Brianna Robson

Disability Credit Canada- DCCI Scholarship for Canadian Students with Disabilities How your disability shaped your decision to study the program you chose?

As a student with a Learning Disability my self esteem, mental health and academic success were significantly impacted throughout my elementary school years. I struggled with processing information and found all academic tasks extremely challenging, and was well below grade level throughout elementary school. In grade 5, I received a diagnosis of a learning disability. Like many individuals with an LD, I struggled with Anxiety and Gastrointestinal problems, further affecting my success as a student. My disability has always defined and impacted me as I navigated the education system from K-12. Conversely, it has also shaped my decision for secondary school education and inspired my interest in the healthcare field. Roughly 6.2 million individuals are living with a disability in Canada. There are so many disabilities that affect many people. What people do not realize is that a disability also impacts our mental health and frequently additional health issues develop which further debilitate us. There are so many unknowns for each disability. My personal experiences have motivated me to study in the HealthCare field & find both a cure and solutions so that no one has to go through the mental, emotional and physical struggles that I have.

My interest in healthcare was also influenced by my grandmother who lived with Alzheimer's disease. My grandmother had a rare case as she lived with it a lot longer than the typical Alzheimer's patient. Her disease wasn't the only inspiring thing about her, her life story is too. My grandmother was a first generation Canadian, she was the definition of perseverance and hard work so her kids could live a great life. My grandmother's life story has inspired me to never give up on life and develop a mindset where I can do anything as long as I work for it. I hope to one day grow up to be an amazing woman like she was and possibly help find a cure to her disease and make her proud.

In response to my passion for health care, a contribution I have made to my community that I am most proud of is successfully advocating for Menstrual Equity to our school board (DDSB). Through extensive research in Grade 11, it came to my attention that 70% of girls have missed school due to the lack of access to menstrual products in Canada. Studies have shown that this disrupts their mental well-being, confidence and dignity. A classmate and I took it upon ourselves to be part of the solution to this little-known problem, made worse during the pandemic. The research and effort involved took over 300 hours of my personal time. Together, we successfully co-created a motion to the Board of Trustees (Feb. 2021) for all Durham District School Board washrooms to provide access to free menstrual products by March 2022. We urged our school board to take bold, compassionate steps to end period poverty in Durham by advocating that menstrual products should be a human right and not a privilege. I am proud that our advocacy resulted in increased access to free hygiene products, and will diminish period poverty in Durham Region, Ontario.

I am proud to say I have been offered and accepted the opportunity to study Health Sciences with a major in Biomedical Sciences at the Cumming School of Medicine, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY (commencing Fall 2022). I am excited to begin this journey and make myself available for opportunities to contribute to the vast field of Healthcare and make a difference in the lives of others.

CANADA

BIRTH CERTIFICATE GEREUFICATI DE MAISSANCE

NAME - NOM

ROBSON, BRIANNA HEATHER

DATE OF BIRTH - DATE DE NAISSANCE

DECEMBER 15,2004

TORONTO

APRIL 19,2005

ISSUED IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO DELIVRÉ DANS LA PROVINCE DE L'ONTARIO FEBRUARY 20, 2006

Sudith M Haitman

CERTIFIED EXTRACT FROM SIRTH REGISTRATION
EXTRAIT CERTIFIE CONFORME DE L'ENREGISTREMENT DE NAISSANCE

CERTIFICATE NUMBER NUMÉRO DU CERTIFICAT

60040791-001

REGISTRATION NUMBER NUMERO D'ENREGISTREMENT

2004-05-123100

Long Hillys

Dr. Don Greenwood

psychologist

1206 Erinlea Avenue Oshawa, ON L1H 7J5 telephone: (905) 579-3691

April 28, 2015

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSULTATION Brianna Robson, born December 16, 2004

REFERRAL and BACKGROUND

Request for a psycho-educational assessment was received from Heather Robson, mother of Brianna, at the suggestion of a friend. Brianna is currently in grade 5 at Gandatsetiagon Public School in Pickering, and has had academic difficulties throughout her schooling; a consultation was desired to find out whether she may have a learning disability underlying those difficulties.

