Tis the Season for...

Not another moment lost to seizures

Photo by Amy Peterson
Like many young adults, Laura Weisz grew up with high hopes for her future. But, during her freshman year of high school, that future seemed frightfully uncertain when she was diagnosed with epilepsy. Laura clearly remembers those early days, “Though I attended a 6,000 student high school, I suddenly felt all alone. My emotions ranged from denial to fear to anger….” Part of that fear was that she would no longer be able to do the one thing she loved the most, swimming. “Swimming is a less than ideal sport because there is always the risk that if I was to have a seizure, I would drown. The doctors told my parents that if I was to continue swimming, someone would always have to be present to watch only me. My family had to rearrange their schedules so that someone was always there to watch me. They didn’t want me to give up something I love just because I have epilepsy.”

The struggles didn’t end there. Due to complications from having brain surgery and side effects of her medications, Laura continued to struggle, “For a while I couldn’t make it through a full practice and it left me very discouraged, but with the encouragement of my friends and family, I kept pushing myself. When I finally was able to truly swim again, all the disappointment and stress were worth it.”

Throughout many of these challenges and triumphs, the Weisz Family sought guidance from the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. Laura credits the Foundation with helping her and her family through many obstacles, “They were able to connect us with resources that helped us learn about the medical aspect of epilepsy as well as the social and mental effects of it as well. Cindy Handford is the Education & Advocacy Specialist at the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan and she has been an invaluable resource during my entire journey.”

Laura’s story is a great example of courage & hope. She is now a freshman at college where she is studying for a career in the medical field. She hopes to one day help others with chronic health conditions. Despite all of her accomplishments, Laura knows that she will continue to need courage as she faces many more challenges due to having epilepsy. This is why the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan takes our mission so seriously & why we need YOUR support. We want to continue to guide Laura & her family through each challenge, just as we hope to help every person & family that is affected by this disease.

Please make a meaningful gift this holiday season, using the enclosed envelope. You can also make a gift online at www.epilepsymichigan.org, or by calling us at (800) 377-6226. Your gift will allow us to provide the many programs & services that give hope to people in Michigan who are affected by epilepsy.

Warmest Regards,

Arlene S. Gorelick, MPH