A highlight of my life has been to go camping with my dad every year. I did not know that our trip in late spring of 2018 would be our last father-daughter camping trip. On the rainy morning of May 9, 2019 my dad lost his life in a fatal car accident. My life instantly changed. I am grateful my dad taught me how to deal with life’s challenges and focus on serving others. I have drawn on those teachings, his example, and leaned heavily on my faith.

A few months after my dad died, we woke up to find our home filled with water. We had to be out of our home for several months while most of our possessions were dried, cleaned, or disposed of. The first semester of my Junior year, we lived at my grandparent’s home while our home was being repaired. I drew on my dad’s example to stay positive.

At the beginning of my Senior year our home caught fire. Once again, we moved in with my grandparents while cleanup and repairs could be made. The garage was destroyed. Our house had fire, smoke, and water damage. Two bedrooms are still uninhabitable, including my room. We are grateful we recently could move back into a portion of our home while we wait for county permits to repair and rebuild. Losing my dad and being uprooted twice within one year has been difficult but once again, I tried to look at the bright side and worked hard to keep my grades up.

My two brothers currently attend college full time. This will be a hardship for our family with three of us in college, since my mother is a schoolteacher and widow. I plan to complete college in four years and alleviate this financial hardship as soon as possible and begin my career.

I am saving money for college by working part time. I have worked hard on my studies during high school despite losing my dad and having to leave our home twice for months at a time, during the past year and a half. My hope is to pay for my college tuition with scholarships. I plan to work full time each summer and work a part time during college to pay for my expenses.

I have drawn strength from what my dad taught me and have discovered a love of reading, painting, physical activity, and community service. I am on the field hockey team and decided to help coach at the middle school in the afternoons. I joined Interact, Key Club and helped with service projects including beach cleaning. My brother taught me how to surf and I have developed an interest in preserving the ocean and our environment. I am interested in Science majors where my career will help improve the lives of others because that is when I feel closest to my dad. His example of selfless service is a guiding force in my life. It is my goal to follow in his footsteps, work hard, serve others, and do everything I can to improve the world in which we live.