

How did your disability shape your decision to study the program you chose?

I have always been afraid of psychologists. Whether it was a clinical psychologist or a school psychologist I have always been afraid of them, they always seemed to have bad news.

I was born with spina bifida myelomeningocele which means I am bound to a wheelchair. Due to my disability I had to have frequent appointments at the IWK in Halifax. This is where I had my first encounter with a psychologist at age 4. I don't remember much from this appointment other than being asked if I knew the purpose of a balloon, in which I confidently responded, "you tie it to your fridge".

As I got older I developed a passion for basketball, which I played frequently in gym class. I knew that wheelchair basketball existed but being from Cape Breton there were no teams I could play on; but I still had some hope there would be something eventually. In seventh grade, it was announced my school would be closing and I would have to transfer to a much bigger middle school. This prompted my first bad experience with a school psychologist. She had interrupted my science class and asked if she could speak to me, which I found strange because I hadn't done anything. She led me to her office where she told me news that had shattered my passion; I was not allowed to play basketball at my future middle school and there were no teams around I could play on. She assured me that I shouldn't give up but hearing those words still devastated me. After that experience I resented my school's guidance counsellor.

The next year, I started at my new school for eighth grade. It was horrible. Prior to me there was nobody else with a visible disability, so I was stared at constantly. Coming from a small school where nobody took a second look at me to this big school, this was intimidating. Constantly I would wonder why people were staring and whispering whenever I was around. I was always left asking myself, "what's wrong with me?". Eventually, I realised they hadn't seen anyone in a wheelchair before. Soon, all of my friends had been put on a separate lunch time or had left me for new friends which left me completely alone. I began to feel very anxious going to school and would frequently cry on my lunch break because I wasn't making any friends. When my mom became aware of this she called the guidance counsellor to talk to me.

The pager in my classroom rang and my teacher informed me to go to guidance; I found this embarrassing at the time because my peers associated going to guidance as a bad thing. The guidance counsellor asked me many questions including if I had any friends in my class, to which I lied and said yes. Over the course of the year I would get called down to the guidance counsellor and she would ask me how things were going, which to me felt like I was being interrogated. Soon, I became afraid of the guidance counsellor. I never opened up to her because I felt she wouldn't understand what I was going through as I wasn't getting physically or verbally bullied, I just felt uncomfortable and alone.

Since then, I've become more comfortable with psychologists after learning they're here to help. In grade eleven I began to think about possible career paths for me. I knew I loved science, specifically Biology, and Sociology. I thought back to my multiple visits to guidance and how I felt I could relate to people with disabilities on another level if I were in a psychologist position, and possibly make them feel more comfortable. With all of these factors, I decided to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Psychology at Cape Breton University.

In the fall I will be starting my second year and I am very satisfied with the program I chose. After my undergraduate degree I plan on getting my master's degree and eventually my PhD.

Since starting university I have been helping to make the CBU campus more accessible. I am a student representative on the Accessibility Advisory Committee which is working toward making CBU more accessible. Furthermore, started working at the Jennifer Keeping Centre at CBU which helps students with disabilities get academic accommodations.

I am very excited to see what my future holds and to eventually be working my dream job. My goal is to provide meaningful support to those needing help and to break barriers and reduce stigma surrounding disability and mental health.

DISCHARGE SUMMARY

McInnis, Hope

K492191

Date of Birth: August 28, 2003

Admission Date: August 28, 2003

Discharge Date: September 10, 2003

Dr. Brian O'Brien
P.O. Box 304
Glace Bay, NS
B1A 5V4

Hope McInnis was born on August 28th, 2003 to a 23 year old primigravida mother at 38 weeks gestation. The baby was born with a disrupted lumbar myelomeningocele. Apgars at one and five minute were 8 and 10. Neurologically the baby had flexion activity of the hips but no knee extension. There did seem to be some quadriceps muscle activity. She also had atrophic lower limbs with no dorsiflexor activity or plantar flexor activity. The anal sphincter was small and snug with no reflex. The back had a large sac that was flattened and covered with meconium.

She was taken to the OR the same day and had her myelomeningocele repaired. There were no complications post-operatively.

A CT scan of her head post-op showed that the appearance of the ventricles were quite acceptable, and a shunt was not needed. She was transferred to the floor on September 8th and discharged home on September 10th with follow-up to be arranged by Dr. Howes' office. She was also seen by Urology and Orthopaedics prior to discharge.

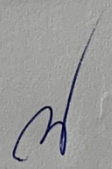
B. Maleki, M.D., Resident
per W. J. Howes, M.D., F.R.C.S.(C)
Neurosurgeon

/cs

c Dr. W. Howes

Dictated: October 2, 2003

Typed: October 10, 2003





STUDENT ID: 0251664

2020/11/04

Hope McInnis
2 Tanya Drive
Glace Bay, NS
B1A 5Z8

Dear Hope,

It is my pleasure to offer you admission into the Bachelor of Science - Major/Honours 4-year (120 credits) program at Cape Breton University for the September 2021 academic session. Congratulations!

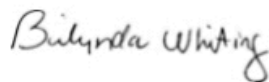
At Cape Breton University graduate satisfaction levels lead the country. In national surveys, CBU graduates have ranked their overall educational experience, teaching and instruction as Number One in Canada. Cape Breton University promises and delivers an exceptional education experience for students. Our faculty, students and graduates are recognized nationally and internationally for innovative accomplishments. These successes contribute to Cape Breton University's growing reputation for excellence both in and out of the classroom

If you are currently in-progress in courses your acceptance is conditional. We must receive your final grades, showing completion of program entrance requirements from your high school, by the end of June 2020 or your offer of admission may be withdrawn.

All new students to Cape Breton University must seek academic advising before they can register for courses. Information on academic advising and how to schedule an appointment is available at www.cbu.ca/academic-advising. Keep an eye on your email for more details on advising.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Cape Breton University community. Please be sure to check your email regularly for important dates, reminders, and information. You can reach out to admissions@cbu.ca should you have any questions.

Congratulations! We can't wait to meet you.



Bilynda Whiting
Director of Enrolment and University Registrar
Cape Breton University



Nova Scotia High School Diploma

This diploma is awarded to

HOPE ANN ELIZABETH MCINNIS

who has fulfilled the graduation requirements prescribed by
the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
for completion of the Nova Scotia High School Program.

Minister of Education and
Early Childhood Development

Principal

June 28 2021

Date




NOVA SCOTIA
CANADA

BIRTH · NAISSANCE

NOVA SCOTIA · NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

BIRTH CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICAT DE NAISSANCE



Certified extract from
Registration of Birth
filed at Nova Scotia,
Canada.

Extrait certifié conforme
de l'enregistrement
de naissance,
Nouvelle-Ecosse,
Canada.

Elizabeth Crowley Meagher

Elizabeth Crowley Meagher
Deputy Registrar General

Surname
Nom

MCINNIS

Given Names
Prénoms

HOPE ANN ELIZABETH

Date of Birth
Date de naissance

Aug 28, 2003

Sex
Sexe F

Place of Birth
Lieu de naissance

HALIFAX

Registration No.
N° d'enregistrement

2003-02-008704

Date Issued
Délivré le

Oct 08, 2010

Registration Date
Date d'enregistrement

Dec 10, 2003



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