A speech and language consult was done at Grandview Children's Centre at age 2, as she was late in talking; she reportedly has had followup at her school by occupational therapy, and by speech & language pathology. She could not remember the alphabet letters in kindergarten, and did not start reading until grade 1.

Brianna had a pediatric consult in November 2012 by Dr. S. Khattak at Kids Clinic in Whitby when she was in grade 3, age 7 years. At that time, her grades had dropped to C's, and she had difficulty with reading comprehension, fluency and decoding (skipped words, confused the letters p and q), with writing (spelling, punctuation, productivity), in mathematics (calculations, math facts, problem-solving), with language (understanding instruction, remembering multi-step directions), and needed close assistance to do homework. Yet she could follow routines, had good printing and art skills, and enjoyed good relationships with adults and peers. Dr. Khattak found no fine-motor problems; her language skills were average, except in summarizing and understanding a paragraph read aloud. Memory testing found her weak at recalling visual patterns from memory in both identifying and copying designs. He ruled out *ADHD*, recommended a psycho-educational assessment, and suggested more verbal explanations be used, and teaching of memory strategies.

Brianna lives in Pickering with both university-educated parents, and an older sister. Birth was reportedly full term, with condition of mother and baby both excellent. Early developmental milestones were late for crawling, speaking words and sentences. Speech articulation made her difficult to understand for the first 5 years, but otherwise there were no emotional, feeding, sleeping or skills development problems. She has enjoyed good health and relationships. Vision and hearing are reportedly good. Father and mother also are in good health.

Brianna is active and excels in competitive cheer-leading, and has hobbies of music and art. Parents feel she requires much parental attention, and she likes to be with them.

TESTS USED

Brianna was seen twice in December 2014 (13, 23) at her home in Pickering, then April 25, 2015. A Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children—Fourth Edition (WISC-IV-Integrated) and a Wechsler Individual Achievement Test—Third Edition (WIAT-III) were given.

In November 2014, mother completed a developmental history, *Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)*, and *Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning (BRIEF)*. *Teacher's Report Form (TRF)* and teacher form of the *BRIEF* were returned in early November by Mr. Kadoski, Brianna's teacher this year. A *Conners3* was available from October 2012 by gr.3 teacher.

BEHAVIOURAL REPORTS and OBSERVATIONS

Brianna has blue eyes, straight fair hair down her shoulders, fair complexion with light freckling. She is of average size, alert healthy appearance. She made efforts to overcome anxiety and establish a working rapport from the start, being cooperative and responsive. Though needing occasional clarification of directions, she could work for two hours without a break.

Mother's ratings (on the *CBCL*) had no problems of 'clinically-significant' level (i.e. >97th percentile for a non-referred sample, which is < 2% chance that the ratings are from someone not referred for difficulty of some sort), nor even 'borderline' level (93rd %ile or higher). Mother rated Brianna as below average in English and mathematics, average in French and most other subjects. While describing Brianna as "easy-going, loving, funny", mother noted "Brianna struggles with reading and doesn't enjoy it".

Teacher ratings of problems on the *TRF* are similar to parents': no problem even reached the borderline level. Her efforts and behaviour appropriateness are rated above average, while amount of learning and her happiness are rated average. Academic skill ratings differ from parents, being at grade level in social studies and language, somewhat lower in mathematics. Only concern expressed was about her struggles in math performance tasks and tests, "mostly on problem-solving questions" (which would imply language). Teacher described her as "responsible and organized, works hard, and is quite strong in language".

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

'Executive Functions' summarize how we manage feelings, control attention, respond to and solve problems we encounter. Neither teacher nor parent ratings on the *BRIEF* saw any difficulty in any area (and Brianna is too young for the self-report). Edited excerpts follow, based on feedback reports from the test publisher's interpretive software.

