

# MEET NICOLE PUSTILNIK

## TPHS SENIOR / FENCER / MOTIVATOR

I am grateful for the little things—and big—that keep me grounded and focused on the present moment during these uncertain times. I am grateful for my family and my dog, walks around my neighborhood, and for the fact that I can still do the activity I love to do most: fencing.

When I feel overwhelmed with tasks or just do not feel like doing anything at all and lounging around, I try to ignore that temptation to procrastinate and instead complete everything on my to-do list. If I'm still tired the next day, though, I will dedicate all of my energy to relaxing. :) I'll sleep in, watch a favorite show while eating breakfast, take a walk, and have a generally easy-going day in order to feel refreshed and ready to tackle tomorrow!

I am most passionate about the sport of fencing. I have been fencing for about 7 years and while it does get frustrating and exhausting at times, there is not a second that I do not love it. I love both the physical and mental aspects of fencing: you have to escape your opponent's attacks physically, but you also have to assess and analyze the opponent's tactics and strategy and predict what actions they want to do in order to proactively avoid them, too. It's like chess, but with swords!

I train 6 times a week at Team Touché Fencing Center with my coaches and teammates. On some days, I take lessons and try to learn new actions and stratagems, and on other days, I spar with my teammates and try to apply what I've learned so I can continue to develop my fencing. I also try to share my love of fencing by teaching the sport at summer camps and other events in order to bring awareness to the sport, and hopefully motivate someone else to try their hand at it.

I am using all messaging apps possible to stay in touch (iMessage, FaceTime, Whatsapp, you name it!) and sending care packages to my friends to make sure that they know that I care about them, even when we cannot spend as much time together as we could before the pandemic.

Just a little motivation when we're stuck in our houses for much more time than we're used to: When you're feeling down or disappointed, make your bed. That way, no matter how today goes, you can know that you did at least one thing right: you made your bed. Start every day satisfied and proud of yourself by completing this sometimes menial task. You got this.

