



Concert for Causes Inc., Student Spotlight

My name is A.D. and I am a Senior in high school. I have had more struggles in my life than any child should have ever had to face. At the age of 15, I was removed from my mom's custody and placed in a foster home. My mother struggled with addiction and my biological father had never been present in my life. I was the oldest of my siblings and became their caregiver at a young age while my mother battled her addiction.

As I got older, I became very resentful and angry. It just wasn't fair that I had to experience all of the trauma and instability that had come my way. I was the child that was suspended multiple times for skipping, disrespect, fighting, vaping and unfortunately fell into addiction just like my mother had.

I moved in with a relative for a short time, and due to some of my struggles, was relocated to a foster home. I was taken away from everything I had ever known. I enrolled into a new school and had to start all over. The foster family that I was placed with was a younger couple who both had music backgrounds. They both have shown me more love and support than I feel I deserve. Before being placed with them, I played music during the pandemic, but I had never had a family that was supportive or present when it came to anything extracurricular, and it was looked at as a financial burden. I loved it but for the sake of my biological family I was "forced" to get out of band. When placed with my foster family they encouraged me to rejoin the band and I did. I am so glad I did because I can honestly say that I believe that music, alongside my foster family, has saved me from where my life was headed.

I have learned the importance of being a team player, dedication, punctuality, and how to be a better person all the way around all through music. Over the last two years I have found a real therapy and love for music. It was the first time in my life that I felt like things were right. My love of music has allowed me to discover self-confidence and overcome my addictions. I have been able to create lifelong relationships with other students and my amazing band director. I am even a member of Band Council and the Chaplain of the band. I am considering going to college for Music Education just like my foster father did. My foster parents both played the saxophone in college.

I am truly humbled by being selected to receive such an amazing gift.