"Ratings of Brianna's executive function, as exhibited in everyday behaviors, revealed no current concerns. Brianna shows the ability to control her thoughts, behaviors, and emotions at a level that is appropriate for her age. This includes the ability to resist impulses, to adjust to changes in routine or in the demands of a task, and to regulate her emotions. She is also described as being appropriately able to initiate an activity and/or problem solving, to hold information in mind while engaging in an activity, to plan and organize her approach to solving a problem, to organize things in her environment, and to monitor her own behavior. Brianna's ability to inhibit impulsive responses, adjust to changes in routine or task demands, modulate emotions, initiate problem solving or activity, sustain working memory, plan and organize problem solving approaches, organize her environment and materials, and monitor her own behavior is described as appropriate for her age."

INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONING

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Ghildren--Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) is a battery of tasks to evaluate cognitive functioning. Intelligence tests sample a student's problem-solving abilities and learned facts, so are good at predicting future learning and academic success; however, they do not measure motivation, curiosity, creative talent (e.g. musical or artistic), work habits, study skills, or academic achievement, which should also be considering in discussing her educational needs.

The WISC-IV has four index scales, each made of several subtests, and an overall Full Scale Score summarizing ten of these subtests. Verbal Comprehension Index measures word knowledge, language expression, comprehension, and the ability to apply these skills to solving problems; the student is asked questions orally and gives a spoken response. Working Memory Index subtests measure attention, concentration and the ability to hold information in short-term memory while doing some operation on it; this is an important part of higher-order executive functioning, and is

found to be highly related to achievement and learning. *Perceptual Reasoning Index* tasks measure nonverbal reasoning, visual perception and organization; they assesses problem-solving ability by using visual perceptual tasks to sample 'fluid reasoning' (approaching and solving unfamiliar tasks) through nonverbal responses. The *Processing Speed Index* subtests measure the rapidity with which one can process simple visual information without making errors; it assesses efficiency in simple visual-motor tasks.

Scores are reported as percentile ranks, which rank student test performance relative to how other students his/her age perform. Percentiles range from <1st to >99th. A percentile of 45 tells us that a student scored as well or better than 45 of 100 others the same age in the general population; and percentiles of 25 to 74 (the middle 50% of scores) are considered 'Average'. Standard scores are also used; these have a 'mean' of 100, and 'average' range of 90 to 110 (the middle 50% of scores). Canadian norms are used in all calculations, which were done by the test maker's software.

WISC-IV Full Scale Score is in the mid-Average region, 55th percentile, as is her General Ability Index, an alternative measure of broad intellectual reasoning ability; the GAI consists of three verbal and three visual perceptual subtests, constructed to be less sensitive to fluctuations in Working Memory or Processing Speed (which can be lower due to factors other than ability, such as anxiety, self-doubt, learning disabilities). This means that Brianna's reasoning abilities are similar to her overall cognitive abilities.

A graph of Brianna's subtest scores follows. Overall cognitive abilities suggest that she should be able to learn and achieve at average levels in school tasks, a little weaker with numbers.

- - - - NONVERBAL - - - - -- - VERBAL - - - score Verbal Compreh'n | WorkingMemory | Percept'l Reasoning | Proces. Speed Simi Voca Comp Info|DSpn LNSq Ari|BlkD PCon MtxR PCom|Codg SymS Can %iles 15 91 14 * 13 75 12 63 50 10 37 9 25 7 9 6 5 Simi Voca Comp Info DSpn LNSq Ari BlkD PCon MtxR PCom Codg SymS Canc percen 8 | 11 11 8 | 8 13

WISC-IV SUBTEST SCALED SCORES

Verbal Comprehension (word knowledge, general information, verbal reasoning, using words to conceptualize and express ideas, social awareness) is in the Average region (66th %ile) with moderate score variation. Word and social knowledge are similar to verbal conceptualization and expression, while general knowledge was lower, suggesting little reading is done for information.

Working Memory (short-term auditory memory span, mental control, mental arithmetic) are in the Average region (63rd %ile) with modest variation. Brianna has average auditory memory span and mental control (keeping data in memory while doing operations on them); she was a little lower in mental arithmetic, where she had some difficulty doing the calculations.

