

LOWER MORELAND HIGH SCHOOL

555 Red Lion Road, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania 19006

*Expanding Horizons...
Individualizing Excellence*

*William J. Miles
Principal*

ALAN BELL MEMORIAL AWARD NOMINATION APPLICATION

NOMINEE: Natalie Larson

EMAIL: missnatalie2000@comcast.net

ADDRESS: 3811 Mettler Lane Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

NOMINATED BY: Maura Quinn

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RELATIONSHIP TO NOMINEE: School Counselor

NARRATIVE: Natalie Larson epitomizes resilience. The depth of her daily struggle, due to Chronic Pancreatitis, would not be evident upon first glance or with a quick review of her academic record. This is because Natalie is strong, focused and determined not to let anything stand in the way of her future. In fact, it was only in a very recent meeting that I learned that Natalie was hooked up to an IV at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia the night before her first day of high school. Natalie insisted on not missing her first day of high school, despite the fact that she was at CHOP all night on an IV. That was in 2015.

There have been times throughout her high school career when Natalie has had to miss school due to a flare or even a hospitalization. In reviewing this in my mind, I cannot think of a single time when Natalie has asked me for an exception or an accommodation when she returned. Not one. In fact, there was a particular occasion last year, after a recent hospitalization, that Natalie casually disclosed to a teacher that she was in pain. When this information got to me, I wondered why she was still in school and found that she had a test in an AP class that day. I had to go to her classroom, interrupt her as she was starting the test, and insist that she take it at a later time. She was not happy but she complied. And honestly, I admired her grit in that moment. The truth is that Natalie has learned to live with a chronic condition but does not allow it to define her or to control her. This is a hard lesson to learn by age 17, but Natalie has. Many around her could learn from her example.

Natalie will be leaving school in a few short weeks to undergo a major – and rare - GI operation to address her condition. She will travel out of state for this operation, will remain in the hospital for weeks and will then return home to recover. This would be a difficult thing to face for any second semester senior. Natalie will handle it with grace. And while this experience will forever be a part of her story, I have no doubt that it will only be a chapter. Natalie will attend Moravian College in the fall as a nursing major. If there was ever something that I was certain of, it would be this: Natalie will continue forward with determination and her positive, can-do attitude, to create a future for herself where she will both help and inspire others. She has already endured more than many adults will ever have to but one

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would never know it. And that makes her a very special student in my book, and an outstanding candidate for the Alan Bell Memorial Award.

ACTIVITIES, INTERESTS & AREAS OF IMPACT:

- Volunteer at Abington Memorial Hospital (12) – aligns with goal of entering medical field
- Symphonic Band (9-12) – performed at Carnegie Hall with the LMHS Wind Ensemble
- National Walk-Out Day - Committee to End Gun Violence in Schools (11) – Helped to organize peaceful walk-out following the school shooting in Parkland, Florida

If I can be of any further assistance, please contact me at any time. Thank you for your consideration of Natalie as an applicant for the Alan Bell Memorial Award!

Respectfully submitted,

Maura K. Quinn