



# SOUTH TAHOE HIGH SCHOOL

*Home of the Vikings*

This student has remained optimistic in the face of great challenges. She does not accept the victim status and rarely thinks or acknowledges the family struggles that she has had to endure through her young life. She plans to attend community college in Ventura California next fall where she pragmatically will obtain a certification as a paramedic. Then, she plans to continue her education and development to reach for her goal as a trauma surgeon to help people with emergencies. She has been dedicated to working in the field of medicine. She knows that in this area she will be able to improve others' lives and also demonstrate that despite having the odds stacked against her she can overcome her circumstances and achieve her dreams.

This student's primary reason for choosing medicine is that her mother was an EMT and Ski Patrol professional before she became addicted to opioids. This student was always exposed to emergency medicine. At first, she was flipping through her mother's anatomy textbooks learning before she could even read. This student suffered as she watched the drugs take over her mother's life. There were many painful scenes that she had to witness as she spent many traumatic hours with emergency as the paramedics tried to help her mom awake from one of her many overdoses. This experience tragically became routine in her home.

So, in 8th grade when her mother's addiction took a turn for the worse as she progressed abusing heavier drugs landing her mother in Jail more often. This young brave young lady made the decision to leave and live with her grandmother. This was a very difficult decision for a young person entering high school but as a survivor, she returned to a stable home here in Lake Tahoe. She had to grow personally and break out of her introverted shell as she made many amazing friends. Her life improved as she collected many successes but watched her parents sink deeper into the abyss of drug addiction. She had to continue to compartmentalize her life and ignore her parent's conflicts avoiding the emotional rollercoaster that would derail her own life. Last year, became overwhelming with her parents' divorce and the death by suicide of her friend Thomas. This student could no longer shield her emotions and experienced the enormous grief of the death of a friend and then having her mother's arrest over the summer. She learned that her mother was so depressed that she tried to hang herself in her jail cell.

Despite the many struggles and setbacks, this young lady has maintained her focus on helping others. She has obtained valuable experiences, distraction from family problems and medical knowledge through the Sports Medicine classes and the campus club. She took on several leadership roles including Public Relations and Vice President. She volunteered over 100 more hours than she was required to complete over working with student athletes on and off campus.

This young lady has proven to herself that she is ready for the exciting future through her college education. She has faith that the experiences she has endured prove she can succeed through hard work and belief in herself. She hopes to be a positive example to help other kids who may have gone through similar struggles. This young lady understands that financially it will be difficult to achieve her college dreams and appreciates the financial support of HERO contributions