

MANASSAS SETON SCHOOL

Life is a blessing

A graduating senior makes a speedy recovery after a near-fatal car accident.

By ANNA HARVEY
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Joseph Wilson nearly lost his life in a serious car accident last year. The car was totaled, leaving him with a severed right femur. After he was airlifted to a hospital, doctors told Wilson that he could have died. That moment, he said, changed everything.

For nearly half of his time at Seton School in Manassas, senior Wilson struggled with his faith. After the accident, however, "I began to see the big picture that I had been trying to see for the longest time," he said. "There really is a God up there, and he's looking out for me, and I have guardian angels always looking out for me." Now, he offers every day to Christ, both the good and bad moments.

"I'm just looking at my life as a blessing from God, and I'm still here. So, I'm trying to just spread the positivity around and make sure that everyone can see the good in all situations."

While in recovery, Wilson was confined to a wheelchair for two months at the beginning of the school year. This period of immobility was difficult for the student athlete on Seton's swim, basketball and lacrosse



PAUL FIFIELD | COURTESY

Seton School graduating senior Joseph Wilson made a speedy comeback to the swim team after severing his right femur in a near-fatal car accident last year.

teams. Yet, with a determination to recover and regain strength in his leg, he worked with his physical therapist and found himself on crutches a month later. Two weeks after he put the crutches down, he was back in the pool, swimming for the school team and preparing to compete again.

"Thank God I was able to recover, because my doctors told me I wasn't going to be able to walk until February. I was walking by Halloween weekend," he said.

By mid-season, Wilson achieved personal records on the swim team and competed in events. He qualified for states, and the Seton team placed third in the VISAA Division II State Swimming and Diving Championship. It took a while to regain his ability to run, but Wilson was back playing on the lacrosse team.

After graduation, Wilson plans to double major in geospatial science and marketing at Radford University in Radford, Va. He hopes for a government career in satellites and mapping. Wilson said that once he arrives at Radford, he'll look for a Catholic community. Having already located a Catholic church close to campus, he said he plans to pray often and seek security in God.

Wilson said he'll miss the tight-knit school community, and "all the people I'm going to be leaving (behind) and the memories. But they'll be definitely ones to cherish, that's for sure."

In particular, Wilson said, he will miss his teachers Vincent Terreri and Alicia Madan Salas, and his swim coach Jim Koehr, who all helped "(forge) my way of success through high school."

With many challenges and triumphs over the years and the last few months, Wilson said he looks forward to the adventure ahead.

"The light at the end of the tunnel is even brighter when you're out of the tunnel," he said with a smile.

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