Learning from Mistakes

 Never would I thought the future of my children would lie in my hands. From where I grew up to mistakes made from those around me and mistakes of my own, a pathway has been shaped for my aspirations and dreams. I’ve come a long way to get to where I am, and I’m still not where I need to be, in law enforcement.

I didn’t grow up in the nicest home but it definitely was not the worst; I had a roof over my head and food to eat, that’s all I really needed. Living around my older brothers, one ten years older than me and the other fifteen years older, I never did what they did except play video games. At a young age, I began playing video games a lot, I played so much that when the time came for me to begin school, I was not prepared; so, instead of starting school at age four, I started at age five and turned six in November. Although I started school late, being with my grandparents most of the time while my single divorced mother worked part time jobs, my grandparents read to me and I learned to read before I was four. I read everything and anything, I loved to read so much. With the help of my grandparents, I grew to become a strong reader, stronger than most kids my age; and in 4th grade, I was reading books that were at high school levels. Because my brothers witnessed the divorce of our parents, they began to rebel, one of my brothers was expelled from school and the other became a teenage father. Growing up, I never really became close to my brothers, they were just sort of there. I watched them and how they lived their lives and thought their lives were great; but, I began to notice a flaw in their lives, they didn’t get a full education and didn’t have goals for after school. Now I have seen their mistakes and I assured myself I would not make their mistakes; I will finish this senior year and pursue education after school, a goal my brothers never accomplished.

Having divorced parents at a young age, I was conflicted between two sides, my mother’s and my father’s. I would spend school days with my mother and during breaks such as summer or winter I would go and stay with my father in Los Angeles. Staying with my father was a different experience than being with my mother; he spoiled me, giving me whatever I wanted, and he was more lenient on me, I wasn’t much of a troublemaker but with him I didn’t have a bedtime, with my mother I did. When I was young I thought my father’s spoiling was love and that he really cared about me; but, as I became older I realized that he spoiled me so that I could like him more than my mother and choose to live with him, only so he would not have to pay child support. My father was a drunk and abusive man, I never saw his true side, he always hid his other side so I could like him; but, I found out he hurt my mother and brothers. Even now, he still has yet to pay child support and he dodges any chance he gets to pay it; this makes me believe he only cares about himself first, and not his family. Having a father like this shaped me to never be like him: drunk, careless, abusive. I am determined to secure a future, not only for myself, but for the family I plan on having and be able to support them first before I support myself.

I didn’t come from the best role models in my life; but one person I have seen as a role model, a person who I counted on the most, was my grandfather. My grandfather grew up in a poverty filled Los Angeles; he didn’t have everything but anything he did have, he was grateful and he enjoyed every day. He loved his family, he didn’t worry about money, property, reputation, he cared about keeping his family safe. My mother went through a really rough time, she got pregnant at 16 and never had a house of her own; but when she needed a place to stay because my father was too drunk, my grandfather and grandmother was always there for her. I grew up admiring my grandfather, he always taught me to work hard, never quit, and always chase my dreams. If there is anyone I believe I am most like, it’s my grandfather, he has shaped my intentions to pursue education and find a career that will support my family and live happy. I know the path I am headed in now would make my grandfather more proud than anything in the word.

There is a difference between people who have made mistakes and the ones who learn from those mistakes; those who learn from mistakes remember not to make those mistakes anymore and can configure which path will change their mistake to a success. Through the mistakes of others and the accomplishments of some, I have shaped into setting a goal: that goal being I finish high school, enlist into the military, find a career in law enforcement, and secure a suitable life for my family.