

Short Biography

My name is Divine Favour, an above knee amputee who has rediscovered strength and freedom through sport. Since losing my leg, I have had the opportunity to push my limits and grow in new ways. I enjoy running and have completed several 5Ks while working toward a 10K, but what I enjoy most is obstacle course racing. I have completed several obstacle course races and am now pursuing the Spartan Trifecta.

I am a student at Texas A&M University studying neuroscience on the pre medical track and a cadet in the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets. I also serve as president of Aggie Adaptive Sports, the recreational adaptive sports organization at Texas A&M. I am grateful to God for my incredible community, and I look forward to challenging myself more while encouraging others to go on their own journey of discovery and adventure.

Personal Essay

In 2019 my life changed in a way I never expected. At just 12 years of age, I was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a form of bone cancer that eventually led to the amputation of my right leg above the knee. At the time I believed I had lost more than my leg. I thought I had lost the ability to do the things I had once taken for granted like running, dancing, and playing sports. Being the only amputee in my school and neighborhood, I did not have examples around me that showed what life after limb loss could look like. For a long time I began to believe that I would not be able to regain what cancer took from me.

Everything changed in 2022 when I attended the Amputee Coalition National Conference. While I was there I saw amputees from different walks of life doing things I once believed were impossible such as taekwondo, cycling, hiking, and running. During the conference there was a running clinic where I met Ezra Frech, now a two time Paralympic gold medalist. He showed me how to run for the first time on a borrowed running blade. The moment I started running something in my mindset shifted. There was so much freedom and excitement in that moment that I realized cancer did not take everything away. Instead, I had been given the opportunity to do things in new ways. I realized that my disability was not a limitation. I could still do the things I wanted to do, I simply had to find a different way to do them.

From that moment on I became committed to pushing my limits and seeing how far I could go. I began running regularly and participating in races. Last spring I completed the Gladiator Dash, a 2.3 mile obstacle and mud run that required physical strength, creative

problem solving, and mental determination to simply, no matter what it took, cross the finish line. Since then I have completed several 5Ks and I am now training for my first 10K. I enjoy obstacle course racing the most though because it is a combination of many things, especially the mental endurance and creativity needed to keep pushing forward. This year I am aiming for the Spartan Trifecta, which includes three races of increasing distance and difficulty. My first race is the 5K this weekend in Spring, Texas, followed by a 10K in May and the 21K Beast in November.

For a long time I saw my disability as a disadvantage and as proof that life was unfair. Now I see it differently. I see it as the grace of God, as strength, as resolve, and as an opportunity to show the world how powerful the human spirit can be. I had spent so much time being held back by limitations that I later realized were not even limitations. I pursue my competitions and races with the mindset of refusing to become my own limitation. This mindset shows up in the rest of my life as well. I am currently a neuroscience major on the pre medical track at Texas A&M University and a cadet in the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets. The Corps has been a journey, from learning how to run and keep up with my fellow cadets to navigating demanding platoon morning workouts. My adventure within the Corps has become a test of how far I am willing to go for what I believe in and how creative I must be in solving problems most people never face. In many ways sport has become an addiction for me, not just because of competition, but because of the constant discovery that I can be more than I am right now.

I also try to use my experiences to give back to others because I had so many people invest in me. I serve as the president of Aggie Adaptive Sports at Texas A&M where I work to help build opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in recreational athletics. I am also involved with the Amputee Coalition youth leadership programs where I work with other young amputees navigating life after limb loss.

The financial reality of limb loss is still a challenge. Prosthetic equipment and specialized components needed for regular living, let alone sports, are extremely expensive and often need to be replaced. Beyond equipment there is also the need for specialized training and travel to races and camps, and the expenses add up very quickly. Much of my training so far has been self taught through trial and error, along with a few opportunities such as the Athletic Training Foundation camp and the Welcome to Running camp, both of which were able to fully cover the cost of my participation. Opportunities like these have helped me grow as an athlete, but they are rare. Access to specialized clinics such as Mobility Clinic in Tampa, which provides advanced prosthetic and running training, would help me gain greater control and efficiency with my running blade. Registering for these races alone can cost several hundred dollars. The Spartan Trifecta registration bundle alone is about \$449, not including the additional fees that Spartan races typically charge. When travel, lodging, training, and specialized equipment are added, the costs increase quickly. With a family of seven and two of us currently in college, these costs can be very demanding, which is why I have often been limited even as I continue to train and compete. Support through the Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation and the Adventure Scholarship would prove invaluable and help me continue pursuing these goals.

More importantly it would allow me to keep sharing this journey with others. I do not want to be the first and only person doing these things. I want to be the first of many. I want other

amputees to see that they are capable of far more than they believe. Because at the end of the day the reason I pursue these goals is simple. I can. And because I can, I refuse to stop

Core Values Challenge

I have 7 core values based on seven principles: Faith, Resolve Responsibility Service, Compassion, Wonder and Hope.

My first value is to honor God in all I do and in who I strive to be, which is an expression of my faith in God. From the beginning of my journey to now I have learned to believe that God has a plan for me regardless of how many bumps life throws at me, how many mistakes I make, or how many challenges I face. That belief gives me the resolve to keep pushing forward because I know how the story ends. I win. I am here for a reason, and I intend to make sure it is worth it.

My second value is to never give up and to face whatever comes head on, which is an expression of resolve. I believe the greatest adventures sometimes come from facing obstacles we never thought we would have to encounter. For me that meant learning to adapt to life with one leg. Over time I stopped resisting what was going to happen anyway and decided that even if I was going to struggle, I was going to do it on my terms and never surrender.

Thirdly, to become the best version of myself for God, my family, and those who believe in me is an expression of responsibility. There have been many people mentors, family, supporters, and friends who believed in me when I did not believe in myself. I truly feel responsible to become the best version of myself so that I do not waste the investment they have made in me.

To help whenever I can because I can is the foundation of service. I believe that if you have the capacity to help someone, then you should. When people choose not to help when they are able, society becomes worse. Even helping just one person can make a meaningful difference.

To believe that better is possible regardless of the present is an expression of hope, something I had to learn early in life. Life has dealt its fair share of challenges in just the two decades I have spent on earth, from a cancer diagnosis to learning to navigate life without a

limb, to the everyday challenges of life, to navigating a paramilitary organization with demanding physical expectations on one leg. If there is anything I have had to hold on to, it is hope in a better tomorrow. As my life progresses that conviction only grows stronger because I have seen God work in my life and I have seen my community support me to greater heights and accomplishments.

To treat every person with kindness and respect is an expression of compassion, something I believe the world is lacking more and more today. As unfair as cancer can be, it does something humanity often fails to recognize. Unlike people, cancer does not discriminate. As someone who believes every living person is God's creation, I believe that regardless of race, gender, background, or politics, people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. I try to live this out in how I show up every day. For example, I currently serve as chaplain within my outfit in the Corps of Cadets. An outfit is the smaller unit within the Corps where cadets live, train, and build community together. Although the structure of the Corps requires discipline and formal interactions, especially with freshmen, my intention is always to treat people with respect and care.

To wake up each day ready to see the beauty of life in everything is an expression of wonder. I wake up every day knowing it is another opportunity to make the most of life. I recognize that there are many people who would do anything to have the opportunities I have been given. Life simply deals us cards, and we decide whether they are good cards or bad cards and how much power we give them. I try to embrace all the colors of life in every opportunity, every challenge, and every person I meet, and to keep learning, because that is one of the greatest opportunities we have as human beings.

Social Media Links

Instagram :

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DIq0BQyNhM6/?utm_source=ig_web_button_share_sheet&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

Yooutube: