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KINZIE WILSON

NEXT GEN HAGERTY MEMBER, AGE 17

I've loved cars for as long as I can remember. As a little kid, my dad would carry me around at local drag races, and we would guess which car would win. He'd quiz me, too, asking whether the cars at shows had big or "little" blocks. Nine times out of 10, I knew the answer.

I never really thought about being in the driver's seat of a race car until I was 13. My dad's friend brought over a gorgeous 1996 Collector Edition Corvette, and I fell in love with it. The NHRA had just introduced a new class of drag racing that allowed 13-to-16-year-olds to bracket-race street cars. So I bought the Vette, named her Lucy (because everybody loves Lucy), and immediately took her to the track.

One time down the strip is all it took. I knew this was what I wanted to do. Fast forward four years, and Lucy and I have

added a new sport: autocross, which the C4 Corvette was built for.

I love the world of racing, but I kept my feminine side active as captain of the varsity cheerleading squad at my high school. With racing and cheerleading, I got the best of both worlds, and that's something I plan to carry over past my graduation, which was last May. I've applied to Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina, where I hope to study motorsports management. I'd have the opportunity to cheer there as well. Best of all, there's a four-lane drag strip, zMAX Dragway, right down the street from the college.

For now, I'll continue to race with the Texas Muscle Car Club Challenge and the Lone Star Corvette Club. I have a big support base through my family, as well as 13 sponsors who keep me going. What more could I ask for? Well, nitrous...?