

Reaching for Perfection

I have always been a proud over-achiever. I filled my schedule with AP classes, college courses, leadership positions, clubs and organizations, volunteer opportunities, and of course ballet classes and rehearsals. There was never a challenge I stepped down from, and I will never in my future shy away from an opportunity to improve myself. Of course, I strive to be perfect and always have. But, I do fail, I do face set-backs, I do struggle, and this is okay.

Going into junior year, I was prepared to face my first set of AP classes and new responsibilities: driving myself, starting the college search, applying for club leadership positions. However, what I thought would be a gradual change into the "adult life" was nothing gradual. That summer, my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. The woman who I idolize. The woman who takes care of me. My best friend. Not only was I devastated, but I was forced to grow up quickly. With mom down, I had to take over as the role of the caretaker, along with being a student and friend and leader and volunteer and dancer and daughter. I had to do it all, and I did. I never gave up. I did my best to remind myself that I had to keep moving forward. I never said a word to anyone at school or dance since I had tasks to complete and wanted to focus all my energy on doing those to the best of my ability. I was determined to stay positive, work hard, and come out stronger than ever. I am proud to say that I finished that year with a 4.0 GPA, many volunteer opportunities, the secretary of the Special Olympics Project Unify club at my school, multiple dance scholarship awards, and more maturity and character than I ever thought possible.

Two years have passed since my mom's initial diagnosis; however, a few months ago, my mom was re-diagnosed with cancer. This time, I am not scared. I know that I have the ability to care for my family, be a top notch student, reach for my dreams, and inspire those around me.

I have dreams to be Physical Therapist for veterans and elderly patients in nursing homes,
lending my healing hands to the broken bodies and hearts in my community.

I am fearless. I am determined. I am passionate.