

Lauren Werlinger  
Triumph Academy  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Mrs. Rinne

### Striving to Succeed

In the real world, there are ruthless people, hard truths, and seemingly unmeetable deadlines. You must strive every single day for success. It must be visible in your every movement; mistakes must be learned from and fixed without delay. It is not luck or simply hard work – it is a choice.

As a student who was and still is fortunate enough to have two incredibly supportive parents, I was ahead in my studies when I was younger. As a result, my teachers were continually having to find advanced material for me to work on because the grade-level work was not difficult enough. In seventh grade, this all changed. Mr. Egan, my seventh and eighth grade mathematics teacher, runs his classroom based upon a computer program that allows for the challenge necessary for each individual student. The material being taught was often much above grade level and, consequently, rather difficult for me. I did not want to continue his class, convinced I was going to fail. I was reduced to tears more than once. Despite all of this, despite the dismal thoughts that filled my head, I refused to give up. I made the choice to continue and did not fail the class, instead improving my grade with hours of homework to learn the new material. It was not the math that was frustrating me, it was my negative attitude. That was when I realized that success was not just putting in the work. It is a mindset.

It is a choice to get up even on days when the cold from last night's snowfall has crept into your bones and your thoughts, and you want nothing more than to stay home from work and in the safety of your bed. It is a choice to push through the haze of exhaustion from balancing your homework, your chores, and your social life. Success is a choice. Attending the charter school, Triumph Academy, has taught me this. The remarkable staff and individualized lesson plans have cultivated a recognizable difference in character and academics of the students.