



Ryan's Story



A Dance to Remember at His Wedding

From as early as I can remember, I was always the kid who wanted to be outside building ramps, playing in the sand box, building forts, playing with my friends, but most importantly, riding my dirt bike. At the age of four my parents got me a Yamaha pw-50 that I rode religiously every day as soon as I got off the school bus. After dedicating my teenage life to motocross, on October 16, 2011, at the age of 17 while practicing, I had a crash that broke my T6 and T7 vertebra, leaving me paralyzed from the chest down.

Indego's impact on my life

I learned through a friend about a type of technology that allowed paraplegics to walk and found a clinical trial for the Indego. I eagerly applied for the trial at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, Georgia, to try and get the opportunity to experience this for myself.

I knew that it was about an eleven-hour drive, but to me, the ability to walk again was worth it. This type of technology is absolutely ideal in my opinion because it is something that gives me the same feeling as racing my dirt bike. I am constantly thinking of ways that I can improve while using the device, and can only imagine the endless options this device can offer to others in the same situation.

I can see the amount of hope that I bring every time that I am in the device, and that is so rewarding to me. I want to show individuals in my situation and the families impacted by this that there is hope to walk again. This device is what has brought me hope.

Why I decided to use Indego in my wedding

I have always dreamt about having the opportunity to walk again. While it would be different than before my spinal cord injury, I'd love to be able to look someone in the eyes while speaking. Indego has made this dream a reality for many, including myself, but this time I wanted more. I wanted to

"This device is what has brought me hope."





stand face to face with my future wife, stare into her eyes, hear the words “you may kiss the bride,” and walk her back down the aisle. I have seen a few others with Spinal Cord Injuries use exoskeletons to celebrate milestones in their lives, including graduating from college and getting married, and I wanted to do the same. Of course, my beautiful (now) wife, Lindsay, was more than willing to help me incorporate Indego into our big day. My biggest priority was practicing enough to feel confident while walking through grass and on uneven terrain. Lindsay and I had picked out a beautiful outdoor venue in a nearby national park months before and were committed to having an outdoor ceremony.

The Ceremony

Everything happened so quickly on the day of our wedding; time never moved so fast. I walked my mother and father down the aisle, gave them a big hug and kiss before seeing them to their seats, and stood beside all my handsome groomsmen. While looking out over all my dearest family and friends, I watched the beautiful bridesmaids lead the way for my soon-to-be wife, escorted by my in-laws, to meet me at the altar. This was the greatest single moment of my life, a rollercoaster of emotions that I had never felt before.

“I never thought that Lindsay and I would be able to share this intimate moment, looking each other in the eyes while I held her in my arms.”

It was truly a once in a lifetime feeling to be able to stand and overlook our guests while Lindsay and her father walked down the aisle. It took everything I had in me not to completely lose it. This was the first time I had seen her in over 24 hours. I was speechless at how beautiful she looked as we stood hand-in-hand reciting our vows. I will never forget hearing the officiant say the words, “I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.” We then, for the first time as husband and wife, walked side-by-side being cheered by all our loved ones as we exited the ceremony.

The Reception

After the ceremony, Lindsay and I had a photo session with the photographer before everyone moved into the barn for the reception. Once we all finished eating dinner, we moved straight into our first dance. For obvious reasons, I never thought that Lindsay and I would be able to share this intimate moment, looking each other in the eyes while I held her in my arms. This was a special surprise for our guests as well and there was not a dry eye in the room. We then moved on to the father-daughter dance, followed by the mother-son dance. I wanted to surprise my mother with this dance, and it definitely worked. This was the first time that I ever danced with my mom – something that she probably thought would never be possible after my injury. The fact that I was able to stand and walk on the day of our wedding is something that I will never forget and a priceless memory that I will cherish forever.