Perceptual Reasoning skills (i.e. nonverbal reasoning, visual conceptual skills analyzing / synthesizing familiar or abstract visual stimuli) are in the Average region (61st%ile) with moderate score variation. She had some difficulty in the timed task of assembling blocks to make specified

designs, but did well in the other tasks, slightly better at discerning patterns among familiar objects rather than among abstract/geometric stimuli.

Processing Speed skills are at the bottom of the Average region (27th %ile), with little score variation. Each routine visual-motor tasks is to be completed with speed and accuracy, typically with low fine-motor demands (e.g. ticking 'yes' or 'no' as a response while scanning for matching geometric symbols). She worked steadily in both tasks, and made no errors.

These cognitive measures indicate that Brianna has generally average reasoning abilities, in both verbal and visual-spatial tasks. Overall cognitive abilities should be sufficient for doing grade-level work and secondary education, though her *Processing Speed* skills suggests that she may be slower than others in completing some tasks, especially those with greater fine-motor demands.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Tables below present Brianna's academic skills compared to *grade* level (Canadian norms) on skills in reading, mathematics, written language, and oral language, plus composites. The first three columns list her *grade*-referenced percentile (percentage of students in her grade that her score is better than), next her standard scores (mean=100) on the skill subtests, then the approximate grade level that her skill level represents.

Column four of each table gives the difference when Brianna's obtained academic skill level (this time age-referenced, for comparing to the age-referenced cognitive abilities' General Ability Index) is subtracted from the skill level expected for her reasoning ability and statistically 'regressed to the mean' based upon her age. Negative numbers mean that she did worse than her ability would predict; however only a large discrepancy (-10 or worse) is likely to be reliable statistically, and to be large enough to have a noticeable detrimental effect on her school achievement, or the time and efforts required to perform adequately.

WIAT-III Subtest	%ile	std. score	grade equiv.	difference from ability	signif. level	frequency in norm sample
Reading Comprehension	34	94	3.4	- 9	n.s.	>15 %
Word Reading	21	88	3.8	-13*	.01	<15 %
Pseudoword Decoding	25	90	3.2	-10*	.05	>15 %
Oral Reading Fluency	14	84	3.8	-15*	.01	<15 %
Oral Reading Accuracy	53	101	6.2	0	n.s.	n.a.
Total Reading	16	85	100 May	-16*	.01	<10 %
Comprehens. & Fluency	16	85	100 Mar	-16*	.01	<10 %

Reading skills are mostly below grade level and below expectation for her intelligence, but the important reading comprehension task was average, as is her oral reading accuracy, which is a pleasant surprise. Overall reading skills are significantly below what they should be, putting this girl at 16th percentile overall for her grade; thus she is likely to have mild difficulty coping in grade-level reading tasks. Overall skill levels indicate she is likely to need more time than most peers for readings, but should perform adequately provided she doesn't hurry the reading to get it over with.

WIAT-III Subtest	%ile	std. score	grade equiv.	difference from ability	signif. / level	frequency in norm sample
Math Problem-Solving	32	93	4.8	-10*	.05	>15 %
Numerical Operations	6	- 77	3.3	-23*	.01	< 5 %
Math Fluency—Addition	2	70	2.4	-30*	.01	< 5 %
Math Fluency—Subtraction	5	75	2.7	-24*	.01	< 5 %
Math Fluency—Multiply	14	84	3.9	-15*	.05	>15 %
Math Composite	14	84		-18*	.01	<10 %
Math Fluency	4	74	1986 GOM	-24*	.01	< 5 %

Mathematics skills are all below grade level, as well as significantly below expectation for her intelligence. It's a mild surprise that Brianna's word problem-solving is relatively good, though she was notably slow in completing these items (she got the points as there's no time limit on them). Mathematical reasoning is fairly intact, but low math facts and slowness in her written paper-and-pencil calculations (numerical operations) are problematic; she was very limited in multiplication, could not divide, nor do multi-digit subtraction. Her fluency levels are as low as usually seen in learning disabilities, though she was quick enough in simple single-digit multiplication, albeit stating "Oh, I've forgotten my times tables".

