



## USAA Scholar

Vivian Schmidt

Grand Rapids, MI

Sponsor: AM1(AW/NAC) Joseph Schmidt

College: Kalamazoo College

2022-2023: Sophomore

Major: Biology and Psychology (Neuroscience concentration)

### Academic & Extracurricular Highlights:

- Kalamazoo College Lacrosse Team
- Varsity Lacrosse Team: 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Captain
- Varsity Swim Team: 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Captain
- Students Against Destructive Decisions
- Student Council: 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Class President, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Body President
- Kalamazoo College Year-Round Lifeguard



I am incredibly honored and grateful for the opportunities that lie ahead of me thanks to the Wings Over America Scholarship Foundation. From a very young age, I decided I wanted to be a neuroscientist. As I got older and truly understood the neurological damage and psychological trauma my father experienced during his time in the navy, I found a true purpose for this passion. Through research, I hope to further our understanding and find better treatments for neurological and psychological diseases, especially those plaguing our brave veterans, such as PTSD. Through receiving this scholarship, I will be able to continue my education at Kalamazoo College, a small liberal arts institution that has allowed me to start researching these diseases on live cells as a freshman (something that is incredibly hard to come by). After completing my undergraduate degree with a double major in biology and psychology and a concentration in neuroscience, I plan to attend a Ph.D. program in Neuroscience or Neurobiology to continue researching. It is my hope that my future research will in some way help veterans across the country continue to conquer their traumas and neurological injuries. With everything the veterans of this country have done for me, I strive to use my passion to help them and their families. Again, I cannot thank the WOASF and everyone who has helped me on this journey enough. I could not have such big, obtainable dreams without my mentors, professors, family, friends, and community.