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Financial Aid Appeal

On June 20th 2018, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. In addition to her diagnosis, she is disabled because of an illness in 2010 that affected her breathing abilities. She underwent a Tracheal Resection on August 3rd 2018 in an attempt to correct this life threatening complication from her previous illness. She was admitted to the hospital for 1 week (7/31/18 – 8/6/18) in preparation and recovery from the surgery. After a discussion with my mother, brother, her family physician and oncologist, it was decided that she would have a bilateral mastectomy as there were multiple lumps found in both of her breasts. She underwent the bilateral mastectomy on September 20th 2018. While our family believed that she was now cancer free, it was later found that the type of cancer she had was considered high risk and it would be in her best interest to undergo preventative chemotherapy. It was determined on October 23rd 2018 that she would need chemotherapy and is due for 4 to 6 cycles of treatment. Her port placement procedure is scheduled for January 8th 2019, where she will then follow with her chemotherapy treatments.

I come from a single parent home with no extended family in the state that I reside, so the circumstances our family had to come to terms with were very difficult, as it not only took an emotional toll but my mother lives alone with no additional help and travelling to and from chemotherapy treatments would prove to be troublesome. I am grateful that my mother is now considered cancer free and while the chemotherapy is another difficult step, my brother completed law school this past December and I will be starting MUA sometime in the middle of February, therefore we will be able to coordinate her chemo treatment appointments to make the process easier for her. I am confident that once the treatments are completed, my life will resume a sense of normalcy so that I can focus entirely on my studies and being successful.

While I was successfully able to make it through my third semester, as well as the first portion of my 4th semester while dealing with my mother's illness back in the states, there was an incident on the island on October 3rd 2018 that greatly affected my abilities to focus and study effectively during Systems and Diseases III, which began on October 2nd 2018. Two of my friends were involved in a gas explosion in one of their apartments that I bared witness to. I came upon the scene about 10 minutes following the explosion when the apartment was still on fire. The incident happened at the beginning of Systems and Diseases III and greatly affected my ability to study. I struggled on the first exam of the class but was able to bring my grade up on the second exam. Unfortunately on November 19th 2018, one of my friends passed away from the injuries she sustained from the fire. As it turned out, I found out this information 10 minutes prior to when I was set to take my third exam of the class. It affected me immensely and my performance failed as a result. I attempted to speak to a professor about this but I was

not permitted to take a makeup exam. I wrote the final exam for the class the following day but was unfortunately not able to recover from the deficit.

I am confident that the circumstances I have faced this past year will not deter me from being successful, if anything they will only contribute to my success as I can speak firsthand with regard to loss and trauma and remaining resilient. I can assure the committee who is to decide the outcome of my appeal that I am dedicated to being a successful student at MUA and I ask to please not use my past as an example for my potential for the future. I will continue to make the necessary strides to be successful and strongly believe that I am deserving of the lifting of my financial aid suspension.