

Many people have done crazy, amazing, and incredible things in their lives. Kids get told stories from their grandparents about great and trying times in their lives. Some have literally climbed high mountains. Other's lived through the Great Depression or World Wars. Some grew up on farms with no electricity or running water. Others grew up in impoverished parts of big cities and somehow became wealthy. Maybe they used to be citizens of another country and now are U.S. Citizens. Some even now, have grandparents who invented the computer...parts of the internet. Maybe they were the first person to go to college in their entire family. Others have faced down diseases/cancer and are still here to share and show their battle scars. Well, I have a story too. I want to be able to tell my grandkids the stories from my experiences. One experience that I have already had, happened Friday, October 3, 2008.

This huge part of my story begins, when I was nine years old. Friday, October 3, 2008... that is the day my dad passed away suddenly from complications of a genetic kidney disease called Alport Syndrome. All of my life up until that point, my dad had kidney failure and had to do dialysis every day to survive. Growing up watching him live with it, I didn't think it was unusual. I can remember the Thursday I came home from school and he and mom weren't there. Instead, there was a note from my mom that said they had to take my dad to the E.R. It was very strange for me because I had always been aware of the fact that technically my dad was sick, but I had never thought of him actually as being "sick." We found out that evening that we would be lucky if he made it 24 hours. We had a little bit of time with him that night after he got out of surgery where he was able to talk to us and say goodbye. After that, he was in so much pain, there was nothing they could do. By the next late afternoon, he was gone.

In the spring of 2008, my Nanna suddenly suffered a fatal heart attack. Six weeks later, my dad's mom suddenly passed from a lost battle with Lupus. Then in October my dad passed

too. About six months after, Mom sat us all down and asked if anyone had any fears of dying. She obviously had been shaken to her core. No one really said anything, except my oldest brother Josh. He said that dad found out about the kidney disease at this age, what if he had it too. So, we all went to see the doctor. Almost a year later, Alport Syndrome was confirmed through a kidney biopsy. Josh's kidneys failed halfway through his senior year of high school. Ever since then my brother has been on kidney dialysis like my dad was. It has been five years, and he is active and at the top of the kidney transplant list in Spokane, WA. Almost two years ago, through a routine sports physical, we found evidence that led to tests confirming that I too, have the genetic kidney disease. So far, it is acting like the female version which means that it isn't as aggressive. Then, last fall, my older sister was also diagnosed with Alport Syndrome. Again, it appears it is the non-aggressive female version. Finding out about this made me want to prove that this disease was not going to bring down my family, anymore...at least not for me.

I am currently involved in many things in my little town of Colfax, Washington. I go to a small high school of about 280 students. I am part of the volleyball team, basketball team, track and field team, ASB, National Honor Society member, and a part of the FFA. I am now a senior, and I can say that going to a small town high school has given me so many opportunities.

Although is a small school, being in the backyard of WSU, it has a very rigorous academic program going on. There are as of now six different college courses that you can take in the high school. I have taken five out of those six dual-credit classes. Being a 3-sport athlete and being in dual credit classes requires most of my time. Whenever I am not studying, doing homework, or at practice, I love to read. Reading helps me escape to a place of serenity. I love reading because I can imagine actually being in the plot of the book, maybe even being the main character or I feel a connection to them.

The reason I want to receive this award is so that I can purchase a *good* laptop to take to college with me, and use to help me with my classes at college. I have applied to a few universities in Washington and Texas, but I plan on attending the University Of Washington to study pre-med. I want to be a pediatric surgeon when I complete medical school. Having a reliable laptop to help me in college will be a relief to me and will hopefully ease some of the hardships of college! The reason I need this prestigious scholarship is because my family has always been on the lower side of the income scale, and especially after my dad died from Alport Syndrome. With my brother being diagnosed with it and currently waiting a transplant, my mom has taken all the financial burden for me, and my siblings. My sister lives in a city two hours away from us, but still needs my mom to help her financially, basically every month. My brother, his fiancé, and I all depend on my mom to support us and she works two jobs. She is a bus driver for both the Colfax and Pullman School Districts and works as a secretary for Colfax Security Company. She also has to help me pay for all of my dual credit classes in school, and all the crazy expenses I have for being a 3-sport athlete. She is incredible and helps me every day in any way she can. I want to receive this award so that I can take one thing off of her worry list. She already does so much for me, and if I were to receive this scholarship, it would be so great for her to be able to save the money she would've used on buying me a laptop for some other need, or just save it altogether.

In conclusion, my family has been greatly impacted by Alport Syndrome. To receive this award would greatly impact my life, and would help me achieve the success I intend to continue to have going on to college. I am grateful to have had this opportunity to apply for this scholarship and will hold it in the highest regards, even if I do not receive the money. Thank you for your time and effort that is put into this award.