



## High School Graduate Scholarship Recipient 2023 - Rebecca Drazul

Prompt: Tell us about your plans for after high school, and how Irish dance fits into those plans

After I finish what seems like the four most agonizing years of my life, I will finally be able to embark on a new chapter. That begins with me moving only 83.6 miles east to study at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU). ECSU is a smaller university with only 4,000 students in their undergraduate and graduate programs.

Due to the university's size, it lacks something I hold so close to my heart. That something is Irish Dance. Irish Dance has been in my life for over a decade, and stopping it after I have put so much time and effort into the activity would destroy me. I have always participated in other activities while dancing, whether it was a sport like field hockey or another performing art like marching band. However, none of those activities can come with me to college due to ECSU's size and the length of time that it has been since I have participated in the activity. As I participated in all of these activities I always stuck with Irish Dance.

Besides the copious amounts of wonderful memories Irish Dance has given me, it has also kept me in the best shape. It has allowed me to not only excel in the annoying fitness tests in Physical Education classes, but also in my other activities. Leaving Irish Dance would leave me with a lack of physical activity to stay in , guaranteeing I become lazy.

Irish Dance is also an excellent way to remove negative feelings. My majors, Elementary Education and Environmental Science, have nothing to do with performing arts, I would like to engage in performing arts in some form or another in my free time. That way I will be able to stay active and maintain a healthy mindset. I hope to start up an Irish Dance club at ECSU and run it with a friend of mine that will be graduating high school next year. I want this club to be open to all, including dancers who have danced for years or want to start Irish Dancing.

The stress of competitions can be overwhelming and, while it can be rewarding at times, I want my Irish Dance club to be stress-relieving. I want to display my love for Irish Dancing and provide others with an opportunity to get all of their emotions out in a healthy way. My Irish Dance Club would be a fun way to learn about this beautiful form of art without having to deal with the stressors that competition brings.