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My Michigan Hero

Imagine a world where you're trapped inside and can't let anything out but a single noise. Even if you try to say a complete word you can't. You try so hard to care for yourself but you don't have the ability. With all kinds of stimuli going in, your brain gets overloaded and you go into a seizure. Your body can't take all the misfires so you have to eat a very restricted diet to prevent them. This isn't something I made up, this is my sister's life. But through all of it she stays happy, laughs, and loves unconditionally.

My sister Emily faces lots of challenges in her life. She may look like an outcast but really she is something extraordinary. She shines the brightest light on everybody. Though she has her challenges she is able to inspire and teach without words that there is good in everyone. This is why Emily is my Michigan Hero.

My sister Emily has Angelman Syndrome. Angelman Syndrome is when a child is born missing part of Chromosome 15 from the mother. Missing these genes causes Emily to be unable to talk, care for herself, but that is just the beginning. It also causes her to be overly happy, have a contagious smile on her face, and laugh often. I don't have the ability to look at her without wanting to leap like a ballerina into her lap and give her a hug.

Emily affects the way I think about my life. If it wasn't for her I would take things for granted and not be so appreciative of the people who are there for me. She makes me realize if she can stay happy through all the tremendous things she goes through I can get through the challenges that pop up in life.

Emily can't do most of the things I do. She can't text her friends, plan a party and even as I am writing this I realize she can't even write this essay or even a single word. But the one talent she has over anyone I know is the ability to give a great hug. She can give a hug to sad person and immediately cheer them up. One day on a normal trip to Target Emily did something special. Emily hugged a random stranger and enlightened their day. The person said that she, "hadn't had a hug in years." Emily may do little things but they have a big impact. When I am sad all I have to do is look at her smiling face and my raining cloud becomes sunshine.

So even if Emily doesn't have a cape and doesn't have super powers, even if she can't save a life, she can give great hugs and smiles to enlighten even a stranger's day. She inspires me to accept everyone and not take the little things for granted. Nobody in this world could give the heart growing feeling like she does. She is the ultimate Michigan Hero.