

My name is Kyla Hansen. I am a high school senior at Oakesdale High School in Washington State. As high school students we are faced with many challenges. My sophomore year in high school I was faced with many challenges that no students should ever face. On September 13th, 2017 I was going to Freeman High School at the time, and I went to school with high expectations of having good day. Within minutes my life was forever changed. One of my fellow classmates shot and killed my locker partner Sam, and injured my three best friends. As time went on it became harder to go on. I had the constant images replay from that day. The most important thing I learned from the day was to not let the shooter win, which meant going on with my everyday life. Months passed and I then started to have a lot of trouble with my eyes. I struggled with with my contacts sticking to my eyes, my eyes being swollen shut when I wake up in the morning, and having severe pain in my eyes and headaches. I even lost my "somewhat good" vision and became legally blind. After millions of doctors appointments we had no answers. After using steroid eyedrops to help my symptoms, I then developed early signs of glaucoma. Flash forward to now and I can only use natural remedies that help a little, but my symptoms will never be gone. Now I walk with my head up high, proud of the progress I've made. I could have given up multiple times, but I had the power to never let it drag me down. These events have made me the person I am today, an overcomer that rises above each and every day.