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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS



From the "Ouachitonian": Carli Copell

By Spencer Benway

July 20, 2021

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Most people have had good experiences with glowsticks and dance parties, but Carli Copell, a junior psychology and sociology double major from Canton, Texas, couldn't say the same due to an injury that involved a glow-stick and her losing her hearing.

"It was the summer of my senior year and I was at church camp," Copell said. "It was a glow stick dance party and everyone was dancing around throwing glowsticks. My friend is standing next to me and she brings her arm back to throw the glow-stick and by some freak accident the glow-stick makes its way into my ear. I grabbed my ear and fell to the ground and it's bleeding and no one knows what's going on."

The pain Copell felt in her ear was a pain she hasn't forgotten.

"It was a really sharp deep pain," Copell said. "It felt like someone shoved something all the way into my ear and pulled it out as quick as they could. It hurt for the rest of the night and the next morning."

Copell didn't know she had lost the hearing in her right ear until the morning the following the glow-stick tragedy.

"I woke up and I could not hear anything out of my ear," Copell said. "I'm was next to my friend and she whispered 'how's your ear' into my right ear and I'm just sitting there and don't hear her. She whispers it again and I just tell her that I didn't hear her. She felt so bad."

When Copell had arrived back home she attempted to explain to her parents that she had lost her hearing but they didn't understand and opted out of taking her to get her ear checked out.

"I didn't really want to go to the doctor because I didn't want to know the extent of what happened to me," Copell said. "I just Googled a lot and waited it out. It took a long time for it to come back, a lot longer than normal. Usually it takes a couple of months but it took mine six months." Losing her hearing wasn't a crutch to Copell. She learned to laugh and joke about it.

"It was a freak accident," Copell said. "It was just something I laughed about. I used the story as my fun fact when I got to Ouachita my freshman year. Those couple of months though where I couldn't hear were just annoying because everytime I picked up the phone I always put it on my right ear, so I had to switch to the left."

Overtime Copell's hearing came back slowly. By January 2018 the ear was completely healed up and working fine again.

"Throughout the school year my friends would make me put in one earphone [in the injured ear] and put the volume really low," Copell said. "When it was back, I knew it was back completely."

Photo by Justin Trostle