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Buckeye Union High School scholarship winner never gave up

July 22, 2010

Rachel Corbin, 18, graduated from Buckeye Union High School with honors in May, but her journey through life was filled with struggles. Corbin moved to Buckeye in third grade after attending five elementary schools in Colorado. Her family moved multiple times while she attended Buckeye Elementary School.

Despite a difficult home life, Corbin could always count on her friends, teachers and school. Corbin said she was 12 when she was kicked out of her home. Her friend's parents took her into their family and raised her like a daughter. Six years later, Corbin is a Horatio Alger Scholar enrolled at the University of Arizona. The \$1,000, five-year scholarship honors students who have succeeded in spite of adversity.

Corbin, an aspiring family counselor, talks about her challenges and hopes.

Overcoming hardship:

"I think it was God. I really do. I really think he had a hand in the matter the whole time. I just kind of wanted something better. I excelled in school on top of that. That's kind of where I put my focus. That's how I found my self-worth, was in school to cope with whatever was going on at home."

Her mentors:

Buckeye Elementary School District teacher Jodi Chesbro and counselor Sherry Saylor "played some huge roles in my life. Sherry was whoever I ran to when things got bad. She would write it down and pray with me and give me advice on how to handle my situation. Ms. Chesbro, there was a time when she pulled me aside and she and I painted her office together and she just let me vent. I guess I just needed to get everything off my chest."

College plans:

"I love to learn. I guess it's been a passion ever since I was little. I knew you're always told you need to go to college to get that degree and move on in life. Well, none of my parents got a college degree. My brother dropped out of high school. It was kind of like, 'I'm going to be that generational break.' Whatever they expected of me, I want to exceed that. I chose my major because of my family situation growing up. Had we gone to a counselor, maybe things would've worked out differently with my immediate family. I love being the listener and advice giver, so I just thought it would be a good fit."

Advice for kids in similar situations:

"Stay strong and rise above. Don't let your parents dictate your future or your choices. There are so many opportunities out there in life. Explore them. Just stay involved, I swam all four years in high school and played tennis. Staying busy was my outlet."