

March 11, 2016

To, OSAA

My name is Jade Lewis and I am a Senior at North Medford High School. Recently I found out about Track and Field and how amazing it was, as I have never played a school sport before I am rather interested in this. Learning new things is something I enjoy, and have been wanting to learn to throw a Javelin for quite some time now. I found out that I was ineligible due to the fact I am technically a 5th year even though I was pulled from school for a year and half due to many health, and family issues. My Junior year of 2013-2014 was filled with the Divorce of not only my Grandmother and Grandfather, but the split of my Father and his 2 year girlfriend whom I viewed as my mother type figure. The year was full of frustration as my grandmother ran away to meet her foreign lover without a note left to tell us where she had gone. The entire family was torn apart and left in ruins as we were abandoned by the women who had raised us and loved us, or so we thought. I struggled to find myself and cope with losing all of these people who I cared for so deeply at once, and fell into a deep depression. The months drew together and I had developed a rather bad infection in the right half of my head causing me to have severe headaches with light and sound sensitivity. I constantly struggled to adapt to the new situation I was thrown into and to gather myself from the pieces I had crumbled into.

Not long after the beginning of December my father we put into Jail several times due to the fact she thought he was stalking her when he dropped me off at school. She lived across the street from North at the time and everyday I was dropped off in fear she would be peering out of the window waiting to call the Police to get my dad for simply bringing me to school. I remember one incident in which my father was actually picked up by the police from his wheelchair and dragged out of our home because he was not able to walk at the time. This was about a week before we took me from North and moved to Prospect. We had bought a small trailer in Prospect for a thousand dollars but it was in such poor conditions I couldn't live in it for the first 2 months. (January, February, and some of March) During this time I was trying to balance the pain in my head, taking care of my very ill grandfather, and make the trailer we bought liveable. While fixing our home I stayed with a family friend for the time in a small room while traveling between school, my grandfathers, and working on the trailer where I hoped to move into soon.

After 5 CAT scans and over 30 Doctor trips I was left hanging when my OHP wouldn't cover my much needed Antibiotics to rid the infection from my head that was spreading to my lungs. Nights were the worst, I couldn't sleep because as the pressure changed it caused my migraines to only get worse and cause me to roll over and over all night. I gave up, I was so depressed I just cried, my doctor prescribed me pain medication to help ease the pain(from the

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pressure buildup) but eventually I told him to stop so I wouldn't become dependent. During this I decided I needed to focus on my health and my family's health, so we pulled me from the school and I got a part time job to help provide for the costs of just our daily lives. My grandfather whom we moved across the street from was flown in a Helicopter three times to RVMC and caused my father and I to panic(On October 31st, a few weeks after my birthday he passed away) I was the base foundation to my family and felt I was holding everyone together at that point, keeping us strong despite we were so weak. Into the next year I finally started to get better but still had to provide for my family. My father had a somewhat job but has for the past 10 years been trying to apply for disability due to his broken back, but was denied multiple times, so I was stuck with working.

I saved up enough money to move back down to Medford to be able to pay rent so I could attend North Medford and graduate where I felt emotionally safe and happy. I have never played a school sport before but have found that this, as small as it is, means the world to me. Through my struggles I have found a happiness finally, and was devastated when I found out I was ineligible to play. If I could change the past and prevent these horrible things from happening I would, and I wouldn't have to be sitting here explaining my hardships. It's honestly hard for me to reveal some of these things because not even my best friend knows some of this. I have never wanted something more in my life and have been working so hard to learn something new. Track, I can honestly say, has really brought a happiness to me and has caused me to forget some of these recent tragedies and given me motivation to keep smiling.

For side note, we found out what caused my head/lung infection was from where I was living had a black mold growth in the walls in my room which circulated into my room and caused me to inhale it everyday for what they believe was a year.

Sincerely,


Jade Ariel Lewis