

THRIVE

Thriving Women





Editor's Letter



It is so great to see you again.

The first issue of Thrive Magazine was accepted, absorbed, and acclaimed by the community, with positive momentum being established by readers like you. Acknowledging and cherishing the last issue, we saw that the current magazine was an absolute joy to make, being able to connect with some of Bryant's most inspirational women.

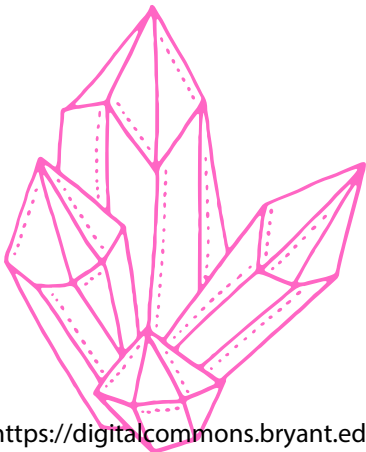
We were able to add more perspective on how to thrive;
how to be with purpose.

Building the second edition during National Women's Month felt right, adding a certain buzz while empowering these amazing stories. I would not have enough room in Thrive's printing budget to publish all the women that I've learned from, that inspire me.

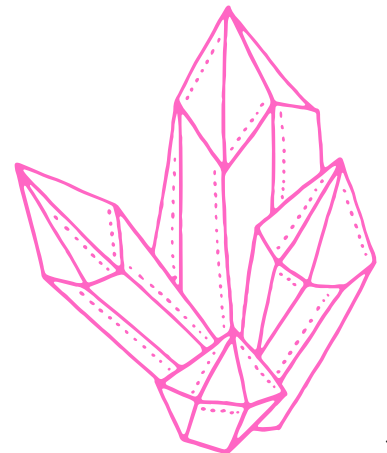
To the mothers, sisters, aunts, godmothers, grandmothers, relatives,
students, friends, classmates, professors, teammates, coworkers,
leaders,
women;

Thank you, for inheriting momentous power through femininity, and
exhibiting strength and support in who you are.

I hope that this issue makes you ponder, helps you appreciate the
powerful and thriving women in your life.



*Warmest regards,
Joey Leszczynski
Editor In Chief*



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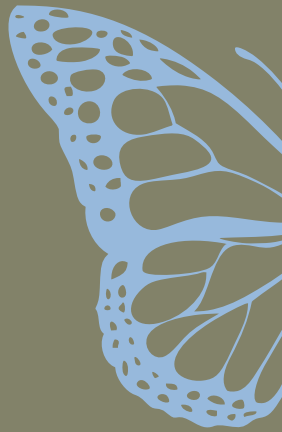
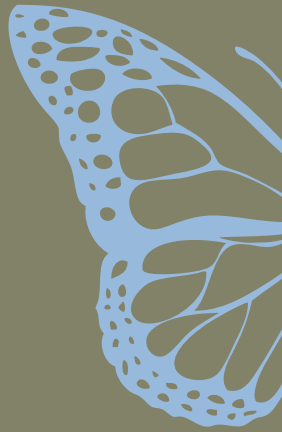
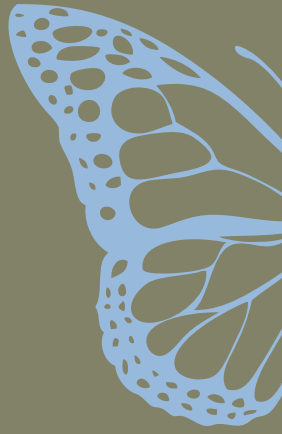
Tyra Thekanth

Danielle Latty

Lauren Roth

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Katherine Babbit





JC HOPE CLASS OF 2024

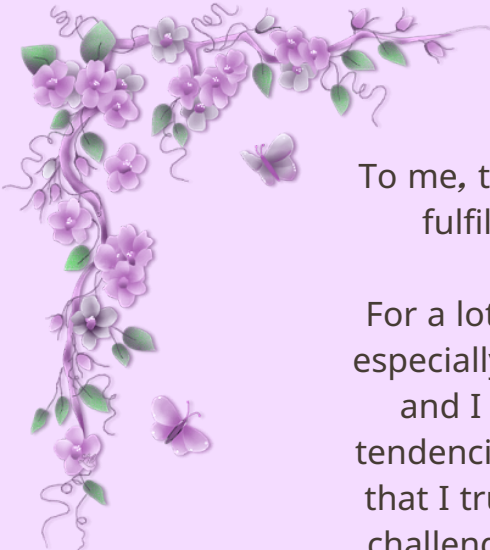
How do I thrive?

