Courage and Strength: The Krystal Wolfe story
This is the story of Krystal Wolfe. Her young life has included homeless shelters, abandonment, foster care, kinship care, and adoption. But this isn’t even close to the whole story.

“It was so hard. I was 13, it felt like my mom didn’t want me, that no one wanted me.”
"My mom and my sister and I were living in a homeless shelter, and we were getting kicked out. These two pastors were helping us get into a motel. We moved from the shelter to the motel, then got kicked out of the motel. The pastors said to my biological mom, ‘You can let your daughters live with us until you get back on your feet.’ We were put into kinship care and moved in with the pastor. Then, just before I turned 16, my grandmother passed away and my mom left town.

At this point, Krystal was forced to make a decision that no child should ever have to make. The choice was to remain in kinship care with the chance of being separated from her sister should her biological parent want her back, or be officially adopted and give up the legal relationship between she and her birth parent.
Teenagers should be thinking of proms and weekends and daydreaming and hanging at the mall with friends, not faced with life changing decisions. Krystal chose to be adopted, giving she and her sister a chance at a stable life.

“I was always scared I would not have a home.”
“Until 7th grade I lived in so many states that I don’t remember ever starting and ending a school year at the same school. Because I got adopted, I could start and finish high school in the same school. Knowing I was going to have some place to go on Christmas break and the holidays, helped me decide to challenge myself to apply to college.”
Statistics for children who “age-out” of foster care are bleak. The emotional and physical security of a stable and loving home gave Krystal the support she needed to succeed academically; it also gave her the determination she needed to apply to college. When Krystal got accepted, the Merakey Foundation helped make her college plans financially possible.
The foundation offers individuals who age out of Merakey foster care programs partial college scholarships. They provided Krystal with financial support for tuition, books, and supplies, which gave her the peace of mind she needed while forging a new path.

The scholarship was not just financial support, but also emotional. Krystal shares that she grew up with very little she could count on, but she could always rely on the calls from the Merakey team to ensure she was set up each semester. The staff at Merakey, and the resources provided by the organization were finally something Krystal could depend on.

The Merakey Foundation did not give Krystal the strength to persevere in the face of tremendous challenges. She always had that strength inside of her. But we did believe in her.
Krystal graduates from Trevecca Nazarene University in May and is currently an intern at the public defender’s office in Nashville. Her story inspires us to persist; every day the Merakey Foundation works to ensure that more stories like Krystal’s are possible.

“My home does not have to be a place. I have a home now within several families. The family that adopted me, the Merakey family and my family at college”
PS: Krystal just got engaged to her high-school boyfriend.

“If I didn’t have the stability of being in high-school in the same place I would never have established that connection with my boyfriend.”
Please consider supporting the work of Merakey Foundation.

To make a secure donation visit www.merakey.org/foundation or call 610-260-4675