

Second Place
Ashley Dunham

9th grade, Valley High School, Valley Local Schools, Lucasville

Title: The Challenge of my Life

“Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact.”

Ever since I can remember I’ve had diabetes. I need many of the laws of life to get through my daily existence. Important to my daily routine is courage, responsibility and perseverance. Fortunately, I’ve always had my parents support and very qualified health care professionals caring for me.

Perseverance is my first law of life. It is the will and drive to keep striving forward instead of throwing in the towel. Perseverance has led me to being where I am today. At times it is very difficult maintaining my sugar levels and insulin needs. I play basketball and run track and this extensive exercise lowers my sugar level. During these times, my mother must wake me in the middle of the night to check my blood sugar level. Otherwise, it is very possible for my sugar to drop so low that I’m in a severe insulin reaction, which is very dangerous. Even though I must endure a lot with my diabetes, I strive to do my best and never give up. My parents have always told me I should not let diabetes get in the way of any goals I set for myself.

My second law of life is responsibility. My diabetes has taught me so much about responsibility. When I was very young, I depended on my parents to be responsible for my diabetic care. But as I have grown, I’ve had to become more and more responsible for my own well being. I’ve learned I have to be organized and keep on a strict schedule. With the sports I play, I always have to plan ahead in scheduling my meal times and insulin injections with my practice and game times. Making the right choices helps me stay healthy, and able to do the things I enjoy. This learned responsibility has also carried over into other aspects of my life including school work and household chores.

I have to endure the everyday pain of finger sticks and shots. Therefore, I must keep the courage, knowing this is what I must do in order to stay alive. Sure, there are days when I wish I could eat anything I want, anytime I want, and not worry about getting my shots or finger sticks. However, it is at these times that I must be strong and courageous.

Perseverance, responsibility and courage define my life. They are all characteristics which will help lead me to a successful life. If I eliminate any one of these from my beliefs, I will not be living life to its fullest potential. And more importantly, I can be happy knowing I gave my best.