



Bright Light Foundation

Kim Abraham

2010 BLF Recipient



Kim was born in Amarillo on 1984. Just two weeks before her first birthday, she was hospitalized for bacterial meningitis. Doctors informed us that this kind of bacterial meningitis was fatal if not detected early, and that it could lead to permanent damage, including deafness, blindness and/or mental deterioration. For the next 90 days, Kim was in the hospital on different antibiotics.

As a repercussion from the meningitis, Kim now suffers from several different kinds of seizures – Grand mal, Petit mal, Secondarily generalized, and Focal sensory. The seizures are severe and often which have become hard to control even with medications. Kim is taking experimental drugs to control the seizures that has kept her in and out of the hospital her whole life. Due to the seizures, she is very much prevented from living much of a normal life.

Kim's neurologist has named her a candidate for Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS) surgery. In June 2010, Kim underwent surgery to have a VNS device implanted. VNS Therapy System works like a pacemaker to

help control these signals to the brain. The VNS Therapy generator is implanted just under the skin in the upper-left part of the chest. Two thin, flexible wires are attached to the left vagus nerve in the neck. The generator sends small electrical pulses to the vagus nerve, which then delivers the pulses to the brain. The gentle stimulation helps to prevent the electrical irregularities within the brain that causes seizures. By the grace of God, time will only tell if the VNS will help Kim with her seizures.

On top of all of Kim's medical problems, Anita is a single parent with another daughter, Lauri, who attends Lone Star College close to home to help out with Kim. The stress from Kim's condition, their grandmother's health and subsequent passing, demands of college expenses, financial responsibilities for her mom's and daughter's medical condition, as well as caring for her next-door elderly aunt and uncle, have left Anita in a financial bind. The stress has caused Anita to suffer from extreme weight loss, and her doctors are alarmed at her low sodium and potassium levels. The doctors want to put Anita in the hospital with intravenous feeding to stabilize her, but Anita cannot take off work, because she is the sole financial provider.

My family and I are thankful to the Bright Light Foundation for selecting me as a recipient for the 2010 year. A sincere thank you goes to each and every one of you.