

Rory J. Weichbrod Scholarship - Essay

Thirteen. It is a small number, but a big age. When someone turns thirteen they not only become a teenager, but hopefully a mature human being. Of course now we may be able to go out to the mall by ourselves, possibly get a phone, watch PG-13 movies alone, but most of all, we must make smart decisions. In October of 2014, three of my family members, my uncle, aunt, and cousin, died in a very unfortunate car accident. Even though all of them were smart, and could tell right from wrong, this accident continues to make me think if I was in that situation, and who or what could have caused it. That incident reminds me of the decisions I have made in these past thirteen years. My uncle would always like to tell me I was a smart girl with a lot of attitude, that I was a girl who could make it alone in the backwoods of Wild West Virginia. I believed him very much, and I still do. I believe that the choices that we make now in our lives will absolutely follow us into our high school, college, and work applications.

I often question myself about the friends that I have made and my school efforts specifically. A true friend is someone who you can truly trust, and rely on. They should be someone who will never allow you to do something wrong and ignorant, but most times these friends are the cause of peer pressure. Especially as we enter our teenage years we must listen to that special little voice in the back of our heads and the pain feeling in our guts. As I said, these decisions that we make will follow us in the years to come so you and I can only decide our future. No sign is going to fall from the sky saying, "NO," and hit you on your head; we have to make our own choices. Whatever we decide, we must stick with it and have no regrets.

Another subject I focus on a lot is my school efforts. I often tell myself that I must push my thinking with challenges and events that help me become wiser in proper decision making.

Like decisions, our school efforts can either carry or drop us in or out of school, work, and our jobs. Hard work and perseverance will soon pay off, not alcohol and drugs. We have to stay focused in our studies besides the many intriguing and tempting options peer pressure can offer us.

As a community we can work together by encouraging, not isolating, everyone who struggles with peer pressure. Forcing people to do things that might harm or injure our bodies in any way is an act of original sin that is not appreciated in many lives. Teenagers like me do not want to be pushed around or told what to do, but at the same time they want to fit in. Would you pick popularity over health, knowledge, and in some extreme cases death? I say to think about what impact your decisions will have on your future. Only we can control our actions and our thoughts, so we should pick what is true to ourselves and only ourselves.

I still have one question, but no one can answer because it is for my uncle: What happened on that hill? Only God knows, but until I see my uncle, aunt, and cousin again, I have to live a life I can be proud of to tell. Something I have learned from this accident is that something little such as brakes, in my story, or drugs, in another, can change your life. From now on we should make good choices in onto our twenties, thirties, forties and forward. We should be leaders of our own lives, and take control of our own thoughts and our own actions. Don't fall into peer pressure because honestly, it is just not worth it. Thirteen. It's funny; I never thought I would call myself that, but here I am. A teenager.