

COVID-19

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If anyone in the world would have betted me a million dollars that I would not have a normal senior year in high school, I would have laughed in their face. My senior year started off normal, just like every other school year had ever been. This was my year, my time to shine. I was in my last year of high school with people I grew up with over the past thirteen years, would more than likely never see again after graduation. The word covid meant nothing to us when it first came around in the fall of 2019, we were not worried one bit.

Practicing my skills to become Certified Nurse Assistant in the spring of 2020 is what took up the majority of my fall other than volleyball. I had prepared for my CNA certification for the last three years of high school. Around December of 2019, is when the changes started coming in. We kept hearing more and more about this thing called “Covid” as people around the world were starting to get more concerned with what it was and what it was to become. Around the end of February, we learned that Covid was more serious that what we thought it was. The last week of February, I learned some bad news. I was told that we would not be able to go to our clinical site to complete our hours. No nursing home would even consider taking us in so that we could complete them. But on March 12, my world was flipped upside down.

Softball has been in my life as long as I can remember. I have been playing since t-ball. My senior year I was going to break many records from my school, the county, and even some records that I had already broken myself. On the 12th of March, my world was shattered. I was told that I would not be able to get my CNA. Later that day, my head coach and my assistant coach called me to their office and sat me down. They told me that the state had postponed all spring sports until further notice. I immediately broke down in tears. The last games to be played my senior year was Friday, March 13th of 2020.

We played McMichael in a double header so that we could get just two last games in because we did not know what the future held, and it scared us. I left my heart out on the field that night, God was telling me that this was it. We won the first game and then we started the second game shortly after we finished the first. We were winning and I was pitching one of the best games I had ever pitched before. When the time came to the bottom of the seventh innings, we had two outs. My lifelong friend, who was also McMichael's pitcher, came up to bat. My coach called a screw ball, strike one. He then called a curve ball, strike two. When I received the ball from my catcher, God told me this was it. I walked to the back of the mound, started to cry just a little. I walked a little further, I gathered myself. When I turned around, I grabbed some dirt and rubbed in on my pants. As my coach called a rise ball, I knew this was it. I began my pitching motion and as I released the ball, I started crying. When the ball left my fingertips, I knew it was going to be a perfect rise ball and that I would get her to swing and miss. Sure, as I thought, she swung and missed. Strike three, ball game! We ran off the field in happiness, I looked around and realized that this was the last time I would ever get to play with the girls I grew up with. All these emotions and tears came streaming from my face, I could not stop crying. Once everyone realized I was crying, they all circled me into a big group hug.

March 13th was the most emotional night of my life. I did not get a proper senior night with my family or anything. Everyone was crying, I felt like I had been hit by a truck. I played with an amazing group of girls and I could not have asked for a better way to finish off my high school career than we did. We later learned that in fact, I would never step foot on another softball field again in high school. My career was over. I had so many goals I wanted to accomplish and a fantastic season to look forward to. All of these events that happened, only

made me stronger as cliché as it sounds. I went through things nobody else's class below me would have to do.

I did not think we would even have a graduation ceremony or anything. I was expecting my high school to tell us that we could come pick up our year books, cap and gowns, and that our diploma would be mailed to us. We did not get our senior prom either which was really a bummer. I had looked forward to my senior prom for years. When our school faculty was deciding on what to do for our graduation, they decided that we would do a drive through type prom. At first, it sounded terrible and very unorganized. But when the day of "graduation" came to be, we all got on our vehicles that were decorated for the celebration of us. We waited in line for about an hour, then my turn came. I got out of my dad's truck, walked up to the station where I got my cords. I then walked in line to get my diploma cover, from there they put my cords on me in the correct order and I shook my principal's hand. Walking to the tunnel filled with fake fog, I then met my family on the other side. My sister flipped my tassel, and I was graduated. We took pictures and then it was time for me to walk to the next place. From there, I was greeted with a cupcake and a balloon from one of my best friends. I walked further and was met by my former teachers and some substitutes. Some of them had gifts and others threw confetti. As I hugged them walking by a few tears were shed with some of them. These were the people who helped shape me into who I am today, and I was saying goodbye to them.

My senior year was not at all what I had expected it to be, but it is a memory of a lifetime. Graduation will be a day that I never forget. The Covid-19 Pandemic made a huge impact on my senior year as well going into my freshman year of college.