To me thriving means to allow change into my life and view it as a way for my soul to flourish. I recognize that everything happens for a reason, allowing myself to learn from every situation I am in. Its important to look at every win, loss, and roadblock as a path to becoming the highest version of myself. The struggles I faced growing up as a black, queer woman in the south were driving forces of reaching my fullest potential. Those challenges have taught me to take pain and turn it into determination. I take the lessons I am given and use it to push myself harder every day. I do this because I know against adversity I can come out on top; it just takes effort and patience. Despite being pushed over time and time again, I have preserved and changed for the better. I thrive by making the person I was yesterday proud of the person I am today.









To me, thriving is much more than just success. It's about the fulfillment and happiness I obtain from my life and its accomplishments.

For a lot of my life, I struggled with my own self confidence, especially in high school. I did not like what I saw in the mirror and I doubted myself in any activity I did. My introverted tendencies did not seem to help. It wasn't until I got to Bryant that I truly started seeing my own value. This community has challenged me to get more involved, grow into a leader, and believe in myself.

On campus, I have held two different leadership positions in the Delta Zeta Sorority. I served as Treasurer on the Student Leadership Team that planned the fifth annual TEDxBryantU Event. I am a member of the Bryant Marketing Association.

This is just the beginning, with goals of I have a goal to get involved in other organizations during my final year at Bryant. These different organizations and involvements I have been a part of on campus have taught me a lot about myself. They've taught me that I can not only be a leader but excel at it.

These involvements have all pushed me out of my comfort zone, and because I have been able to be comfortable with being uncomfortable, I've been able to grow into the confident woman I am today.

I look back on who I was just three years ago before coming to Bryant , and I see a completely different version of myself; not one that I'm not proud of, but rather the young girl who laid the foundation of who I am today. When I look in a mirror now, I see a woman I am proud of, who has grown so much in a few short years into an even better version of herself. I really do believe that the people I have surrounded myself with, the opportunities I've been exposed to, and the confidence I have found in myself have given me the ability to thrive. In a world where women are only becoming more empowered, I am glad to know that I go to a university that reflects that positive change because I for sure have seen that change in myself.

Taryn Walsh
Class of 2023



I grew up competitively dancing for fifteen years, this would entail twenty hours of practices each week with the same group of girls since I was three years old. Many of us went to the same school and practically spent every day together. This became my family and my safe place.

When leaving high school, we all paved separate paths for our future. I brought the grace and competitive nature from my dance career with me to Bryant but had lost a major piece of my life. Joining a sorority ended up being the key to filling this void.

Sara Latourneau
Class of 2023



Many people think of sororities in a negative connotation, I did when I first came to school but was encouraged to give it a try which opened a door of opportunities and friendships I never expected to have. There are judgements and stereotypes around being a “sorority girl”, but there is much more than meets the eye. I am the current president of my sorority and held multiple leadership positions before this. I've been able to define my values through this organization, help various philanthropies, encourage Diversity and Inclusion education, and am learning the power of delegation. None of this would be possible without the encouragement and support from an empowering and inspiring community of women.

I've learned in my experience about the importance of a good community to help you get through struggles and adversity. I am not trying to sell Greek Life to you but am encouraging you to step out of your comfort zone. I wouldn't love life if I never stepped out onto a stage, went surfing in the big storm, made new friends, applied for that leadership position, or asked for help when I needed it. Remain open-minded to new experiences and let go of judgement on yourself and others. This sounds easier than it actually is, it is uncomfortable and may be nerve wracking, but could lead to benefits you never would have imagined. Trust yourself to know when to move on from something and try a new thing out of your comfort zone, and see what happens.

