

I will never forget the day I learned that Lindsay and her sister had passed away. It was August 3rd. My friend Georgia called with the news, and I dropped to my knees. The shock was immediate and overwhelming.

I was not as close with Lindsay as some others were, but every time I was around her felt special. She had a rare kind of lightness about her. She was kind, pure, and completely genuine. The kind of presence that shifts the energy in a room without trying to. I know you will hear that again and again from the countless people whose lives she touched.

Her death cast a shadow over the rest of our college years. Yet somehow, her spirit stayed with us. We raised Lindsay shot glasses in her honor. We walked across the graduation stage with her beads around our necks. She was missing, but never absent.

While her passing is one of the most heartbreaking things I have ever witnessed, I pray that some measure of good can come from it. No family should endure a tragedy like this. Fire safety is not optional. It is not something to overlook or treat as a formality. The fact that there were not stronger requirements in place, and little accountability for unsafe conditions, is deeply troubling.

If nothing changes, this will not be the last time something like this happens. I hope with everything in me that Lindsay's life becomes the reason it does not happen again.