



KAYLA SITTERLY

When I was born in the fall of 1989, my parents couldn't have been happier. They said I was perfect, so tiny and cute.

Unbeknownst to them, I was born with Tetralogy of Fallot, in other words, I was a blue baby.

Tetralogy of Fallot is a combination of four separate heart defects which include a hole between the ventricles (ventricular septal defect), obstruction from the right ventricle to the lungs, the aorta lying directly over the ventricular septal defect and right ventricle develops thickened muscle.

At five days old, I had surgery to receive a shunt and fortunately was able to come home two weeks later.

My family and I knew that the road ahead of us was long and that I would have to undergo several other procedures to repair my heart. My pediatric cardiologist Dr. Frank Smith is a constant support to me and my family and has been with us every step of the way.

By the time I was twelve, I'd received a patch over my pulmonary valve which repaired the hole in my heart, as well as a stent and a pulmonary valve replacement.

Growing up, you would never know that I had open heart surgery. I participated in dance, school plays and did very well in school. Initially sports weren't in the cards, but that didn't stop me from playing JV Softball.

I just finished my sophomore year at SUNY Canton, majoring in early childhood development and am doing great!

I Go Red for my heart and my future!