

Angels for ATHLETES



It was 2011 and I was a volunteer for Big Brothers Big Sisters. I enjoyed my time with my “Little” and she had begun opening up to me about challenges in her life. We would spend time at the park playing on the swings or kicking around a soccer ball. I tried to do “active” and sports related things with her. One night at dinner, she casually announces that a class mate had approached her about joining a gang. Naturally, I thought this had to mean a playground gang in which 10 year olds made believe on the playground as that’s how it would have been when I was 10. But instead, she was referring to an actual street gang. I asked her if she knew what a gang did and she responded, “Yes, they shoot and kill people and stuff”. To say I was shocked by a 10 year old showing legitimate interest in joining a gang is an understatement. My Little was a good kid but came from a rough neighborhood.



On February 21, 2011 my biological little brother suffered a near death hockey accident when the skate of an opponent sliced his neck open. As a result, his thyroid, carotid artery, jugular, muscles, nerves and tissue were all cut. In the moments following the accident, he skated back to the bench and his coaches shuttered at the amount of blood and the inside of his neck being exposed. We were beyond lucky that morning. In the arena that morning was an oral surgeon who knew enough to stick his hand in the wound and hold the carotid artery in hopes of saving my brother from bleeding out. In the course of 7 minutes, he lost 2 pints of blood. Needless to say, he was rushed to a trauma 1 hospital in Torrance, California where he underwent emergency surgery. The following morning the I.C.U. doctors and his surgeon made the rounds and he promptly asked when he could play hockey again. In the moment this question stunned my family. Just 24 hours earlier, we weren’t sure if he was going to survive and now he’s asking when he can play the game that almost killed him. But, in hindsight, I am not sure why I was surprised. As that’s my brother. That’s his spirit. I am happy to report that my brother returned to the ice to play hockey once again just 9 weeks after this terrifying experience and nearly four years later, he’s still competitively playing the sport he started when he was 2. He loves hockey and wasn’t ready to hang up his skates. To say the least, witnessing this spirit and determination was beyond inspiring.

It was Father’s Day of 2012 and I sat down with my Dad and told him I wanted to start a non-profit based on the experience I had with my Little and the inspiring story of my brother. The non-profit would support kids and athletics. In August 2012, I founded Angels for Athletes. Our mission is to enrich and empower resourced youth by providing financial assistance and equipment for their involvement in recreational sports programs. In addition, we provide a college scholarship to high school athletes coming back from a sports related injury.



For more information or to donate contact

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Encouraging and supporting kids through active participation in recreational and competitive sports.