WIAT-III Subtest	%ile	std. score	·grade eguiv.	difference from ability	significance level	frequency in norm sample
Sentence Composition Sentence Combining	53 77	101 111	6.3	+ 2	n.s.	n.a.
Sentence Building	27	91				
Essay Composition	37	95	4.5	- 5	n.s.	n.a.
Grammar & Mech.	19	87	3.5	-14*	.05	<15 %
Word Count	21	88				
Theme Develop't	53	101				
Spelling	37	95	4.7	- 5	n.s.	>15 %
Written Expression	37	95		- 4	n.s.	>15 %

Written Language skills are variable. Skills are good in sentence composition; though she had some difficulty making up sentences with specified properties, she did very well in combining existing sentences (not having to be concerned with spelling). Essay composition skills tested as reasonably good for her grade, with good idea development, adequate productivity, and 'mechanics' skills (punctuation, capitals, proper sentences), grammar a little weak. Spelling skills are okay for her age and grade, and consistent with what's expected for her intelligence, as with her sentence-writing skills. Writing (actually printing) is quite legible. She should be able to cope with written assignments, though will need some help reviewing her grammar.

WIAT-III Subtest	%ile	std score	Grade equiv.	difference from ability	signif. Ievel	frequency in norm sample
Listening Comprehension	23	89	3.9	-14*	.05	<15 %
Receptive Vocabulary	50	100	90 544			
Oral Discourse Comp.	10	81				
Oral Expression	45	98	6.3	- 4	n.s.	>15 %
Expressive Vocabulary	19	87				
Oral Word Fluency	55	102	## 			
Sentence Repetition	70	108				
Oral Language Composite	30	92	n.a.	-11*	.05	<15 %

Oral Language skills are show some differences. Listening Comprehension is somewhat low; despite good receptive vocabulary, she was low in understanding spoken sentences (answering questions based on what she recalls), which means that she may need more explanation than peers when concepts are taught, particularly if she is unaware that she did not comprehend. Expressive skills tested are word production fluency, expressive vocabulary, and verbatim repeating of spoken sentences. Her good sentence repetition suggests that her receptive weakness is not simply a case of poor recall of the words said to her, but a mild difficulty in bringing up the correct visual image that relates to the words she hears.

Overall academic skills are below grade level (and below what is expected for her cognitive ability levels using age-based norms) in reading, and mathematics calculation skills. The *visual* mode of *information input* (reading) and the *auditory* mode (listening comprehension) are both mildly but significantly weak. This means that Brianna likely finds it a little harder than her peers to take in new content information by reading, or by lectures.

The *auditory* mode of *information output* (speaking) and the *visual-motor* mode (writing) are both average for her grade and age, but she is weak in her grammar and sentence 'mechanics' while good in content production. Brianna will likely find it slightly easier to express what she knows by expressing her thoughts orally than by written tests and assignments.

SUMMARY and RECOMMENDATIONS

Individual testing of cognitive abilities confirms that Brianna has generally average overall cognitive abilities; WISC-IV Full Scale and General Ability Index are both Average (about 55th %ile) and indicate that reasoning abilities are sufficient to meet school academic demands.

Standardized testing of academic skills on the WIAT-III finds weakness (skills about 1.5 standard deviations below cognitive abilities) in mathematics calculation skills. In these, her skills are below expected levels to an uncommon frequency (in the lowest 5 - 10% of students for how much lower her skills are than they should be), despite the help she has received at school and home, and the value placed on education in her family, and the absence of sensory deficits that might account for these.

Reading weakness is apparent (skills are 16th percentile overall, but she is in the lowest 10% for how much lower her skills are than they should be for her intelligence), but less than expected with her history; perhaps this is the result of improved skills through remedial help she has received both at school and home. Her reading speed is affected (largely through having a smaller reading vocabulary, which only practice can improve); this means she will need a little more time to do readings, so she doesn't have to hurry and thus learn less from a passage than she should.

