

My Life With CF

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A Glance at My Life in the Past Year



graduated from high school



took a summer road trip across the country with my family



started my freshman year of college at the University of Delaware in the fall and was able to move onto campus this spring!

My Running Journey and CF



I started running when I was in 8th grade with the goal of completing a 5k. I soon realized how much I enjoyed running and how beneficial it was for my health, so I joined the cross-country team as a freshman in high school. I ended up running for all four years (despite developing a stress reaction during my junior year and having to come back from that). Even though I'm not running for a team in college, I still run regularly to keep myself healthy in the face of CF!



One of my most recent accomplishments is running ten miles for the first time. I have been gradually building up my long run distance since the start of this spring semester, but really surprised myself with being able to complete this run!

How CF Inspired Me In Choosing My College Major

(This is from an article I contributed to my CF clinic's newsletter, published in Spring 2021).

The process of choosing a college and a major is a challenging one for many people, and it was certainly not an easy process for me. My junior and senior years of high school overwhelmed me with many different options for what I could study and the careers to which those paths could eventually lead. In choosing a major, I wanted to combine as many aspects of my skills and interests as possible. I also wanted to attend a college that would provide me with opportunities in my field of study and a strong community in which I would thrive both socially and academically. As I reflect on where I am now—one semester into studying nutrition and dietetics in the Honors College at the University of Delaware—I want to share about the people and experiences that led me here.

I was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis and Celiac disease at ages three and five, respectively. My doctors and specialists checked in with me routinely to see how my treatments were going and to address any issues as they arose. But more importantly, they wanted to help me learn, grow, and excel in all of my endeavors. They always asked about my hobbies and interests and how I was doing in school, and they focused on helping me accomplish my personal goals and pursue what I love. From a young age, I was interested in science, particularly as it related to health. I realized how much running could benefit me physically and mentally, so I decided to join the cross country team in high school. Through my experience with running competitively for four years, I learned about the importance of proper nutrition both in preventing injury and helping me to perform to the best of my ability. Inspired by the care I received from my doctors and CF care team, I know that I want to pursue a career as a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). I still have several years of education ahead of me, but I hope to use my abilities, experiences, and perspectives to help other people and improve their quality of life.



What I've Learned From My Experience With CF

Despite all the challenges of cystic fibrosis, I have learned a lot from it. CF has played a significant role in shaping who I am, but I am not defined by it. If anything, CF has helped me grow into a better person. Having CF has taught me independence. I am the one responsible for remembering to do my treatments, seeing them through from start to finish, refilling my medications, and communicating clearly with my doctor and CF care team about any concerns or needs I have. I have also learned to not be so anxious about every detail of my life, but to take things one day at a time and to be flexible when plans change.

One word that inspires me daily is the word "joy." I've learned that even though I can't always control my circumstances, I can control my response and my attitude. So, I strive to live my life with joy, even in the midst of challenging situations.

