Meet Alyssia

I wish to have the perfect smile

Alyssia’s Senior year of high school was looking bright. She was on the school’s volleyball team and everyone was looking forward to Senior night. About a week before the big day, Alyssia fell on her head during a match, and the impact of the fall spiraled into so much more. After severe headaches and vision problems, she went to the doctor. Based on nothing but a gut feeling, her doctor checked her bloodwork, and it resulted in Alyssia being rushed to the hospital. The next day she was diagnosed with leukemia.

The months that followed were tough. Her mother was heartbroken seeing Alyssia go through round after round of chemo. She faced unexpected complications with each round including: a lung infection, temperatures up to 107, severe pain, blood infections, cranial pressure, kidney problems, and optic nerve swelling. Because of the complications, Alyssia wasn’t allowed to go home between treatments. Her mom said the only word to use for how things were at the time is terrifying. However, support from the hospital and Alyssia’s friends helped her push through, and Alyssia finished treatment in time to go back to school and graduate with her class.

A MOMENT TO SHINE

Through treatment, Alyssia knew that her one true wish was to have the perfect smile. The opportunity to get Invisalign would give her the boost of confidence that she so deserved after all those tough days. She was thrilled to finally get Invisalign, and just when she thought that her wish was complete, she was surprised with a call informing her that Make-A-Wish Georgia and Macy’s were throwing her an event to reveal her beautiful new smile. The day was more than Alyssia could have ever imagined. She chose her favorite outfit from Macy’s and had a glam team do her hair and makeup. With the runway set and the cameras ready, Alyssia walked the runway to show off her perfect smile.

The day wasn’t only amazing for Alyssia, but it also made an impact on her mom and brother as well. Her brother was fascinated by the limo ride and had just as much fun as Alyssia did that day. “I am so grateful that so many people cared for her on that level,” said Alyssia’s mom.

“"It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I know I’ll never forget it."
– Kimberly, Alyssia’s mom

INSPIRED TO DO MORE

Alyssia is currently studying public health at Georgia Southern with hopes of pursuing a nursing career. Apart from some changes in her heart because of treatment, Alyssia hasn’t had any long-term complications and is thriving in her college experience. Her mom wanted her to wait a while before going off to college, but her wish inspired her to be courageous, keep moving and push toward the future. Alyssia’s wish showed her the power of people coming together to bring hope to those who need it most.