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be Still

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Loss

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A CELEBRATION Of Gabriella

Every year the post arrives on my stream. Gabriella's birthday. This year she would have been 15 then 16. Her younger brother having grown older than her. Her mom and dad a constant force in the community against pediatric diseases. They have been successful. REALLY successful. They had President Obama sign the Kids First Act. They have personal conversations with The Director of the NIH, Dr. Francis Collins about pediatric funding. They continue to raise their own money to fight. It is not only glioblastoma that they fight. Glioblastoma. The disease that took her away. They donate funds to a lot of various kids diseases.

When she was first diagnosed the blogs started off sweet, hopeful. There were parties and support groups for other children. Then she got worse- then better- then much worse. It started to really hit her, her eye became malformed and I cried every time the post went by about her update, with pictures. I felt so bad and did not know what to do. They had all the resources they needed. Heck they had direct access to one of the most brilliant minds in our time – the guy that mapped the human genome and runs the NIH. It didn't matter. She died.

A child died.

A child whose Grandma was my mother's bridesmaid. A child whose dad and aunt I knew as a kid. She died. Talk is bull----.

That is what the saucy 8 year old Gabriella would have said.

Literally said.

So every year the posts stream by, the updates and the void that sits behind them. I love the posts for the reminder of the life that she lived, little Gabriella who earned an honorary college degree. She was an inspirational spirit.

And I hate the posts. They make me sad. I hate that I get sad and I am appreciative of also not turning numb.

I used to say this as a student doctor. *Don't stop caring*. If you stop caring the job will suck. So I never did.

So I don't stop caring but still I dread the posts and like them. Should I donate every year? Should I do more? Does any of it matter?

Yes, yes, it matters because she would want it to. Because she would want the Kids First Act to save a life of another child. Because she would want it to matter.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriella_Miller_Kids_First_Research_Act
https://www.pinterest.com/pin/151222499961328744/
https://gramho.com/explore-hashtag/gabriellamiller

GABRIELLA

- **Suzanne Riskin, M.D.** is an Instructor of Basic Sciences at the Clearwater campus of NSU- KPCOM. She is interested in bringing narrative medicine to the curriculum because she is inspired by the works of her students. She received her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and her M.D. degree from the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine. When she is not reviewing physiology and academic medicine materials she spends time floating down a river in a kayak and cooking up a great meal.

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