

Destiny Harper

My Defining Moment

This year so far has been a huge defining moment in my life as well as my family's. While our world and people within our communities fight and try to prevent the battle against covid-19, two of the most defining moments have occurred for me. Over the past year I became a single mom and had my first child. Becoming a single mother has been a very hard battle as I did not want for it to be this way, but I enjoy every single moment of it. My son gives me the strength to never give up. There have been days when my heart breaks because I wanted my son to have two parents who love each other, there are days when I feel lost and overwhelmed, but then I look at my son and I know he loves me. I know I am not alone because I have him. As a single mom I have discovered inner strengths and capabilities. Due to covid-19 I have not been able to expose my baby to new adventures or the life around us. It's his first year of life and I can't take the risks of him being exposed to this virus. We limit the places we go and are unable to see all of our family.

Another defining moment at this time in my life is that my little brother was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare bone cancer, robbing him of his senior year of high school at Central Catholic. Because of quarantine my brother took a hobby of skateboarding, then in which he fell and thought he had a strain or pulled a muscle. However, instead the doctors found cancer. My brother has to complete his senior year virtual while being hospitalized every two weeks for chemotherapy that will occur for 10 months. This took a huge hit to my family as we

never thought this would happen. Nobody wants to see their loved ones in pain. My parents took it the hardest. Once receiving the news they were in disbelief that their baby boy has cancer. My brother has an amazing support system, many friends, family and people all around that have helped our family tremendously while he fights against this battle. These are defining moments in my life because there will always be good to outweigh the bad and keep us strong.



A defining moment for my mom was when she swore into the Army. She realized from that moment forward she should always continue to stand up for others. She would fight for those who could not fight for themselves and her life now had a bigger meaning. Serving in the military was never an attainable dream for my mom growing up. Our family was a very traditional Mexican family. Women had their place, in the kitchen and caring for children. Women did not serve in the military. None of the men in the family who did serve, voluntarily enlist. They were all drafted. Here my mother was embarking on unfamiliar ground. She was going to be the first female in our family to volunteer to enlist in the Army.

As the granddaughter of a Mexican immigrant, American patriotism runs strong in our family. I intend to follow in the footsteps of my Great grandfather who served in WWII, my grandfather who served during the Vietnam conflict, my brother who is serving in the Navy and my mother and father who served during Desert Storm. As a human being, your "purpose" is what guides you, gives your life meaning, and helps you evaluate opportunities. When we can identify our purpose, our reason for being alive, we can create a life of intention and meaning. The military in our family happens to be a part of what defines us. By joining the United States Air Force I will be able to serve my country, embrace the challenges, persist and continue to work hard in setbacks or failures.

