Natalie began losing small patches of hair during her freshman year of high school and was diagnosed with alopecia areata, an autoimmune disease that impacts about 2% of the population in which one's own body attacks its hair follicles. As an athlete, it was a challenge for her to find hairstyles that would hide her bald spots while allowing her to remain active in sports. Unfortunately, while there are treatments for alopecia, there is no known cure.

In college, her bald patches grew larger and became more difficult to hide, especially in windy situations. Natalie became increasingly anxious and was overwhelmed with feelings of guilt, shame, and isolation, eventually leading to panic attacks. During her senior year of college, her hair loss became so severe that she made the executive decision to shave off the little remaining hair she had left. Shortly thereafter, every hair on her body disappeared, and her alopecia areata turned into alopecia universalis, the most severe form of alopecia that affects only 0.02% of the total population.

In professional settings, Natalie now dons one of her six gorgeous wigs, but you'll find her rocking a bald head under a baseball cap anytime she's in barre, kayaking, standup paddle boarding, or running after her two small children. Natalie's wigs helped her reclaim her confidence and have given her the ability to live her best life. She is infinitely grateful that her family had the means to pay for her beautiful wigs out of pocket since most private health insurance plans, as well as Medicare and Medicaid, refuse to pay for any portion of an alopecian's wig as they consider it "cosmetic."

For over a decade, Natalie has been actively involved in the National Alopecia Areata Foundation's (NAAF) Legislative Liaison Program where she has advocated on Capitol Hill for legislative changes that would improve the lives of alopecians; this includes increased funding to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is the largest single investor in the study of skin diseases. Although more than 84 million Americans have a skin disease, the NIH received a decrease in funding in FY2023. The burden and breadth of skin disease in our society is not appropriately reflected in the funding allocated to study it.

Natalie previously served as the Capital Area Alopecia Areata's Support Group Leader, continues to be actively involved in NAAF's Legislative Liaison program, and is the Communications Manager at the Coalition of Skin Diseases (CSD). She strives to support alopecians – and all those with skin conditions – in the community, works to make sure that others know they are not alone on their journey, and hopes to affect positive change through the power of advocacy.