

Growing up in China alongside my American dad, British mum and my older sister was definitely an adventurous way to start off my life and influenced the direction of my life greatly. The day-to-day was so unknown and as a homeschooling family we saw everything we encountered as a learning opportunity, teaching me to have a strong work ethic. My mother was diagnosed with cancer when I was four and again when I was eight leading to medical evacuations back to my birth country England, clearly impacting the path my life took. I immersed myself in the public school system, but for the seven years I resided in Britain, I felt somewhat left out as a child with a multicultural background. However, I excelled in school because of the strong work ethic my parents had instilled in me. I remember enjoying sciences in particular, loving the idea that there was always more to be discovered or researched and how we live in a world that we know relatively little about guiding me to elect a major in Nutrition Sciences.

When I was just fourteen, my mother passed away and as some method of escape, I made a drastic change in the direction of my life and to move across the world to live with my grandparents in Alaska while finishing highschool. Everyone thought that I'd come running back, but it has been the best decision of my life so far. I love embracing the carefree, nature-oriented, relaxed life of a Juneauite. I am now in my second year in Juneau, Alaska. My mother's death definitely had the most significant impact on my direction in life. Moving to Juneau completely altered my college choices and my social circles to totally shift my life's path. It also led my life to a journey of great healing from my bereavement and guided me to a much healthier mindset, looking past my grief.

This shift in the direction of my life path caused by my mother's death led me to spending a lot of time with my extended family that I've never lived close to before. I'm active in my church and attend regularly there as well as a local youth group. I also spend time practicing the violin, which I started playing when I was eleven years old. It had always been a dream of mine, but there was no available teacher while I was in China and so I had to wait and learn the piano instead. Now I get the joy of playing both instruments and find them a great way to relax after a busy school day. Hiking and being outdoors also helps me relieve academic stresses.

It was definitely a significant shift in the direction of my life when I left my immediate family and I still take every opportunity to visit them throughout the year. My sister is attending college in England and my dad is a student teacher, both of which lead to financial challenges for our single-parent household. Education has always been such a high priority for me and I've had the inspirational example of both my parents achieving graduate degrees, leading me to want to pursue the same levels of education.

Aside from losing my mother, another important factor that has directed my life is my love for languages. Growing up in China meant that I grew up bilingual, speaking both English and Mandarin in my everyday life, learning them side by side. This opportunity led me to have a passion for languages and the patterns contained within them. I studied five years of Spanish and Latin, along with four years of French. I loved to see the way languages had similarities and especially how European languages derived from Latin. These years of hard work studying languages led me to direct my life towards minoring in Spanish over any other language because I believe it has the most relevance in the West of the United States and I have a goal to have the ability to help serve clients or patients whose first language is Spanish.

I am greatly looking forward to pursuing Nutrition Sciences and Spanish. I cannot wait to embrace this next chapter in my life with the impacts of my mother's death and my linguistic passions leading the direction of my life.