

Alfonso Magallon –

L-2 (T-12) Spinal Cord Injury 06/15-11/15

Highlights: The Staff were really cool people!

Journey since discharge: It's been a long journey and still even longer to go since my injury, but I am basically 95% back to what I was doing before my injury.

Anything you would like to share: Be strong be patient be yourself find ways to keep you positive. The road is long but the experience is amazing!

Alice Jose –

Aortic dissection/embolic stroke; 6/24/16 – 7/02/16

Highlights: My highlights include the wonderful facility and the amazing, caring staff. I would like to thank Jennifer (social worker) for her tireless effort with paperwork.

Journey since discharge: Since my discharge, I had a lot of rehab and healing to do. I must admit, it was hard at first; I really did not like walking like I normally. It has been rehab sessions since then, but as of September 6th, I am completely discharged from any further rehab. At this point, I can now do the every day to day routines in my life. Now, I'm waiting to be cleared to work. By November, I will know the answer.

Anything you would like to share: For me, the key to getting better was being positive from the time you wake up until you go to sleep. I believe we have the power to get better, and praying. Being thankful, not lucky.

Amanda Bailey –

C6-C7 SCI July-Sept 1998

Highlights: I remember some of my favorite mail nurses Chris Vicky & Lynn. I remember the respiratory therapist Rick who was always so positive & he would share his blockbuster movies that he was finished with so I could share them with the rest of the patients.

Journey since discharge: I am lucky enough to live in a pretty close nit community up in northern California on a ranch. I defiantly have a hobby of gardening & enough books to start a small library.

Anything you would like to share: Yes. Is that a trick question?

Andrew Garrett –

TBI - Brain stem accident 12/12/05 treatment through July 2006

Highlights: Dr. Englander Ritu Jejani

Journey since discharge: I am on SSDI but volunteer and am able to drive multi-tasking is difficult and I tend to overload myself at times. Have come a long way. Thanks to so many amazing doctors and therapists that saved my life.

Anything you would like to share: I have made lots of progress over the last 10.5 years. I am on long term disability but I am able to volunteer helping others. My balance is still off and multi-tasking is difficult and I tend to overload myself at times. Thanks to amazing doctors and therapists that saved my life.

Anthony Nicosia –

TBI; June 1st, 2009

Highlights: All the staff/physicians were instrumental in preparing me for my returning to my home.

Journey since discharge: I continue to exercise dog walking/training and reading.

Anything you would like to share: I encourage any patient suffering from traumatic brain injury to keep hope that your injury can continue to improve-stay engaged and continue to keep positive!

Ashaki Hunter –

Gunshot – Sci; 10/2012-11/2012

Highlights: n/a

Journey since discharge: Currently back in school for engineering and working on an invention to help people with spinal cord injuries

Anything you would like to share: n/a

Ben Ostrander –

October 10th, 1996

Highlights: Kevin, Vicki, Susan, Christian.

Journey since discharge: College, 15 years design drafter. Northrop Grumman

Anything you would like to share:

Career Mentor

Bob Spisak –

C6-7 SCI; 6/99-12/99

Highlights: Response not provided.

Journey since discharge: Busy all the time volunteering. Racing Hand cycles and working on old Muscle cars.

Anything you would like to share:

Thanks to the staff at that time.

Brenda Bailey –

Paraplegic injury T-11 (incomplete); August 6th 1984

Highlights: SCVMC is one the top rehab centers in the country. I've been to a few rehab centers and yours, by far is the best. You really take the time to prepare us for the big bad world. My favorite Doctor was Dr. Thompson.

Journey since discharge: My life went OK for quite some time, but I'm now also a double amputee. Not from diabetes either. But I'm now getting older. I'm in an electric chair now. I have arthritis in about every joint. Losing cartilage in wrists – Left arm/wrist has a metal plate and screws in it.

Anything you would like to share: Please be very patient with them. They're learning how to live all over again. DON'T GIVE UP ON THEM "PLEASE"!

Bryan Stow –

TBI; 10/2011 – 3/2012

Highlights: First steps learning to read, speak, walk again. Dr. Roberta Wang, Raquel, P.T, Vicky, P.T, Cathy Castillo, S.L.P, Deb and Rita, O.T.

Journey since discharge: On a mission to stop bullying in schools, and end fan violence.

Anything you would like to share:

Family is very important in the rehab of a family member.

Carolyn O'Connor –

Spinal Cord Rehab

Highlights: In-patient therapist Maureen Sam and Laura, and Out-Patient therapist Chris and. Carrie.

