

Imagine this: you are an eighth grade student who can not read. Instead, you “catch” letters that are floating in the air, put them back in order, recognize the word, define the word, and then move to the next word to repeat the process. You do not comprehend what you are reading completely, but you hope to understand enough about the topic to learn something and answer a question. I did not have to imagine it, because this was my situation. Yes, I am dyslexic, but at this point I was self diagnosed.

I had been tested many times, but was never diagnosed. In fourth grade I gave up, and tried different therapies with no improvement so I chose to learn my own way. I focused on my strengths. At a very young age I approached test taking with problem-solving strategies. In order to get an “A” I not only needed to know the information, but also needed to figure out how to read the questions. Computers enabled me to excel. I found Quizlets, old exams, as well as many other resources to familiarize myself with questions. In order to not be embarrassed with not completing homework I did every question. I was never confident that I would write down the correct assignment.

Starting high school I knew that I would not be able to maintain the grades my hard work deserved so I decided to get retested. Finally, I was diagnosed with Dysphonetic Dyslexia and CAPD, and was fortunate to locate the correct therapy. Unfortunately, therapy takes a significant amount of time and effort to improve. I had to quickly learn how to balance struggling in school and the long hours of therapy, which made me focus on a success in another field. Field Hockey was where I found that I was extremely athletic. That summer after sophomore year I worked extremely hard at two important things that defined why I am a success today. I participated in a summer immersion program called Girls Who Code where I learned to love computer science and problem solving and my desire to be a Computer Engineer. The second thing, and the most important, was the Gemm Learning therapy it is the summer I learned how to read.

In the end, my story about years of hard work and significant issues with learning does have a happy ending. I can now read and comprehend! Armed with these skills, I have received the

grades my hard work deserves. I now know how to recognize and identify problems; as well as generate creative solutions. Through this struggle, I have learned that I have the ability to overcome obstacles, the determination to achieve my dreams, and possess exceptional skills to ensure success. With this knowledge I now move on to my first step to my computer engineering degree.