

Essay by Alexis Kannewurf

I am a first-generation college student. The first of my family to apply to a well-known university like UIUC, get accepted, or attend. My mom went to a local community college until she found a well-paying job and she dropped out. My dad went to trade school for welding, and he worked multiple jobs at factories and autobody stores.

My parents worked their way up from nothing until they had enough to take over my great grandfather's sweeping company. They worked hard to develop the company and to provide opportunities for my brother and I; one of those opportunities included acquiring a college degree.

Being a first-generation college student made it difficult for me to pick from the thousands of universities, fill out applications, find scholarships, and reach my goal of majoring in Animal Science and becoming a large animal veterinarian. Neither of my parents have experience with any of these problems, which makes it harder for me to reach these educational goals.

In response to a question that was part of the application process...

If I could go back in history and change one decision that was made, I would change Adolf Hitler's decision to invade Poland in 1939. If Germany's troops never pushed through Poland's Western border, France and Britain would not have declared war. Alliances would not have taken place and trenches would not have been dug.

Countries wouldn't have been invaded, and their leaders would not have turned against one another. Bombers wouldn't have crossed the Pacific Ocean to release their deadly cargo on American soil. Land across the world would not have been scared by bullets, bombs, and blood. Hitler would not have set up concentration camps and killed his own people.

The atomic bomb would not have been needed or used. Americans, including my great grandfather, would not have lined up to join the forces. They would not have boarded navy ships and transports to fight for their country.

If Hitler never invaded Poland, World War Two would not have started, and millions of lives would not have been taken. Innocent lives would have been

spared, and the pain that touched almost every family around the world would not have existed.