

I was born raised in Ronan, Montana, actually born there at the hospital, so kind of been there the whole time all the way from kindergarten all the way through high school graduation. I was a three sport athlete in high school, volleyball, basketball and softball, and in eighth grade I was at a summer practice, kind of like an open gym, and I ended up rupturing, basically shredding, my ACL in my right knee like, completely. I had no idea I did it, you know, I was like 'Oh this is okay, this is good.' Went home and no, no it wasn't. So from the age of 15 to 18, I actually ended up having four knee surgeries total within that time frame and so it took me out of a lot of sports right off the bat because of the nine month recovery so, yeah. Went through that nine months and Volleyball is like, the first thing you do. So, coming into my freshman year, I didn't get to play volleyball. I just was out of commission. And so from then on, it was battling time frames of when I would have a surgery each year to then, 'Okay what sport do I get to play now,' and it usually always ended up being softball. I did a lot of managing after that. I helped with the boys basketball team and kind of made it my passion to help them out, keep the boys in line type of thing, and then when it came time to be, you know, going into my senior year, I had kind of taken myself out of sports. Like, I stepped back away from that and realized that wasn't my identity, that wasn't me. So, I kinda had that realization by that point. So, I think my goal was that I realized that I wanted to go to college as a sophomore in high school. I had kind of gone through a stage in my life where I had come down with a couple different injuries that were limiting me as far as everything sports because, of course, as a young athlete, you're like 'Sports is my life,' and it took a little bit of realizing that 'Nope, now you know you need to figure something else out.' From then on, I always had a passion for trying to help people and be there for other people, so I knew I wanted to go into something with health care because it's always needed, whether it was nursing, you know, I looked at all different facets of healthcare and I just wanted to pursue that. I knew helping people is what I was intended to do and I realized that through my own experiences, I didn't want to be a physical therapist, because they help you when you're already hurt. Like, they have a purpose, but it's after you're hurt. And so then I looked further into becoming a certified and licensed athletic trainer. I loved the idea of preventative care that, 'Hey if I see something wrong with it, take care of it now, preventing you from messing up your ankle and having to have a ligament surgery' or you know, any of those other things that can happen if things go unchanged. Like, your mechanics of the way that you move during a certain sport. So, right after high school, I attended the university of Idaho. And coming from a small town, it was a lot. I actually spent the first semester there and realized that personally, I didn't want to be there. I couldn't get the help I needed, I think there was 9000 freshmen that came into that year including myself, and I think that's bigger than my home town. I was like well, I started out you know spread my wings a little bit, did that thing, but it just wasn't for me. Then, I fulfilled my undergraduate degree, which is health and human performance, at the University of Montana Western in Dillon, Montana. And so got my bachelor's degree there, helped out with the football team and everything like that after the internship process. And then I actually got my master's degree from the University of Montana. If you're going through when you look back and you wish that you would have taken a chance, take it. Don't ever have to look back and wish that you didn't take the chance or didn't. Go through and figure out whether you're going to succeed or fail, because failure just means that you're trying. You know, it doesn't mean that you're a failure at life or you can't try again. So, especially with me, I didn't pass my boards the first time. I didn't. You know, and I don't even pass them the second time. You know and it's one of those that not only was I in my own head about it, but it's also a big test and there's a lot of things contributing to it, but if you want it bad enough and you know, third time was my charm. Passed it, and I am glad I kept

going because if I didn't and I looked back and was like 'Oh. It only took one more try? Like why couldn't I have done that?' I think that's my thing is just, make it so you're happy to wake up the life that you have. Be able to be grateful for it because you made it for yourself.