



PARKINSON'S WARRIORS VIGNETTE



MYKAELA TREES

Written By: Mykaela Trees

Mykaela Trees is the current captain of Team Trees and also serves on the Pacing for Parkinson's organizing committee.

Tell us a little about your relationship with Parkinson's Disease.

My grandfather had Parkinson's Disease and was diagnosed when he was 56. I was not able to fully understand how Parkinson's affected his life and our family until I was older. As a kid, I didn't think much of it. I still had my Pop Pop who loved to spend time with us; however, that looked and changed as I got older. When I remember my grandfather, I remember him not just for having Parkinson's but for his many other attributes. I, or any other person who was blessed to know him, would describe him as patient, positive, loving, wise beyond words and always ready for dessert or something sweet.

Parkinson's does not just affect the person diagnosed, and I saw that with my grandparents. My grandmother went above and beyond to care for my grandfather. As Team Trees we aren't just fundraising for my grandfather, but for my grandmother as well. For many years I watched my grandfather go through the stages of the disease, but he kept that spark and warm, optimistic personality for which everyone adored him. My dad ran in the Baltimore Running Festival with the Movers and Shakers team when I was just a child, and we began running again as a family in 2013. Johns Hopkins did a lot for both of my grandparents; the way my grandfather would talk about everything he was learning and people he met through Hopkins or my grandmother in the support group. For me, supporting Hopkins is a way to honor my grandparents and support other families experiencing something similar.



Above: The first year on Team Trees. Emily (Trees) Rothert, Hagan (Trees) Wilson, Brittany Trees and Mykaela Trees.

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Supporting Johns Hopkins Parkinson's
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*Above: Mykaela's grandparents,
Emily and Jerry Trees*

When you think of the Parkinson's community, what word comes to mind?

The Parkinson's community is everything I think a community should be: welcoming, loving, and positive.

What's one piece of advice you would give someone with PD and their community?

Support and love. Parkinson's is a hard disease to understand and to see someone you love to go through. Support them on the bad days and love them on the good days.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

Pacing for Parkinson's has been amazing for my family! I can't say enough how great it is to be around such a positive community. I know my family and I can't wait to be back in person for race day in the tent. One of our favorite days of the year is race day when we can talk, meet new people and of course the beer!



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