

Hi, My name is Zack Wannawong. A little bit about myself

I am a wheelchair tennis athlete and former chef who rebuilt my life after losing my right leg to necrotizing fasciitis in 2024. Originally from Thailand, I moved to the United States at 16 and worked my way up from dishwasher to executive chef. After my amputation, I faced one of the toughest challenges of my life, but I chose to fight back through sport. Tennis, a passion from my childhood, became my path forward. Now competing in USTA and working toward ITF tournaments, I am committed to pushing my limits and growing as an adaptive athlete. My goal is to inspire others facing adversity to keep going, stay strong, and believe that a setback does not define your future.

My life has been shaped by resilience, reinvention, and a constant drive to keep moving forward. I was born in Thailand and moved to the United States at 16, where I built my career in the kitchen, working my way from dishwasher to executive chef. The kitchen taught me discipline, creativity, and how to perform under pressure but my greatest test came outside of it.

In April 2024, I was diagnosed with necrotizing fasciitis, a life-threatening infection that led to the amputation of my right leg up to the hip. I spent months recovering, learning how to live again, and facing the reality that everything had changed. But instead of letting that define me, I chose to adapt.

Before my injury, tennis was something I loved as a kid. After my amputation, it became something much bigger it became my way back. I started playing wheelchair tennis, and from the first time I got on the court, I knew this was my new path. The challenge, the movement, and the competition brought back a sense of purpose and freedom that I thought I had lost.

As an adventurer, my journey now looks different, but the spirit is the same. Adventure for me is pushing beyond limits, facing discomfort, and refusing to quit. Every time I train, compete, or travel for a tournament, I am stepping into the unknown again, testing what I am capable of.

My passion is to grow in wheelchair tennis and compete at the highest level possible. I am currently playing in USTA tournaments and working toward competing in ITF events. My goal is not only to improve as an athlete but to represent resilience and show others especially those facing life-changing injuries that there is still a path forward.

Receiving the Flyin Ryan Adventure Scholarship would directly support this journey. The funds would be used for coaching, training, tournament entry fees, and travel expenses. These resources are essential as I continue to develop my skills and compete at a higher level.

More importantly, this scholarship would allow me to keep building a story that can inspire others. I want people to see that losing a leg or facing any major obstacle does not mean the end of your dreams. It can be the beginning of a new one.

I am not just chasing a goal; I am proving that no matter how hard life hits, you can rise again, adapt, and keep going. This is my adventure now, and I am fully committed to it.

My greatest accomplishment is rebuilding my life after losing my right leg to necrotizing fasciitis in 2024. Coming back from a life-threatening condition, learning how to live independently again, and stepping onto a tennis court as a wheelchair athlete has been the hardest and most meaningful journey of my life. Competing again, after everything, is something I am truly proud of.

My favorite adventure is my return to tennis. Every practice, every match, and every tournament feels like an adventure because I am constantly pushing my limits and discovering what I am capable of in a completely new way.

My biggest inspiration is my son. Everything I do is to show him that no matter what happens in life, you can keep going, adapt, and chase your dreams.

Here is some links to my story

<https://mainlinetoday.com/food/zack-wannawong/?amp=1>

<https://youtu.be/eBAIRkVEx5k?si=TPCzzamfxOusxi-z>

<https://youtu.be/QeX9H4G7tX4?si=rXP7p2boDDpg6yBS>