Journey since discharge: Doing lots of therapy and exercise. Quilting and volunteering.

Anything you would like to share: Loved the movie night at the Pruneyard and cooking tacos in the kitchen.

Charles (Chuck) McAvoy –

T4 SCI; 3/6/1983 to 5/13/1983

Highlights: Many great stories - too many to list - Dr. Wilmont, Dr. Thompson, PT Vanesia, Nurse Rescino and others I cannot remember the names.

Journey since discharge: I'm retired from 29 years with Pacific Bell/SBC/AT&T then another 10 years with Kaiser Permanente as an infrastructure engineer. I now devote my time to metal sculpture vintage motorcycle restoration and playing with my granddaughter.

Anything you would like to share: SCVM provided a good basis for my future years with an SCI. I was fairly well prepared to live an independent life. I have never had a pressure sore and just a few UTI's in 33 years.

Chuck O'Brien –

C6/C7 Quadriplegia; 08/1992 thru 11/1992

Highlights: I only remember a few names but it wouldn't be fair to leave anyone out. The entire staff of CNA's RN's OT's PT's and MD's left lasting memories and lessons that have helped me thrive and stay healthy throughout my years since moving on.

Journey since discharge: After leaving, I spent a half year getting used to a new life routine. I went back to work, until the business decided to close down. I decided to go back to school and ended up graduating with a business degree in Management Information Technology.

Anything you would like to share: Pay attention to what the staff is teaching. Everyone in your inner circle shares your challenges; be respectful to those who are trying to help. Take control of your life take care of your body. There are opportunities if you choose to look for them. Success is an attitude.

Diane Chatwin –

October 2001; Bicycle accident cracked cervical one

Highlights: The eye opening experience of rooming with spinal injury patients for several weeks.

Journey since discharge: I healed completely in about a year so I resumed teaching modern dance and aerobics.

Anything you would like to share: I loved the philosophy of not thinking about what you couldn't do but concentrating on the things you **COULD** do.

Eric Hazer –

TBI; June 23 to July 9

Highlights: All of the staff were very helpful and supportive.

Journey since discharge: Working full time. Running, golfing, working out at the gym.

Anything you would like to share: Great staff and facility.

Findlay Olson –

Severe TBI; August 12th 2015 - November 10th 2015

Highlights: Shout out to Holly and Tracy and Emmie and Dr. Wang

Journey since discharge: Fun days good exercise taking it slow

Anything you would like to share: Stay strong and keep your head up. Try hard to laugh

Franklin Elieh –

C-6 SCI; October 1989

Highlights: Rigorous therapy and supportive staff.

Journey since discharge: Working full-time living independently.

Anything you would like to share: Work your tail off during your short stay.

Gerald Holloway –

C5-6 Quad; 6-76 / 11-76

Highlights: Trying to grasp massive life-style change (how to live? what to do?)

|| R. Parker J. Gorham L. Turkisher Dale
Doug

Journey since discharge: Shamrock House; Berkeley CIL computer training; Programming with HP and WJ; Retire.

Anything you would like to share: Be nice to people trying to help you; don't dwell on what you can't do but work with what you can do and get on with life as best you can. It passes quickly!

Gina Biter-Mundt –

C 4-5 Tetraplegia; August 9th 1976 - October 1976

Highlights: The Stryker frame flips every 2hrs for 6 weeks. NOT Fun!

Journey since discharge: 40 years later, I graduated with a degree in Adapted PE taught for 20 yrs at community college. I was a paralympian 1988. Swam for 8 yrs on the USA team traveling all over the world. I had a daughter who now teaches adapted fitness in SLC Utah. Lastly, I work at Kaiser.

Anything you would like to share: Get connected with peer mentors early in the rehab process. Peers are a great resource that provides support and tips of trade. Why re-invent the wheel when there are so many wheels out there waiting to be a role model to help people through the rough times.

Jared Stacks –

TBI; February/1999

Highlights: No response provided.

Journey since discharge: Working part time for a physical therapist. Graduated from Hartnell College with a certificate of completion in auto mechanics and AA degree.

Anything you would like to share: If it wasn't for SCVMC rehab department I wouldn't be able to walk, talk, speak, and be able to live the life I'm living today. They worked hard with me and gave me inspiration to continue to improve. Without all the staff I wouldn't be where I am today!

Jerry Krause –

1970-1980

Highlights: Dr. Tacker

Journey since discharge: Retired

Anything you would like to share: Life goes on enjoy!

