

South Tahoe High School

Lake Tahoe Unified School District

"Home of the Vikings"



Ivone Larson, Principal

Dennis Sarosik, Assistant Principal

Patrick Hamett, Assistant Principal

My name is _____ and the past four years have been an experience that shaped me into the person I am today. My mother and father both moved here 22 years ago from Mexico with their only daughter, my sister. They came hoping that they could build a better life for my sister, and then my brother who was born in the US four years later. Since they arrived, my father worked to become a legal citizen and the case went on until four years ago when he was finally deported, leaving my family here. We had to face a choice about how we wanted to handle our lives--follow my father to Mexico, or fight and work hard to stay in South Lake Tahoe. My mother told me that the decision was ultimately mine because she didn't want to move me anywhere I didn't want to be, especially if that meant I would leave behind everything I had here. I know it would be difficult, but we decided to stay, and against all odds, we're still here. Needless to say, I had the help of my older sister and brother to help guide me along the way, but neither one could replace the father figure I lost. I could still speak with him, and skype with him, but we've never had the money for me to go see him in person. Though it was a tragedy, I wouldn't be who I am now. The experience of having to grow up on my own let me figure out who I am and what I wanted at a much younger age than everyone else around me. I want to be able to help people in any way I can, and be there for younger people who have been in my footsteps. Things were fine for about two years, but then another tragedy came upon my family. My brother, who was 20 at the time, was attacked by Still's Disease, a very rare illness that has an incredibly low survival rate. He had a heart attack and was transported to Renown in Reno. My mother and sister both went to Reno and stayed with him for a month in a half, and I stayed here to continue school. He was released only to go back to Barton Memorial, then a hospital in Davis for another month. This entire time, the doctors would tell us that his chances of survival were incredibly low and that he wasn't going to make it. I couldn't believe that my brother wasn't going to survive, and I begin to live a life on my own, without anyone there to take care of me and to protect me like before. I was heartbroken, but I knew I couldn't give up. Against every single odd, my brother survived and made almost a complete recovery. My life and high school career has been met by extreme turmoil, but I still didn't surrender when everyone around me began to get hurt, or taken from me. If I had to describe my life with one word, it would be "Miracle". I know that I can stand through anything; no matter how hard it is because I've already stood. I will be attending University of the Pacific in the fall to study biology and music.

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