

## **2ND PLACE:** Siobhan Cavagnaro 7/16/2010 (Heart)

In 2003, at the age of 22, I was diagnosed with a very rare bleeding disorder. I had a nosebleed that would not stop for over 5 hours. Who knew that I would have a life altering diagnosis so quickly, and so late in life?!

After a consult with a hematologist it was decided that I fit the von Willebrands disease profile, yet it was unsure EXACTLY what bleeding disorder I had. My tests concluded that I had prolonged bleeding time which means that if I got cut or hurt myself, I would have a difficult time clotting. From day one I was concerned about getting into a car accident and not being able to speak for myself. How would I be able to tell an EMT or a paramedic that I would immediately need life saving medication, ddAVP? It was then that I was referred to American Medical ID.

I got my first bracelet in 2004 and was so happy with it. Not only was I able to pick the perfect bracelet for my taste, but I was able to engrave exactly what my doctor recommended to ensure my safety in the event that I would not be able to speak for myself. What was even more exciting was that if you flip it over, you can read all of my doctor's information, which was suggested to me after a fateful day almost two years ago...

It had rained that morning but during a break in the rain I thought I would walk to the mailbox to mail some letters. I waved to the workers pumping in the monthly oil supply for my apartment building on my way to the mailbox. The next thing I remember, I was in the hospital and there was an EMT standing over me stating that I was "one lucky girl!". I was confused and terrified. It turns out that on my way back from the mailbox, I had passed out onto the cold, wet pavement and hit my head on the ground. This was my worst fear coming true.

Thankfully the oil workers saw the incident and called 911. I was placed on a backboard with a cervical collar and rushed to the hospital. The EMT who responded saw my bracelet and was afraid that I was still unconscious due to a bleed or severe and worsening injury to my head. When I was rolled into the ER he showed the physicians my bracelet and I was immediately rushed to CT scan to check for brain bleeds and received all of the necessary medications promptly.

I am proud to wear my bracelet because I know it could save my life again some day. As a registered nurse, I encourage my patients with chronic diseases or those with severe allergies to obtain a bracelet as well. I work with the pediatric population, and I even show them and their parents the website with all of the choices!

Thank you American Medical ID. You have not only saved my life, but you have saved so many other lives as well!