JORGE CAMPOS –

TBI; MAY 28 - JUN 12, 2014

Highlights: All were AMAZING!! Anita, Cristine, Kristina, Michael, Gina, Mohames.

Journey since discharge: Back to full duty at work since Jan. 5, 2015

Anything you would like to share: I highly recommend it here, since they showed me the human side of taking care of me and my wife.

Julia Parkison –

Paraplegia; May - July 2005

Highlights: Can't remember any of the staff's names after so long. But did really love my physical/occupational therapist. Really every one of the staff were so good.

Journey since discharge: It's been a rough go. Had respiratory failure trach vent. Spent some years in nursing home. Happy to be living in own home again for almost 7 years now.

Anything you would like to share: Wish family had been more involved while I was there. Thank God for what they DID participate in training wise. Wish we remembered everybody from our time there better, but those were crazy times.

Katie Sharify –

Nov 2011 - Dec 2011

Highlights: Dr. Crew & Dr. McKenna my nurses Rosita Amelia and Sarah. My lovely PT Chris. Scott who introduced me to former patients (to whom I am very close to today). My very patient OT Dao.

Journey since discharge: Relocated to Southern California for intensive rehab. Returned to school at USC to finish my degree. Traveled abroad to study in Paris for 6 months. Just graduated and I am now back living in the Bay Area getting prepared to apply to law school.

Anything you would like to share: I cried nonstop the first two nights. Everything and everyone seemed so awful and scary. I had never been hospitalized before. But know that you are in great hands. Once the pain subsides take advantage of all your PT and OT sessions! It seems impossible at first but the staff will provide you with a foundation that will be key in regaining your independence.

Kevin Lowrey –

T5 Complete; 08/02/1977

Highlights: Dr. Wilmot, Dale Dixon, Debbie Burdsal, Marie Roman Clifton

Journey since discharge Married, college, three kids, wheelchair basketball, started a mobility company, 5 grandkids

Anything you would like to share: Network with people with same interests and disabilities

Kevin Sheehan –

TBI and recovery from other injuries sustained on December 18 2014; at SCVMC January 2014.

Highlights: The staff at all levels were wonderful and provided excellent care along with thoughtful preparation for moving forward. Knowing what to expect going home and how to deal with the day to day issues were important to me and my family.

Journey since discharge: I have made remarkable progress. I returned to work as Scientific Director for the Stanford Blood & Marrow Transplant Program half-time in mid-March and progressed back to work full-time in May of 2015. My recovery from the TBI and other injuries I sustained.

Anything you would like to share: Just that I appreciate the care I received at SCVMC the compassion they demonstrate toward those depending on them to get through very difficult times.

Ligia Andrade Zuniga –

C5/C6 Complete SCI; 1/09-3/09

Highlights: I just remembered how terrified and worried I was but specifically through all of the love and care by the majority of the staff and the peer support program I learned that I could get through this and that I wasn't alone.

Journey since discharge: Since discharge I along with another friend have started an organization called “Sexability” in which we educate and advocate for access to sexual freedom and expression whether it be through the proper medical care or through rebuilding the ability to create intimate loving relationships.

Anything you would like to share: Just do the best you can whatever it is at that moment you are unique everyone’s experience and reality is different.

Lincoln Krochmal –

Right CVA (bleed); October/November 2010

Highlights: Team approach to rehab.
Great care by Dr. Duong, nurses', aides',
and therapists'.

Journey since discharge: Retired,
enjoying being a grandfather.

Anything you would like to share: Still
working on my recovery.

Maggie Bedecarre –

TBI; August/2015

Highlights: Too many memories to mention. Thank you to Dr. Duong, Dr. Huang, PT Jill, OT Sara, ST Haley, RT Christina, Psychiatrist Erika

Journey since discharge: Currently receiving care from Stanford Neuroscience and now a Stanford student.

Anything you would like to share: Valley Med Brain Injury Unit was my home for 4 weeks at a critical point in my recovery. My family and I are so grateful for the doctors' therapists' nurses assistants and staff of Valley Med.

Marv Tuttle –

T12 SCI; 8/9/98 to 9/20/98

Highlights: My team. Nurse Mike Cashman, Dr. Werner and Dr. Comstock, amazingly got me through this!

Journey since discharge: Retired at 54.

Volunteering at the Monterey Bay Aquarium
Canine Companions for Independence as a peer
at both Valley Medical Center and The Palo Alto
VA. A member of the Veteran's and Family
council at the Palo Alto VA Part of the National
Speakers team.

