



Julien Bertrand's History



I had always been a normal boy, living a normal life. I had my projects and my dreams, just like anybody else, except that in my case, I expected so much more from life. I thought I was invincible. But I was wrong.

Living with cancer

While my third year of high school was well underway, I was suddenly stricken with an illness that I thought was fatal. Indeed, in April 2006, several early signs of the illness such as: symptoms of cold and flu, severe insomnia, chronic fatigue, extremely pale complexion and a few hematomas, had appeared. I then decided to go consult a doctor. The news were quite alarming, I was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Following that diagnosis, I underwent chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments. A few days later, my condition was deemed too critical to stay in the block, so I was transferred to the intensive care unit and my parents were informed that I might not make it through the night. Fortunately, my condition was stabilized. The weeks went by, and I suffered multiple side effects related to my treatment.

In June 2006, I was granted hospital leave. For the next two years, I had to present myself on a weekly basis at Sainte-Justine Hospital for a medical follow-up. During these treatments, certain complications arose, such as thrombophlebitis which occurred on my left leg as well as relapsing thrombophlebitis. During these two years, it was difficult for me to attend school. I had started my fourth year of high school in 2006, but I had to quit because of an overwhelming fatigue. I managed to complete my fourth year of high school in 2007, achieving results that surprised me. I felt so proud of myself!

The nightmare isn't over yet

In June 2008, I was told that my treatments were over. I was finally cured. In September 2008, I started my fifth year of high school. But an excruciating pain was preventing me from feeling my best. Specialists informed me that the head of my right femur was dead and that the bone had collapsed onto itself. I was immediately forced to walk on crutches. Unfortunately, the specialists refused to operate me. They wanted to limit the long-term damages that could result from the numerous operations required to replace the prosthesis every ten years. I have therefore no other choice but to live with inefficient pain killers and I am limited in my daily displacements.

A light of hope

When I was contacted by Défi Moto Espoir, I told myself: "This is so incredible!" Everything happens for a reason and I couldn't have asked for something better to happen to me. Life is full of surprises and filled with obstacles, but there are always unbelievably generous people willing to help you out. The only thing to do is to keep hope in a better tomorrow.

I continue to be optimistic. Next year, if everything goes well, I should attend Cégep de Saint-Laurent in Montréal as a student in architecture science.