

Part 1:

The year 2020 was a crazy one, I don't think anybody can disagree with that. Besides the obvious foe of COVID-19, our country has gone through changes that our generation has never seen before. For me specifically, the Black Lives Matter movement has been a recent defining moment in my life. The way people have come together from all parts of the US to fight for a common cause has been inspiring to me. Even though the movement gained traction through the tragic death of George Floyd, I believe that his death wasn't in vain and he's changed our country in ways nobody could ever imagine. It's not even the protests, petitions, and media coverage that has stood out to me the most in all of this (even though that on its own is amazing), it's the way people have taken the time to look into the mirror and recognize their own bias and privilege. It's the way that they now know that if they were to ever get pulled over and arrested, their fate would most likely not be the same as George Floyd's, or any of the other countless black men murdered at the hands of the police. Growing up as a black woman in America, having allies that would comfortably speak out against the racial bias they witnessed, refrain from using slurs, or even simply acknowledge their own privilege was extremely rare. Seeing how this is beginning to change makes me optimistic for the future. I think that's why I can confidently say this movement has been a notable defining moment because for the first time in my life, I can finally see people acknowledging that there are fundamental things wrong with our country that won't change without action. Our country still has a long way to go, but it's refreshing to see it trending in the right direction.



Part 2:

My mother is a very influential person in my life, if not the most. A defining moment in her life that has always stuck with me is her journey through college. My mom immigrated to America when she was only 17. She was on her own for a few years of her life. She had to put herself through college by babysitting and working night shifts in restaurants. Her mom and grandma had both been doctors and she was determined to follow in their footsteps. But as people know, medical school is very expensive. My mom is the hardest worker I know, but even she couldn't come up with that kind of money. She was at the point where she had to decide between bus fare and dinner some nights of the week. She put her faith into God and prayed for months for a way to follow her dreams. One day, out of the blue, she got a call from a close family friend back

in Nigeria. He said he knew how much she was struggling and was going to put her through medical school, giving her over \$30,000 to attend George Washington University. Her prayers had been answered! Whenever she tells me that story, her face never fails to light up. I learned from this that with hard work and perseverance, you can do anything you put your mind to. She inspires me to give it my all in anything I do, and that's how I knew I wanted to be a doctor just like her. I think a connection between our defining moments is wanting to see black people succeed. In the medical field, there is a huge shortage of doctors of color. This lack of representation makes it hard for people of color to feel comfortable with their doctors and nurses. I think my mom knows that she's making a difference in the community today, and how she got there will forever inspire me.