Meet the Executive Board

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Interested in joining the Thrive Team?

Email us:

thrivemagazine@bryant.edu

**General Meetings:
Thursdays at 5 PM, Papitto
Heritage**









As a Literary and Cultural Studies major, my work is inspired by the intersections of creativity, research, and social justice. During my time at Bryant University, I have witnessed multiple racist incidents and experienced misogyny both inside and outside of the classroom.

This exhibit was created and curated in response to a course that explored the African diaspora. When the professor began to address race directly, and contemporary challenges we face in the American context, students expressed racist ideas and inflammatory rhetoric.

This eroded any trust within the classroom, eliminating the possibility of class discussion. Students had become aggressive to the extent that the professor was forced to change the last four weeks of the syllabus, effectively silencing their voice as an educator and repressing conversations about race. It is clear we, as a community and a country, do not talk about race and racism and its intersections with gender, class, and/or place of origin. We must, as a community, understand that our words hold weight, that racism and misogyny exists in our culture, and the impact it has on our students is real and it matters.

Kayla Batalha



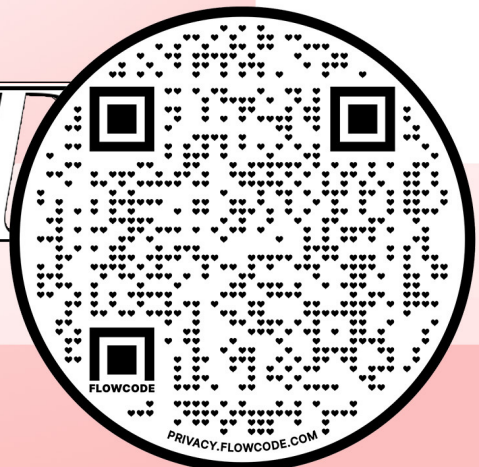
Breaking Bias, Building Belonging displays research-infused art that requires community participation in order to be completed. While it presents the research I have conducted over the past year and a half, this exhibition is positioned as knowledge-in-the-making. Visitors can learn about issues surrounding diversity at Bryant as well as other universities across the nation by interacting with each display. Through visitors' interaction, I can continue to understand the ways in which racial and gender-based bias manifest within the Bryant community as a researcher. The collaborative nature of the project is symbolic of the type of work that is required to achieve our goals of a diverse community and an inclusive and equitable culture. Throughout my interviews with community members, a prominent theme pointed to the idea that people who do not experience discrimination and feel as though they do not hold biases do not feel as though they need to be a part of DEI efforts. Using art that beckons all participants to interact with and respond to racism and misogyny within our own community is a way to bring people into the conversation to work towards building a greater sense of belonging.

