. But Park soon figured out that she had a lot to learn.

"I quickly picked up purchasing, inventory management, demand planning, and shipment coordination skills and developed a passion for overseeing this aspect of the operation. Each day I contemplated the significance of what I was doing and realized my passion. With the help of my manager, I applied for the MSSCM program [the master's program at CalState Long Beach] because I knew there was a lot more to learn. Since I began the program, I've increased our inventory turns from 4 to 5, helped introduce a brand-new product line to target a new market, and was a key decision maker for a new ERP implementation. I've also had the opportunity to present a presentation based on the business statistics I've learned in the research methods course based on a regression to show the executives of the company where we have room for improvement. Most recently, I've assisted the executive management team in sourcing and importing a product from a country we've never done business in."

After graduation, Park looks to advance her research in overseas supply chain disruptions and optimizing inventory policies. But she also looks to give back. She wants to return to CalState Long Beach and teach. Before she can do that, though, there is another reality: student loans from both her undergraduate and graduate degrees. So, the 2017 WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship has significant meaning for her.

Again, the WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship is different. In a way, it's almost more personal than many other scholarships. And that is one reason why Evelyn Park is particularly deserving of the 2017 WTS-LA Directors' Scholarship.