



2013 Broad Prize Scholar Remarks

Thank you, Mr. McGinity.

I never thought I would have a story to tell when asked to describe an obstacle I had to overcome to make it to college. But since I do, I am happy for this opportunity to share it.

I always had plans to attend college. When your father is a minister and you live in a neighborhood where most of the girls end up being teen moms instead of college students, you strive for something better than what you see.

I thought as a family we would come together and strive for similar goals. Unfortunately, as I grew up I realized I would not have that family to depend on.

My two sisters followed the negative environment rather than seceding from it—one barely finished high school, while the other got pregnant and skipped college. They have good lives despite their choices but it was not what I wanted for myself. So I worked hard in high school and took as many Advanced Placement courses as I thought I could handle.

But eventually, the last of my family disintegrated. My last year of high school—while I was trying to take SATs, AP exams, and complete college applications—I was kicked out of my home by my own father.

My parents were going through a nasty separation and I was caught in the middle. My father turned on me. He tried to take everything from me, like I wasn't his daughter anymore.

My mother loved me and supported me as best she could at the time, but she needed me. She needed me to help pack when the police escorted us out of our home, she needed me to help her with the lawyer and to go to court with her, and she needed me to buy furniture to replace what my dad took.

Through this, I completed my college applications and filled out every scholarship and financial aid application, because I never forgot my goal.

The Broad Foundation stepped in when my father stepped out.

Thanks to The Broad Prize scholarship, I am now a junior at the Georgia Institute of Technology and am working toward degrees in architecture and civil engineering.

Walt Disney once said “We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things.” At Georgia Tech, I am moving forward by continuing to improve my life through community service on campus, tutoring freshmen and playing rugby.

When I graduate, I plan to use my degrees to give back to my community by re-creating and rehabilitating old buildings. I am grateful to The Broad Foundation for giving me the financial support to make my dream of a college education a reality.

Thank you.