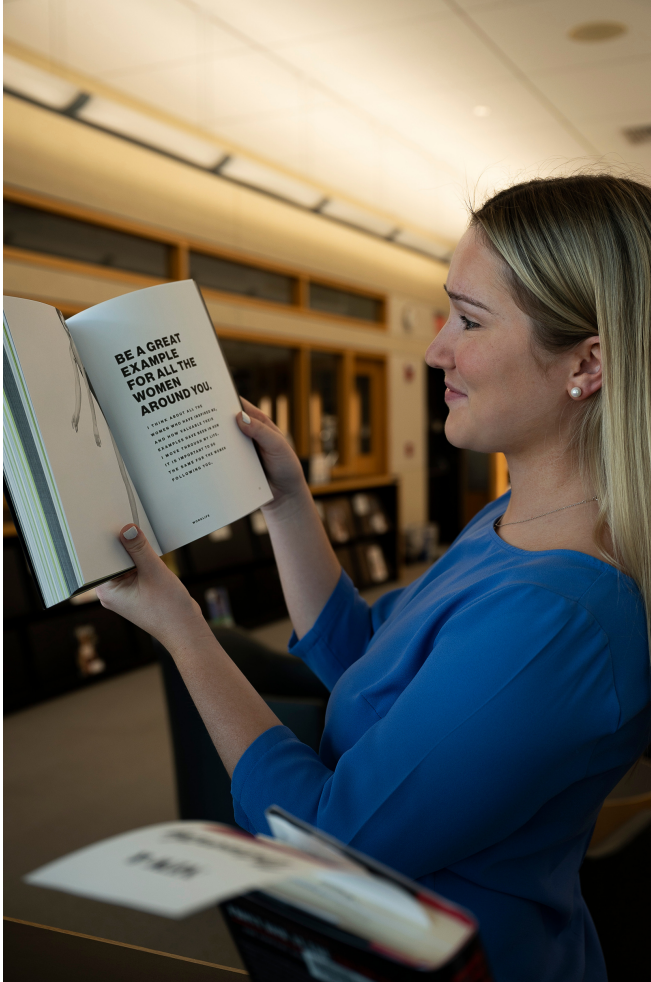


Behind the Customz

I am writing this as a more real piece in which I can talk a little bit more in detail about the behind the scenes of building a brand (whether that means as a business or as a student in college). I think a lot of the time it is hard not to combine the both of them, and it is hard to separate who you truly are from the business persona you convey. I mentioned in a Ted Talk I was able to do this year, “A business has a voice and a culture surrounding it in which you make”. And while I definitely conveyed a particular voice within my business, and by that I mean being authentic for my love of Bryant University while indulging in the art of graphic design, staying true to providing affordable products, occasionally modeling in my pieces, and creating something and seeing it around the community. Sure the brand has created new doorways and amazing opportunities, but it has also shed some light on the hardships and roadblocks that come alongside it. For instance, there is this tremendous lack of support among small business owners who are also full time students across the globe, and the trials and tribulations of understanding a craft and perfecting it (all of which is still taking plenty of time to complete). But the benefit of pursuing a dream young is there tends to be a lot more wiggle room when it comes to failure, and constant support among peers, family, and mentors. Now I get asked a lot of questions about how I am fully able to manage my business, and to that I say it definitely takes some major time management skills, but running Bryant Customz has been an experience that I could never fully describe in writing. For instance, when I was first able to sell 96 pre-orders in August of 2020 to launch my brand I never realized what it would feel like to actually physically see customers in my community walking around in my product. To this day I could never describe or put words to just how thrilling and intrinsically motivating it is for me to continue. Bryant Customz has been a part of my life that I will never forget, and it has taught me just how devoted and truly how far I can take something without giving up. This brand is more than just some customized clothing and fashionable accessories, but it is this moment in my life where despite nothing else going right I know I can always turn to it and it will have my back. I love the saying that states “You won’t work a day in your life if you are doing something you love” and I believe those are words to live by.

BRYANT





When I first came to Bryant and I decided to major in finance, I quickly noticed that most of my finance classes were full of men, and I occasionally felt intimidated by this. However, over the past 3.5 years, I have grown immensely as an individual. I have found mentors in my female professors and peers, and I have developed confidence in myself and my capabilities. In January, the finance department at Bryant nominated me to become a member of the Boston Chapter of Financial Executives, an honor bestowed upon one graduating senior. I have also found success outside of the classroom. Going into my junior year, I had my first internship at Dell Technologies and this past summer, I interned at Fidelity Investments. Both of these internships gave me a sense of professionalism that cannot be achieved in a classroom and also helped me advance my technical skills while working in the industry. This fall I landed my dream job and received an offer to work full-time at Fidelity in Boston after graduation. Over the next 5 years my goals are to continue to thrive in my career while pursuing my passion of helping other young women in finance find confidence in a male dominated industry.

While schoolwork is important, participating in my personal interests, especially singing, has always been important to me. Since my freshman year, I have been a member of The Bottom Line, Bryant's A Cappella group. During my junior year, I was the lead soloist in our first ever music video which is on all major streaming platforms. This year, as a senior, I am serving as the President of the organization and am leading the group to professionally record a full album. Another extracurricular I am involved in is the Bryant Ambassadors program which has also contributed to my confidence. Last year, I received the award for Ambassador of the Year.