Anything you would like to share: Just my
favorite saying “You Get Out of it, What You
put into it”.

Michael Simons –

July of 2000 – August 2000

Highlights: The Staff was really good. There was a shared friendship between patients because we were all going through the same thing.

Journey since discharge: Response not provided.

Anything you would like to share: Stay strong, you can do anything. I'm a T-11 paraplegic and I worked at a gym being a janitor. Learn how to do stuff, then it's a breeze. Careful of bed sores!!

Naomi Lyall –

TBI; 2/2014 - 4/2014

Highlights: Tawni Ybarra, Christine, Christina, Dr. Hui, and Josie.

Journey since discharge: Teaching chemistry and physics at Scotts Valley High School Part time.

Anything you would like to share: SCVMC was such an incredible help!! So much kindness and care!!

Nick Struthers –

August 21ST 2004 to September 4TH 2004

Highlights: Suzy, Kim, Carol, Adler, and fellow patients' Austin, Herman, Kenny, and Jason.

Journey since discharge: Full recovery.

Anything you would like to share: No response provided.

Pat Wong –

T-4 Complete; Spring Summer of 1997

Highlights: Names forgotten.

Journey since discharge: Retired.

Anything you would like to share: Be Active.

Pete Galpin –

L1 fx; July 1977

Highlights: No response provided.

Journey since discharge: College med school plastic/hand surgeon. Only surgeon in the world to go through med school/surg training as a para

Anything you would like to share: It's a rough road but if you have your mind you can accomplish your dreams.

Rachelle Del Ben –

Aneurysm rupture needing rehabilitation approximately end of April to beginning of May 1993

Highlights: Bocci ball games on front lawn. Cinco de Mayo celebration in patio. Day at San Jose Giants. Lunch at coccas. Learning the bus and cooking with OT Emily (rec therapy) taking me for therapy in the pool, which helped me walk again!!!! Thanks so much to Emily.

Journey since discharge: I had an internship at NASA. Now going to De Anza for A.P.E, thanks to my PT person!! Also to finish up my web design degree.

Anything you would like to share: Staff: pay attention to your patient's bell it is probably important! I fell out of bed trying to take myself to the bathroom because staff ignored my bell and I was paralyzed!!

Patients: make the most of your therapies they are going to help you recover and do all activities as they come up, it makes your hospital stay more enjoyable!!

Rafael Garcia –

Rehab brain injury; October 2014

Highlights: Honestly I was a pain while I was there everyone was great. All of the nurses were wonderful. They helped me so much and I don't think I would have recovered quickly if it wasn't for their patience! Christina was amazing as well!

Journey since discharge: I'm back at work running and taking life with an easier approach day by day.

Anything you would like to share: I'm thankful for everything this rehab center did for me. It's the best place the staffs are caring and do an amazing job they go above and beyond

Rafael Olivares Jr. –

SCI C6-7; July - September 1998

Highlights: Everybody was great. Special shout-out to PT for our outings.

Journey since discharge: Trying to stay healthy and live positive.

Anything you would like to share: Don't give up!

Renee Dinger –

AVM – Stroke; 2007

Highlights: The therapists and the team of doctors were amazing.

Journey since discharge: I've been working since 2008 and I volunteer with the Peer Support Group.

Anything you would like to share: Work hard. Love the new you and remember you were given a second chance.

Ricardo Ayala –

November 2007

Highlights: Great staff.

Journey since discharge: Working.

Anything you would like to share: Don't give up!!

Rob Boyles –

**Diagnosis not provided.*

Highlights: 2016 Services with Lincoln and his wife at meetings

Journey since discharge: Not discharged from you but doing very well. Was at Kaiser.

Anything you would like to share: Go to the support groups with Lincoln. Amazing help!

Ronald Stone –

First time: T6-7 incomplete; Dec 5th 1985 – Feb/1986 paraplegic.

Second time: Dec 5 2015 - Dec 18 2015

Highlights: Just had a lot of fun with the therapist and nurses. Very good care but very bad food.

Journey since discharge: Work, Work!

Anything you would like to share: Listen to the nurse's attendants and therapists. They know what they are doing and will go above and beyond to help you. Treat them nice and listen to them and your stay will be much more enjoyable and your life after will be much easier

Ronlyn Goo –

10/17/2015 - present

Highlights: RT bowling w/ Scott, ekso-walking w/ Tawni, speech with Holly and Margo, baking brownies w/Chloe.

