

I became an adventurer the day I was told I would never walk again. After a service related accident in 1999 left me a walking quadriplegic and traumatized, I chose faith over fear and made a promise that I would walk a marathon. I did not grow up as an adventurous person, but that moment changed everything. It became the beginning of a lifelong commitment to challenge limits, trust God, and turn adversity into action.

My journey began with a single marathon and grew into four consecutive Boston Marathon qualifications and finishes, along with 24 marathon completions. From there, I completed 100 half marathons across all 50 states and Washington D C, using each race as a platform to show what is possible when disability is met with determination and opportunity.

I later expanded into triathlon, completing 14 races including the Chicago Triathlon. I continued seeking new ways to stay active and competitive, including handcycling, and gradually built a life centered on movement and possibility rather than limitation. In recent years, I have embraced adaptive sports such as para fencing, para climbing, sled hockey, Nordic skiing, 4-track alpine skiing, and adaptive snowboarding. Each has reinforced the same lesson: growth comes from showing up, staying open, and refusing to stop learning.

Today, my deepest passion is competitive para archery. Over the past five years, I have competed internationally, focusing on growth, consistency, and mastery of the sport. I am a member of the United States Para Archery Team. Medals have come as a result of that passion, not the purpose of it. I am now working toward my goal of representing the United States and medaling at the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

The Flyin Ryan Adventure Scholarship reflects how I choose to live: fully engaged in life, willing to take on challenge, and committed to growing through every experience. If selected, I will continue pursuing sport at the highest level while sharing my journey to encourage others with disabilities to stay active, take risks, and define their own version of adventure.