At times, balancing my jobs, extracurriculars, and schoolwork with a social life has been extremely difficult. However, I can honestly say that I would not have it any other way. I thrive when I am busy and doing things that I love, and I hope to serve as a positive role model to my peers across all my involvements.

Lauren McSweeney
Class of 2022



EXTRA VA





Major Talk: Megan Polun

Literary and Cultural Studies



Megan Polun enjoys reading and creating art in her free time, which works well with her LCS major. She's excited to explore career opportunities on this path and is considering becoming a children's librarian, an English teacher, or continuing to study topics she's curious about in grad school. She credits the great professors in the LCS department with sparking her passion for learning more and teaching others.



My name is Megan Polun, and I'm a double major in Literary and Cultural Studies and Leadership and Innovation Management. I came into Bryant as an undeclared business major, and I spent a lot of time browsing the course catalog to see what kinds of classes interested me. After taking 3 LCS classes, I decided to add it as a major. One thing I love about LCS is how broad it is. You can take painting, sculpture, book making, or other studio art classes and they count as Literary and Cultural Studies. LCS also includes classes in film studies, creative writing, jobs in arts industries, women and gender studies, and a lot more.



LCS is a great pair to my management major because it provides me with a greater understanding of how to listen, learn, and communicate my opinions. A lot of the classes have expanded my worldview; I've learned about sexism, racism, classism, overlapping systems of oppression, and other essential topics that have opened my eyes to the ways the world works and my part in changing it. I've found that my LCS classes have helped me develop more empathy towards the experiences of others, and that will be beneficial no matter what career path I pursue. While the College of Business provides job-specific skills, the College of Arts and Sciences supplements that with important soft skills such as awareness, empathy, and communication.

The professors in the LCS department are extremely knowledgeable of and passionate about their subject areas, and they are genuinely interested in their students. Professor Zaretti's classes are super fun because they center on creativity, and I think it's great to have time built into your weekly schedule just to be creative. It's easy to get stressed out with all our responsibilities, and LCS classes help me slow down and appreciate the world around me.

Nikki

Thriving women. Well, now that is an interesting couple of words because how do you define thriving? I mean in the typical sense it would be that someone is successful, happy, and healthy, right? Yet, the way we all see that is different and individual.

For me being a thriving woman means to be confident within yourself and to feel genuinely happy. When I feel confident and happy that is when I am thriving and glowing with joy. That is when I also feel most like myself.



Comparison is the thief of happiness. We've all heard that saying before, haven't we? But I think in the past year I have realized how much truth there is to that statement. Every day we are thrown into situations where we compare ourselves to other people whether it be subconsciously or consciously. I have personally seen such a shift in my happiness and confidence with removing social media from being such a consistent part of my life and for everyone that could mean removing something else that is hampering your happiness.

I hope that wherever you are in your journey of self-love and being confident in yourself you are taking the time to celebrate how much progress you have made because no matter where you are on the journey you are still making progress for the better.

Belenky





Kelly

from the oxford english dictionary

she looked at him
as if she had never
seen beauty
before

as if he was what you'd find
oxford english dictionary,
page eight hundred and nine

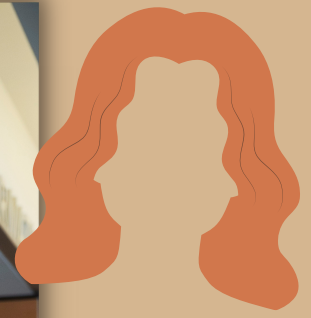
when you looked up the word beauty
his eyes
would be the first to shine

but she knew
that beauty
was not her focus
that legibility
was just fine

and if you looked up
opaque
page twelve thousand,
one hundred and five
you would find his mind

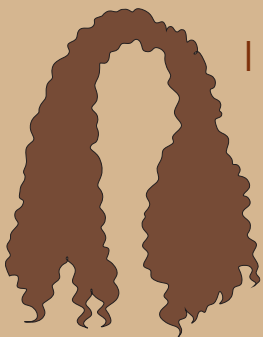
and this,
was her problem
her eyes were tired
of reading his writing
between the lines

Cash



Eliana Ochieng

THE SOPHOMORE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP MAJOR
WANTS TO BUILD AN
INCLUSIVE HAIR SALON FOR
STUDENTS OF COLOR.





