Losing my mother during my freshman year of high school was one of the most difficult experiences of my life. Not long after she passed, I began thinking deeply about my future and what path I wanted to follow. I joined Speech and Debate, which opened many doors for me and gave me the opportunity to grow.Through this experience, I began to discover my purpose.

During these times of grief, I reflected on who my mother truly was. My mother was one of the hardest working people I have ever known. She believed that success came from determination and that you should never rely on others to be a success. She stood firm in what she believed in and never allowed anyone to silence her voice. Remembering her strength made me realize that I wanted to live my life with the same purpose.

My experiences shaped me to be who I am today and through them I realized that I have always taken an interest in law. My mother was not the typical woman. She worked hard at the plant until she was injured. When I was younger, she would tell us how men would scoff to see a woman working the same job, but she earned their respect. She never needed their validation but it goes to show how she emphasized hard work leads to success, and she did it all on her own.

In the fall I will be attending Sam Houston State University. I want to pursue a career in criminal defense because I believe everyone deserves to have their rights protected and their voices heard. I have always been an advocate for others and helping support a cause I also believe in.

My father's story has also played a major role in shaping this goal. He came to the United States from Mexico at 14 years old with nothing. My dad started living small with friends and working on boats to now working as a supervisor for a contracting company. My father has taught me that through hard work and sacrifice, you can have it all. My father has also taught me the same great values in how he built a life here to provide for our family. I am incredibly grateful that he is documented now, but I often think about how different things could have been if he was not. Some of my relatives have been sent back because of their immigration status, and my father's siblings cannot come to the United States to see us because they are undocumented.

These experiences have shown me how easily people can feel powerless or unheard. They have inspired me to pursue a career where I can stand up for others and defend their rights. I want to take the opportunities my parents have given me and build my own success while honoring the sacrifices they made. Most importantly, I want to give a voice to those who feel like no one is listening and help ensure that they know that their voice carries power.