



Megan Silcott Earns her Thrill Ride – July, 2015

(Photo: Doug Meehan)

For any 18-year-old, taking a wild spin at the Bondurant Driving School track in Chandler would be simply awesome. But imagine being able to feel that rush after climbing out of a wheelchair.

"This is awesome," an excited Megan Silcott of Maryland said.

Two-and-a-half years ago Megan's life was turned upside down.

"I went to bed one night and woke up in the morning and my body felt weird. I couldn't really move out of bed," she said.

While fighting off an infection, the then 15-year-old's immune system started to eat away at the covering of her spinal cord. And in what seemed like the blink of an eye, this otherwise healthy and active teenage girl was paralyzed from the shoulders down.

The only thing not paralyzed was Megan's spirit and drive to walk again. What followed was intense rehab at the International Center for Spinal Cord Injuries at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in her home state of Maryland.

While there, she met someone who understood her battle.

"During my bachelor party, my best friend was driving my car and I hit a ditch going 135 mph," Patrick Rummerfield said.

Rummerfield broke his neck in four places and was told he would never walk again.

With the same strength of will, Patrick not only walked again, he became the first fully-functional quadriplegic and also became a race car driver.

Fast forward a few years and a promise made back in rehab was kept today in Phoenix.

"I promised her if she would work hard and to get back up and get her driver's license, I would take her on a few laps she'd would never forget," Rummerfield said.

Some might say these two are walking, or in this case, driving miracles. But for Megan and Patrick, they know that's only part of their story.

Megan said, "A lot of people say it's a miracle. I kind of think it's not. I'm a determined person; I wasn't going to be stuck like this."

Her driver and mentor Patrick followed that by saying, "You know the old saying: The only time we fail is when we quit. **Never give up; never give in. With iron will you will always win.**"