"It plays a huge part in diversity and inclusion on campus."

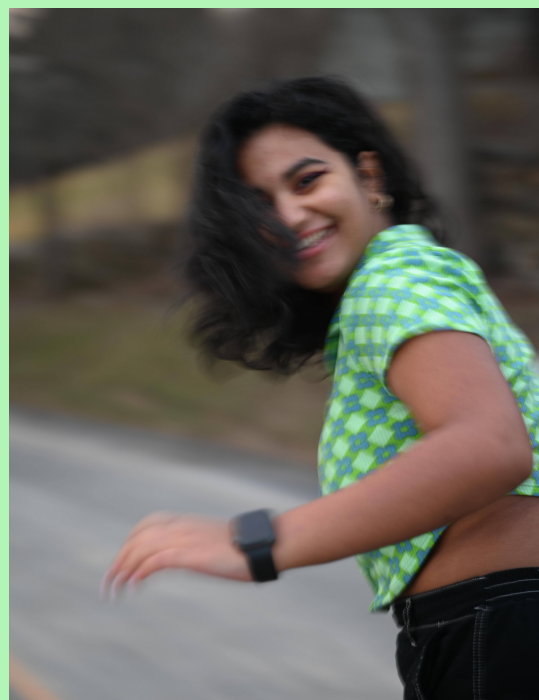
****Why a hair salon?****

We are on a small campus filled with students, mainly athletes, coming from all around the country. Communities where they were the predominant race. Places where hair getting done is something that they are so used to, but taken away from us. And, not only are they placed in communities such as classrooms and on teams where it's mostly white people, we don't get to express ourselves in one of the most sacred ways. Which is, I think, through our hair. It's kind of ridiculous to make students, black students, even white students, anybody, have to travel an hour or more or pay around \$300 to feel normal.

What research is necessary to make this project a reality?

I'm currently going through the finance aspect. I don't have any barbers yet, but that's also not super hard to do because most barbers and hairdressers are freelance, they just rent out a chair. So, Bryant would be making money off of it because of the renting. And, it would be significantly more popular because it's a concentrated community. I was actually speaking to the head of student engagement and he was like, "How about we have people come in and do nails too?" I just want this project to allow people to look good, so they have that confidence.





Tyra Theknath, Class of 2025

Change is inevitable, however, growing is optional. People can dwell upon the fact that everything has changed and things can never go back to the way it was. But what matters is what people learn from that change and what they do about it in the future. Embracing change and growing from it is what I learned. Because what people fail to see is that life is a gift, they need to accept that in your life people will come and go, some will hurt you and some will heal you, what matters is what you learn and take back from those experiences because change is beyond our control.

Change is the only constant, and although you can't control it, you can control how you perceive that change. You could view it as a blessing or a curse, for better or for worse. For the longest time, I never accepted change and took it for worse when I never truly knew how change could help me for the better. I used to feel like my life was boring, I felt like I lived the same day every day. Leading a predictable future, like I was in autopilot mode with nothing new to look forward to, what I did not realize is that I was waiting around for something bigger instead of focusing on the simple blessings that surround me every day. I needed change, a change of aims, a change of desires, and most importantly a change of outlook towards life. I need it because I don't want to live my life the same way, every day.

The saying "yesterday was history, tomorrow is a mystery and the present is a gift" resonates with me because one day I will grow old and when I do

I will look back on these days reminiscing on those moments. Right now we are blessed with a present. I want to make the most of it, live with a wild passion, learn from my losses, love restlessly and acquire inexpressible amounts of joy so that one day I can look back and recall these days.

Change is inevitable, and it is something that I can't control but I can control how I react to the change, right now the present which is a gift.



