

May 12, 2021

Co-Chairs Frederick, McLain, and members of the Joint Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education:

My name is DeAujZhane Coley and I am a recent graduate of Howard University where I majored in Human Performance, Human Health and Leisure studies. I am submitting this testimony in support of OHSU's budget, and in particular OHSU's policy option package request to expand access to *OnTrack OHSU!*, which works to provide exploratory and impactful health science learning experiences to Oregon students and increases science interest and identity.

My connection with OHSU and the *OnTrack OHSU!* program began when I was a freshman at Jefferson High School located in North Portland. At 15 years old, I was eager to get more involved in the sciences and a teacher encouraged me to apply for a competitive program to be summer intern at OHSU. It was completion of that first internship at OHSU that set the tone for my career goals and formed my outlook on my possibilities of pursuing a career in medicine.

I also engaged in a job shadow through the *OnTrack OHSU!* program, which helped build my self-confidence in the STEM field and showed me that my goal to one day work in medicine was truly possible. In that job shadow, I had the opportunity to shadow a cardiologist, as well as go on rounds with a pediatric resident. At the young age of 16, I was thoroughly inspired by the physician-residents at OHSU. Additionally, OHSU has a close biotech partnership with Jefferson High School that was instrumental in encouraging me to take four years of math and science, which better prepared me for the rigor of my major in college.

Even after graduating from high school and going to college, Katie Lenahan, the *OnTrack OHSU!* program director, stayed in contact with me and still remains in contact today. Now that I have graduated, I am looking forward to beginning a post-graduate, summer research internship at OHSU. Following this opportunity, I plan to matriculate to medical school in the near future to fulfill my dream of becoming a pediatrician.

For all of these reasons, OHSU's impact on my career and life has been monumental. I urge you to fully fund OHSU's budget, and also support funding to expand access to *OnTrack OHSU!* so that more students like me have the opportunity to develop an interest in science and medicine.

Thank you,
DeAujZhane Coley