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PB&J Scholarship Essay

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I have had to struggle through many hurdles in my life, especially due to my health. Both my mental and physical health are not great and that has had a big impact on my life. I used to be a straight-A student, doing my very best to be the best, but by the time high school rolled around, my health started to decline, and it declined fast. Because of this, my grades started to be put on the back burner. I never gave up on my goals however. Despite my struggles, I still am striving for the future I dreamed of.

As for my health, I suffer from a physical condition called Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, or EDS. This is a disorder in my connective tissue, causing a lot of weakness and pain, especially in my joints. I also have several mental health conditions, including Bipolar II, anxiety, and ADHD. Both my physical and mental health conditions showed up long before I began getting help and treatment. These have all affected my motivation and concentration, making school difficult. I only started to receive help around my junior and senior years of high school. Even with the help I have now, these chronic disorders continue to affect my life.

Before getting help and during the experimental time of figuring out what treatments will help best, my grades dipped a few times. During my junior year, I ended up failing a class. My other classes also dropped, and while not as low, it was not up to my standards. This continued too in senior year, as my medications were not working as well as they needed to be and my physical health got worse. Despite my challenges, I never stopped pushing myself to do well. I still took classes that challenged me, for example, AP classes and honors classes. I did not give up, instead, I sought out help to pass the classes I was in. I worked hard to bring up my grades when I could. Finally, I kept dreaming of a future I hope to attain.

To overcome the challenges I faced, I put in a lot of work and found support from those around me. I worked hard to better my health, finding treatments and skills to lessen my symptoms and overcome the ones I cannot. I built up my support team. I got help from my teachers and counselor to be able to pass my classes. And most of all, I never gave up. I may have faltered a time or two, but I always got back up and tried again when I could.

As for my future plans, I have plans to go to Cornell College next fall to study biology. I chose this college for several reasons. I wanted to go to a smaller college, and one with a campus closer together to help lessen the strain on my body while going between classes and my dorm or elsewhere. I also fell in love with the campus and the people there. Most of all, I appreciate their

block schedule for classes. This schedule allows for students to take just one class at a time. This accommodates for how my brain works, as I can put a lot of focus into one thing, but once I have multiple things going on, my concentration starts to crumble. Finding a school that not only is my dream school in size, academics, and the people there, but also accommodates for me being better at focusing on just one thing at a time, is what led me to choose Cornell College.

I am also choosing to study biology. For the longest time, I had thought I was going to go into teaching. However, teaching always felt like a fallback to me. One day, I was thinking about how I loved biology class, and how it always came easier to me than most. I then started to think about all the jobs that seemed so cool involving biology in some way. Eventually, I realized a key fact, that biology could be what I studied and eventually find a career in. This realization was huge for me. I no longer felt like I was just going through the motions, and instead felt like I was working towards a dream job. While not all my struggles were cured by this realization, it helped to motivate me to keep trying, even when life pushed me down.

Being able to afford college, to keep doing well in classes, and my health are all challenges I will have to face. And I am certain more challenges will come up that I can not plan for. I will not let these hurdles stop me from reaching my goals. I know the challenges I have to face will always keep coming, but I have also learned to have faith in myself and to persevere despite them. I have a lot of support and I know I have my own strength as well. I have been working hard to combat what is to come my way. I have been working hard to get scholarships to afford college. I have worked hard to find what works best for me in studying and completing work for school. And I have been working hard to keep up with and to better my health in any way I can, such as doing my physical therapy or taking my medications. It has not and will not always be easy, but I will work hard and believe in myself because that is the only way through it.

I have struggled in the past and still do at times. Despite this, I am working hard to overcome my struggles and find a way to achieve my goals. I keep getting closer to reaching my goals, but I can not stop yet. I still have a long way to go, but I know that with some work, I can do it. I can not wait for college, even with the challenges I will have to face there. I plan to continue to learn, to grow, and to never let the challenges I face stop me from being able to achieve my dreams.