Journey since discharge: Outpatient rehab adaptive PE stroke support groups.

Anything you would like to share: It gets better...eventually.

Rosa Rosa –

1979 August - January

Highlights: PT - Dale Dixon & Mr. Avila. OT Judy Han/Carol Adler and 2nd floor nurse Kitty.

Journey since discharge: Married 1985. Had Son 1990 the Daughter 1995. Divorced 2002 but remarried 2010. I have been working at an outpatient surgery center for 18 years. I live a very happy life and I am now 56 years old. I had my accident on August 14 1979 and now I can feel.

Anything you would like to share: Don't give up have faith and hope and attitude has a lot to do with it think positive it's a long journey but it will come.

Sidronio Flores –

Stroke; December 1st, 2010 – December 31st, 2010

Highlights: Spending time eating in cafeteria with friends. Enjoying therapy classes with Dr. Ritu. She helped me get back to my feet and start walking again. I was paralyzed on left side.

Journey since discharge: The first months it was hard for me getting back to my normal life. I was helped by my wife, Daughter, Sons, and Grandchildren. My family gave me the reason to jump back into my life, and also my dog needed me to take her walking.

Anything you would like to share: I learned to never give up. Continue with physical therapy and classes. Continue exercising to improve walking. Also take your medication.

Suzanne Suzy Pacheco –

Traumatic Brain Injury; April 24 - June 10, 2010

Highlights: There's not much that I remember other than some of the times that my family would visit me and having the staff force me to get blood drawn (I hate needles). I also remember taking trips around the hospital I believe when I was doing physical therapy.

Journey since discharge: After discharge I did Rehab without Walls. I have done some volunteer services with the Boys and Girls Club of Monterey County. I was part of the Salinas Clubhouse. I left that volunteer job because of transportation issues. Needless to say I loved it.

Anything you would like to share: Recovery takes time and patience is key! Don't give up instead live with a positive outlook.

Thibault Turcan –

TBI; I was here in 2012 from May until June

Highlights: I volunteer with Robert Medel frequently because of one of the therapists who suggested that I volunteer.

Journey since discharge: I am going to school and volunteering at VMC.

Anything you would like to share: I still desire to become a medical practitioner of some kind- I also would like to thank the staff of VMC who worked with me sincerely.

Tim Roake –

Severe traumatic brain injury; January and February 2008

Highlights: Dr. Duong Deb and the other OT and speech therapists and my minders who kept me from wandering off.

Journey since discharge: Went back to work at my law firm for two years, then half time for two years before becoming a disabled former partner. The first couple of years I was able to handle my cases that predated my injury in December of 2007, but had and have issues with work.

Anything you would like to share: I've read my medical records. You took a heavily sedated person and brought him back. You were also invaluable to my family. Allowing them to bring in food books and various photos was instrumental in my recovery.

Victor Su –

T4 Asia A SCI; Approximately June / July of 2002

Highlights: No response provided.

Journey since discharge: I am working full time as a product manager in an IT department.

Anything you would like to share: To patients & family: It gets better with time - have patience & faith.

To staff: thanks for all the support & help!

Vince Martinez –

Post Traumatic Brain Injury; 7/21/97 to 7/31/97

Highlights: I only remember short instances of my stay at SCVMC. One that sticks out is when my physical therapist took me outside to the rehab lawn with a friend of mine to throw around a football.

Journey since discharge: I was able to return to high school and graduate. Less than three years after graduation I earned my bachelor's degree. Taking classes to get my masters.

Anything you would like to share: Find a good reason not to settle for your current situation and use that to help push your recovery.

Virgil Pineda –

Hemorrhagic Stroke; May 2010

Highlights: I celebrated my 38th birthday as a patient on the 2nd floor...

Journey since discharge: I 'am permanently disabled now. I lost the fine motor skills I needed for my career, but I'm glad I can move about and drive a bit.

Anything you would like to share: Don't lose hope... GOD will provide... Try to learn your new body and fasten your seatbelt and enjoy the roller coaster ride.

Xavier de Ryckel –

I was in a coma for a few weeks because of a severe Traumatic Brain Injury with a very low GCS at the beginning.

Highlights: I walked drank and ate for the first time in Santa Clara Valley.

Journey since discharge: I am living on my own and back working again.

Anything you would like to share: Your brain is the limit. Expose yourself to the right stimuli and it is possible to heal from a severe TBI.