"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

—Philippians 4:13







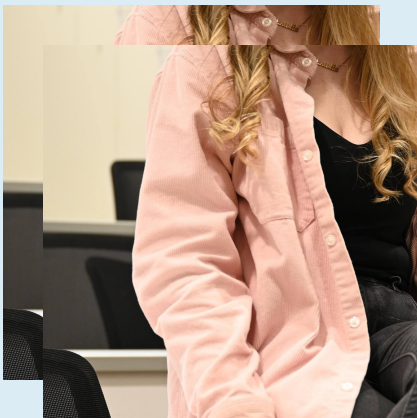
DANIELLE CHISHOLM

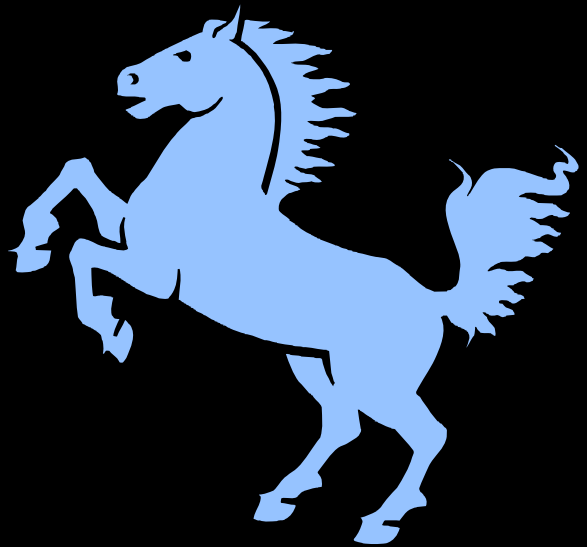
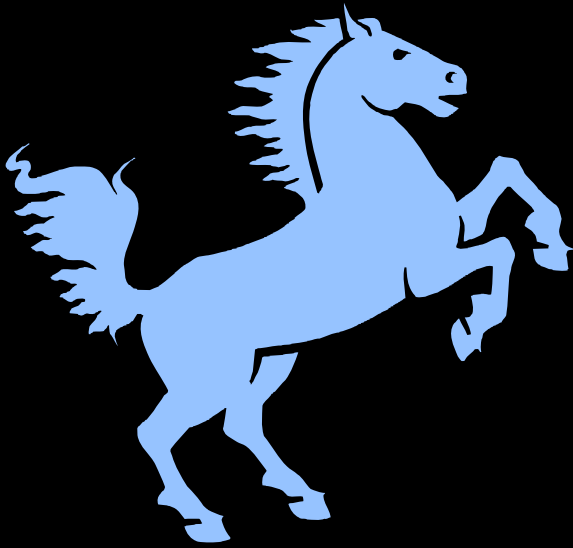
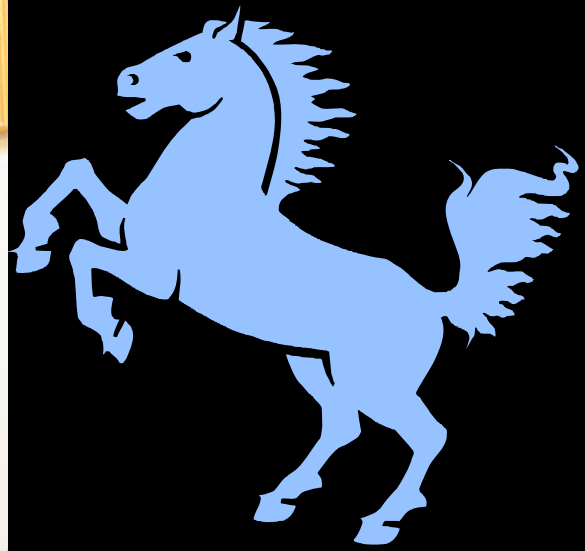
It's almost impossible to imagine your entire life and how you live it changing in an instant- until it does. In January 2020, just before the second semester of my freshman year at Bryant, I was diagnosed with Degenerative Disc Disease and two herniated discs at the L4-L5 and L5-S1 vertebrae. This was difficult for me to comprehend, as I had not experienced any form of injury or trauma that would cause this- it just happened out of nowhere. Six hours after being diagnosed with these issues at the ER, I was in the operating room receiving an emergency Laminectomy/Discectomy; my herniated discs were pushing on my spinal cord and affecting the nerves that controlled the feeling in my legs. It was a scary experience because everything happened so quickly, and I had virtually no control over my fate.