Mathematics. Brianna meets DSM-IV diagnostic criteria of Mathematics Disorder (315.1). Her deficits are moderate to severe, in calculation skills and fluency, meaning she does not have the skills to meet grade-level expectations without help. These deficits are primarily in calculations and 'math facts', rather than understanding problem reasoning. Use of a calculator can clearly help with such deficits, but would be quite time-consuming compared to the automaticity of learned math facts typically possessed by students her age and grade.

Consideration should be given to identifying Brianna with Communication Exceptionality (Learning Disability), so that she may receive suitable remedial help and accommodations in her areas of difficulty, particularly in mathematics, and a lesser extent in reading speed.

Reading. Brianna will likely have mild difficulty coping in grade-level reading tasks. Her overall skill levels indicate she will likely need more time than most peers for readings, due to her weak reading comprehension and fluency.

Accommodations of text-to-speech software (wherein the computer reads digitized text to the listener at a user-set pace, while the listener follows along looking at the passage and the word as they are highlighted and being read), or 'talking books', are not good alternatives, as her listening comprehension skills didn't test as any better than her reading comprehension. Reinforced practice with feedback, on passages of suitable difficulty, is likely the best way to improve her familiarity and skills.

Mathematics. Brianna's calculation skills and speed are quite low for her grade, with notably low math facts in operations like division, multi-digit subtraction, fractions, and multiplication tables. While use of a calculator would help in doing calculations, at her young age remediation is still suggested to improve math facts and operations, to permit better coping for taking some secondary school mathematics.

Don Greenwood, Ph.D., C.Psych.

Fwd: Thank you for accepting your offer of Admission!

Brianna Robson < robsonbrianna@gmail.com >

Fri 2022-07-29 3:36 PM

To: Mamma Bear <therobsons@hotmail.com>

Begin forwarded message:

From: APPLAUTO@ucalgary.ca

Date: April 28, 2022 at 3:51:40 AM EDT

To: robsonbrianna@gmail.com

Subject: Thank you for accepting your offer of Admission!



April 28, 2022

Student number: 30180638

Dear Brianna Robson:

Thank you for paying your deposit and accepting your offer of admission. We are excited to welcome you to campus this Fall 2022!

To get you started with next steps, please register for an <u>IT Account</u>. Once you create your IT account, you will automatically receive your UCalgary email address. If you need support, see our <u>Getting Started Guide</u>.

To learn more about your next steps, please visit our website.

Sincerely,

Undergraduate Admissions





Mérite scolaire de l'Ontario Ontario Scholar

Le Mérite scolaire de l'Ontario est décerné à l'élève This award designates as an Ontario Scholar

Brianna Robson

University/College Preparation, College Preparation, Workplace Preparation, Open, Cooperative Education who has obtained an average of at least eighty percent in any six Grade 12 University Preparation, or College-delivered Dual Credit courses; or Ontario Academic Courses.

cours préuniversitaires/précollégiaux, cours précollégiaux, cours préemploi, cours ouverts, cours d'éducation coopérative, qui a obtenu une moyenne d'au moins quatre-vingts pour cent dans six cours de 12e année : cours préuniversitaires cours à double reconnaissance de crédit offerts par un collège, cours préuniversitaires de l'Ontario

Dated at Toronto this 30th

day of June 2022

Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Education



Diplôme d'études secondaires de l'Ontario Ontario Secondary School Diploma

This Diploma is granted to Ce diplôme est décerné à

Brianna Robson

a student of élève de

Brooklin High School

who has fulfilled the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma in accordance with the provisions of the Ministry of Education, Ontario.

qui a rempli les exigences prescrites pour l'obtention du diplôme d'études secondaires de l'Ontario, en vertu des dispositions du ministère de l'Éducation de l'Ontario.

Délivré à

Brooklin

day of jour de

June 2022

the

Minister of Education /Ministre de l'Education

l of School/Niredeur ou directrice de l'école