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## **MAY 3: 5K IN TUKWILA TO HELP LOCAL MOM FOLLOWING COMA** **Jovita McConnell Was in “Vegetative State” Before Miracle Recovery**

**TUKWILA, Wash.**—On Sunday, May 3, run or walk for a good cause at the first Jovita Strong 5K event at Tukwila Community Center to benefit the nonprofit Help Hope Live in honor of Jovita McConnell. Jovita experienced a life-altering aneurysm and coma in April 2025. Fundraising efforts will help fuel her ongoing rehabilitation.

### **Jovita Strong 5K Details**

**When:** Sunday, May 3 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Where:** Tukwila Community Center at 12424 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, Tukwila, WA 98168

**What:** Jovita Strong 5K

**Cause:** Help Hope Live in honor of Jovita McConnell, who experienced a life-changing brain aneurysm and coma in 2025.

**Cost:** \$40

**Register:** <https://events.helphopelive.org/event/7048/signup/>

**Event Contact:** Desiree Kalalau, sister, at (206) 200-5604

**Can't Make It? Donate:** <https://helphopelive.org/campaign/27068/>

### **Jovita's Story**

Jovita is a wife, mom, sister, and aunty who experienced a sudden medical crisis on April 28, 2025 when an artery ruptured in her brain.

She went into a coma for a month. Two months after that, she was identified by her doctors as being in a “vegetative state.” Her medical team believed she would never emerge from this state. They told her husband, Shane, to plan accordingly.

“Would she want this life? That’s what the doctors asked him,” explained Desiree, Jovita’s sister. “Shane told them that he would never bet against his wife. If they truly knew her, they wouldn’t, either.”

Shane’s instincts were right. Jovita slowly began to hit key milestones that indicated she was coming back to her loved ones. She breathed on her own. She squeezed a hand. She sat up. She became aware of her surroundings again.

Jovita was medically stabilized locally and then pursued rehabilitation in Seattle. She was then transferred to a more specialized rehab facility in Denver, Craig Hospital. Desiree says her Craig team was exceptional: “Their patience, compassion, and dedication are restoring our hope.”

Jovita was able to return home from Craig, and husband Shane is now assisting Jovita with the ins and outs of daily living as she continues to fight for health and independence. Her three children, Presley, Toby, and Tatum, are right behind him, supporting her recovery with grace.

Prior to her medical emergency in 2025, Jovita was an active presence in the Tukwila community, including serving on the city council and the fire department governance board and helping to run the local pantry for children in need. She has lived in Tukwila her entire life – in fact, she still lives in her childhood home today.

Many of the costs that are paving the way forward for Jovita and her family are not fully covered by insurance. That’s why her loving community turned to the nonprofit Help Hope Live for medical fundraising, pairing online donations with special events like the Jovita Strong 5K.

Since February, they have raised over \$6,000 in Jovita’s honor.

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



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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 \$194 million to pay patient expenses, assisting more than 25,000 patient families. ###