Two weeks later, I was back at school and participating in IDEA (with accommodations, of course). I was determined to not miss out on any part of my social and academic experience on campus. I began to feel an ounce of normalcy- of which lasted quite briefly. On a hot July day in 2020, I was playing in the pool with my baby cousin when I felt an intense, stabbing pain in my back- I immediately knew that, once again, something was terribly wrong. I went to my doctor for an evaluation within the week, where I found out that the disc that was initially operated on did in fact re-herniate. This began a long road of going through my daily life in constant pain and discomfort while waiting for a spinal fusion to (hopefully) create a long-term solution to my permanent health conflict. The process of scheduling a spinal fusion is a lengthy one normally, and the pandemic made it even more grueling to plan. My original surgery date was pushed from November to December, and then from December to April. Waiting for it felt like torture!

For ten months, I couldn't wear a backpack. I couldn't make it through a single class without discomfort. I couldn't even sit for longer than 20 minutes without having to re-adjust, sometimes grateful that we had to wear masks in class because it could hide my grimaces. The discs began pushing on my sciatic nerve, which made it difficult to walk without a shooting pain in both legs. I felt trapped in my own body. It's difficult for those who have never experienced chronic and persistent pain to completely understand it and how it affects a person 24/7; I often felt very alone.

Sometimes, I am not quite sure how I 'survived' all of this mentally. The only thing I could do was take life one day at a time, searching for and cherishing the good in a sea of bad. Today, I am about a year past my spinal fusion and feeling better than I could have ever imagined. I can exercise, maintain an active lifestyle, and participate in my involvements without restrictions again. Though I do have permanent nerve damage and still experience occasional pain, I feel like a completely different person with a new lease on life. My experiences have forced me to gain a new perspective on what it means to be happy, healthy, and what it means to thrive. I become more and more grateful for every day I experience that is pain-free. I have realized how lucky I am to have such an amazing support system of friends and family who have never wavered. Though I would not wish this condition on anyone, I also would not change anything about my situation because it has made me into the person that I am today; a person that I am proud of.





A message to my younger self,

Life is ever-changing, and you will face challenge after challenge; feel pain and disappointment, but more importantly happiness and joy. Stepping into this next stage of life, you will leave everything you have ever known behind; you're going to be tested and expected to reach these high hopes placed on you. It may seem unlikely, but you will surpass them and become the person you have always pictured yourself being.

Yes, you are still facing this dreadfully chronic stomach disorder, and no you still do not know what's wrong. You have been through tests, surgeries and have seen multiple different specialists, but you are still considered to be a medical mystery. Yet, you find a way to get up every day no matter the pain and will find at least one thing to be happy about each day. Some days are better than others, but those bad days are what will make you strong.

You have your dream job! You are on the road to becoming a professional horse trainer and instructor. You have been able to start the Deaf Riding Program, the one you have always thought about. You finally found someone that believes in you and is willing to take a chance on you. After failing, you got back up and were able to dust yourself off, but it is thanks to your resilience, you have been allowed to prove yourself.

You finally have found what drives you and have found ways to enjoy the work that you do. You were a part of multiple different projects here at Bryant, working with real companies and supplying them with completely renovated business plans. You will even compete in multiple competitions, and in one of them, you will be in the top three finalists. From there, you will be offered the opportunity to be an IDEA mentor, this is where you find your love for teaching and how to really be empathetic as well as courteous towards others.

You are about to graduate from Bryant, you are going to be scared about leaving the constant and stepping into the real world, but don't be. You have been given every tool you need to be successful in any occupation of your choice. This is because you have been able to face adversity with dignity and courage. You have become the person I have always hoped we would be.

Believe in yourself because no one else will until you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine C. Babbit". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'K' and 'B'.

SENIOR

DOUBLE MAJOR IN MARKETING AND PSYCHOLOGY

MINOR IN COMMUNICATIONS

