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AND
THIS IS
MY MOM

Hi!

My husband and I didn't know what to expect going into my C-section for the birth of our daughter, Teagan. A perinatologist had identified her spina bifida less than a week before at one of my last ultrasounds. Part of me is still glad I didn't have more time to think about it, because I would have been filled with worry.

That day was the first time we met Dr. Julian Lin, a spina bifida specialist from **OSF HealthCare Illinois Neurological Institute**. We quickly learned no two cases are the same.

At just four days old, Teagan was taken into surgery by Dr. Lin. Even after an MRI, he wasn't sure what he would find. **It turns out Teagan has one of the rarer and more complex cases of spina bifida** because all her spinal column nerves run into a fat mass in her lower back. He removed as much of the mass as possible without affecting the nerves.

When she was 2 ½ years old, she started having extreme pain in her left leg behind the knee. She'd wake up in the middle of the night screaming. Her right leg was already tinier with a loss of feeling.

We called Dr. Lin. An MRI revealed her spinal column was tethered—pulling too tightly. This causes many severe problems and Dr. Lin recommended we do another

surgery to relieve the pressure. We went back and forth about doing it because there is no guarantee for spina bifida patients and there were big risks. We knew Dr. Lin was going to have to work around that dangerous fatty mass.

It was excruciating to make the decision to send our little girl into a painful and uncertain situation even though it had the potential to be very beneficial. But our faith and trust in Dr. Lin is why we agreed. He worked carefully to remove the part of her mass that had grown back and relieved the pull of her spinal column. Afterwards, he was very honest with us. This surgery went well, but any future operations may result in paralysis.

There are still everyday struggles she faces, but instead we focus on what she can do and how far she has come. It can be very hard for a 5-year-old, but she is a fighter. **She dares to do everything, and we've learned never to doubt her.**

I would be lying if I said we are not still scared at times, but we also know we aren't alone. We have found a community and family at OSF HealthCare Illinois Neurological Institute with Dr. Lin and his team. I would never trust her care to anyone but them. Knowing how important our daughter is to everyone there is priceless.

But it isn't just them who give me comfort. There have been so many times I have silently thanked the donors who made all the necessary advancements possible.

YOU made research happen. YOU gave the doctors extra education. And YOU helped them have the right equipment to work so closely on her spine.

Teagan can't put her spina bifida in a closet or under the bed. It is her everyday reality, and it will be something she deals with her whole life. But there is so much hope. Every day we learn more. What was considered impossible five years ago is now routine because of people like you.

I would give anything to help Teagan, and I feel blessed that we live in a community that feels the same way.

Forever grateful,
Nichole Doyle
Teagan's mom



P.S. A thank you doesn't seem adequate, but thank you for giving Teagan a better chance and for making it possible that other kids can live better. This mother will always be grateful to you. - Nichole



YES!
I want to help patients just like Teagan.

Make a gift online at
osf.foundation/Teagan

OR _____

Mail this slip and your donation check payable to OSF HealthCare Foundation in the provided envelope.

Thank you!



OSF HEALTHCARE
Foundation

530 NE Glen Oak Ave
Peoria, IL 61637



BACK MAIL PANEL



OPPORTUNITY

for me and my girls



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Hi [NAME],

I wish you could have seen me the day I got my Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing scholarship award letter; I was completely overjoyed.

I'm a single mom with two amazing little girls trying to balance nursing school, work as an LPN and being the head of our household. My scholarship means one less loan, one less stressor and most important, one more opportunity for me and my girls.

Ever since I was little, I knew I wanted to be in health care. Instead of dressing Barbie up, I bandaged her broken arm. Growing up, I was lucky enough to meet nurses who made a big impression. They inspired me. To this day, I still want to be like them.

For me, it was never even a consideration to go anywhere else for nursing school. There are so many things to love about Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing.



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My favorite part is the community of support I've found. My professors and instructors know how hard it is to balance it all and get through the coursework. But they always challenge me and encourage me to be the best.

Being a student here is one of the hardest things I have ever done. You have to be willing to put in a lot of hard work, as there is no leniency. But that's what I want, and I want to be the best. I can't just skim the books or not take clinical seriously. Every day is the chance to learn and better myself.

None of this is possible without you, though! **I work really hard, and I have amazing teachers, but my dreams couldn't come true without donors like you.** My life has been changed, and I will forever be grateful.



I know how thankful I feel every day for my scholarship, and I am asking you today to help make someone else's dreams come true. **Every dime you give makes a career for someone; it advances them. It's not just money - it is opportunity for the rest of their lives.**

Because you helped me, I will graduate this December (woohoo!). It's really just my first step, though. I have BIG goals. I want to get my master's degree and then become a women's health practitioner here in Peoria.

I can't say thank you enough for being part of my dream. Thank you!

Holly Robinson

P.S. Because of you, my two little girls are going to grow up knowing they can achieve their goals – just like I did.

YES!

I want to help students just like Holly.

Make a gift online at osf.foundation/Holly

OR

Mail this slip and your CON scholarship fund donation in the provided envelope. Make checks payable to OSF HealthCare Foundation.

Thank you!



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