

Dear Richard Bulpitt Education Award Scholarship Selection Committee:

When I was young, I used to write cards addressed to my parents saying "you are the best mom/dad in the world".

As I finish my high school education and pass through a major milestone in my life, I am able to realize the truth and weight of the words that a young girl wrote. I am incredibly blessed to have the support, guidance, and love, my parents have shared with me, allowing me to flourish personally, academically and athletically.

My education began years before I first picked up a pencil. It started with nightly reading where either my mother or father would read books to my siblings and I. We progressed from picture books to short novels taking turns reading until I was able to fully comprehend and read books all by myself. They instilled within me a mind full of creativity and a strong passion for reading and literature. Furthermore, throughout my elementary and high school years, my parents were actively involved in my schooling, from helping in hot lunches, to volunteering on field trips, and driving teams to volleyball, basketball, cross-country, and track meets. Not only did they support me while I was at school, but also at home where they were always around to clarify issues, broaden my thinking, help me reach my goals and encourage me when the work load was weighing me down. They knew all my teachers and courses and would ask when I came home, "how was your day". I always felt their encouragement and faith in me. Little acts like preparing my lunch and breakfast before I raced out the door to coach early morning high jump practices, speak with teachers or attend early morning meetings at school, allowed me to a few more minutes of sleep before I began my my day of school then several hours of training before returning home to begin homework. Without this extra help I would not have been able to excel in my school work, athletic pursuits and school clubs. My parents hugely impacted the value and quality of my education and learning.

In 2013, I was named to the Canadian team for the World Youth Athletics Championship. To train and compete at this level brought new challenges for me. This year I have been given the opportunity to train with a university track team that is affiliated with my local track club. To undertake this opportunity I have had to miss the last block of school every day as the track team trains at 2:30pm. As a heptathlete competing in seven events, practices often take up to four to five hours a day. Throughout this major transition, my parents have guided me in the process of managing my time, creating priorities, and keeping a balance between my athletic, academic and social happenings. Amazingly, my parents steadfast support for me has not wavered as I explored my post secondary options. Even though money was tight, my mother took me to Ontario to visit potential universities. As track and field has a strong influence on my life,

21

only certain universities have both the athletic and educational qualifications I needed, and my parents made sure I was able to explore them. Through every step of my education, my mother and father have cultivated a strong support network for me to pursue my goals and aspirations. They have taught me integral abilities like problem solving, time management, and prioritizing skills which will prepare me well for university.

Regardless of circumstance, my parents have been behind me every stage of my life- sacrificing so much to raise my siblings and I. I know that I am extremely fortunate to be raised with so much love, compassion, and support. My parents have influenced me in all components of my life and taught me to strive to be the best I can; personally, academically and athletically.

Its been 12 years and since I first wrote that card to my parents and thankfully I am still able to write, "you are the best mom/dad in the world", and mean it more than ever.

Thank you in advance for considering me for the Richard Bulpitt Award! I look forward to hearing from you soon.