Nina A.

**Nurse**

*Arrowhead High School*

Being a child, sure I may have wanted to be a superhero but we all know that wasn’t really going to happen... I was fascinated by these fictional characters who could make such a great impact in the lives of other people. As I later found out, I don’t need superpowers to make a positive difference in people's lives. So, in addition to looking up to superheroes, I also looked up to nurses.

Ever since then, I have always wanted to be a nurse. Now why did this sound so appealing to me? Long days, difficult patients, stress, physical demands, and feeling undervalued. To most people this does not sound like their dream career, still, I wanted to help people when they were at their lowest. My grandmother had a stroke during her open heart surgery when I was about nine years old. Our whole family was devastated by how much this surgery had taken a turn. This surgery was supposed to fix her heart but only made her life so much more difficult. When she woke up from surgery, we realized she was not the same person as before. She relearned all of the things we take for granted every single day. The doctors even said that she would never be able to walk again. After so many long and frustrating days with Grandma in the hospital and rehabilitation, I realized that these nurses are everything to her. Yes, I could choose to be a doctor, with more schooling and responsibilities, but the nurse is the one standing by the patients side and bringing them back to good health. They are there for their patients' highs and certainly their lows. I watched this team of doctors and nurses bring my grandma back to the sweet grandma who took me to Dairy Queen before school started each year, sent me cards in the mail for each holiday, and always said “I love you more.” This dedication and sincere concern the nurses had provided left a huge impact in my heart.

For the past year, I have worked in an assisted living facility as a certified nursing assistant where I care deeply for my resident and the staff I work alongside. This opportunity has shown me what a career in healthcare will look like in my future, and how much it strengthened my desire to pursue it.

I have begun to learn that little things such as a hug or saying “Good night, sleep tight” to a patient can have such an impact in their lives. Watching my grandmother go through rehab, I knew that some residents did not get visitors every day like she did. So as the nurse, you truly are able to change these people’s lives. This provides a sense of comfort when they are not somewhere they particularly choose to be. Not only do nurses have to treat the patients physical needs and demands, but their mental and emotional ones as well. While I don't know if nursing is the right choice for me yet, like Grandma always said “We’ll follow you wherever life takes you.”