

Emily Progin, Content Manager  
[eprogin@helphopelive.org](mailto:eprogin@helphopelive.org) / 800.642.8399  
Release: Immediate

## **24-YEAR-OLD FINDING HOPE & COMMUNITY AFTER PARALYSIS**

### **How Oxnard Is Rallying to Help Jontae Patton**

**OXNARD, Calif.**—In December 2022, life forever changed for Jontae Patton as a car accident left her with paralysis from the neck down at age 22. With gratitude, faith, and relentless determination, Jontae has become living proof that a spinal cord injury doesn't mean the end of your hope for the future. Her community is helping to fuel her ongoing recovery journey through the nonprofit Help Hope Live.

Jontae was born in Oxnard but spent half of her childhood in Camarillo, moving back to the Oxnard area as a high school sophomore. Jontae was recruited to play softball for a college in New Jersey.

Jontae was home for the winter and recovering from an ACL surgery during her last semester of college when a car accident changed the course of her life. "The car accident had its own agenda," she explained. "It didn't care to check my calendar and my plans for the future."

Jontae faced a long, hard road of medical stabilization and intensive rehabilitation while adjusting to life with paralysis from the neck down. "I learned a lot of things in rehab," Jontae explained, "like how to drive a power chair, how to paint with a mouthstick, and so many skills to help me with my new daily life. I gained an understanding of my injury and learned self-advocacy for meeting my needs."

Facing a diagnosis that could be deeply isolating, Jontae cultivated a new community for herself. She made support group connections, met others who had been through a parallel journey, and fostered a new faith community at New Life Community Church.

At every turn in her journey, she has found surprising connections that have bloomed a sense of new hope in her life:

“While finishing my degree, I faced serious medical issues, but I also made a connection that never would have happened without this spinal cord injury,” she explained. “One of my professors was affected by a traumatic brain injury, and I found myself opening up. I got the A, but I also got to make a deep connection.”

As she has dealt with both triumphs and setbacks, Jontae has found hope not just through her community’s support but also through their tangible financial help.

A spinal cord injury like Jontae’s has an estimated lifetime cost of [over \\$6 million](#). Countless costs, from caregiving to medical travel to home modifications for a wheelchair, are not fully covered by insurance.

That’s why she turned to the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live to start a medical fundraising campaign. Donations are tax deductible at:  
<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/23795/>

As the Medicaid benefits that Jontae relies on have come under political dispute, fundraising is an even more essential ingredient to her health and independence.

The community’s support keeps pushing her forward as she relentlessly holds onto hope for a bright, healthy future. “I won’t let my dreams die here,” she explained.

Unlike a GoFundMe campaign, donations to Help Hope Live are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and all funds raised will be administered by the nonprofit to cover verified medical and related expenses. Help Hope Live verifies medical and financial need for every patient.

Help Hope Live is a national nonprofit that specializes in engaging communities in secure, tax-deductible fundraising campaigns for people who need a transplant or

are affected by a catastrophic injury or illness. Since 1983, campaigns organized by Help Hope Live have raised over \$188 million to pay patient expenses.

**###**