



Bright Light Foundation

Jerry Don Kelley

2010 BLF Recipient



Jerry grew up in Cameron Louisiana where his father was a mechanic. He learned the trade from his father. Jerry was in the Marines from 1989 – 1993. Jerry was married in 1993

After the Marines, Jerry worked as a helicopter mechanic for 6 years for the Department of the Navy. He then went on to work as National Gas Compressor Mechanic in Venice Louisiana so that he could be closer to his family and to where he grew up.

Jerry's hobbies were Extreme Sports like Snow Boarding, Wake Boarding, surfing, and beach volley ball. Jerry's over-all best sport was Moto-Cross.

On November 20, 2009 while dirt-biking with friends, he came up short on a jump and was thrown 20' in the air and bounced off of a ramp. Jerry landed on his head. Then he was transported to hospital by life-flight. The accident caused Neck Vertebra damage, in turn leaving him to be Quadriplegic. He has worked through that and can now use his upper body. Although his left arm is still a work in progress. Physical therapy was only paid by insurance for a limited amount of visits but he is now able to use his right hand. He had to move from his home and into an

apartment that would be handicap accessible, creating a cramped space and less room for his wife and daughter.

Through all of this, he has had a wonderful support system including his friends, family and most of all his wife and daughter. His wife, Shannon, is Jerry's care-giver and although this time has been stressful for them, she still continues to care for him with great compassion and love. His 9 yr old daughter has been wonderful through out this as well, never giving them problems. Jerry's friends even made it possible for him to have a day of surfing at the beach! Jerry has a picture where, you can see a friend carrying Jerry on his back and out into the surf where they helped him onto the surf board and allowed him to do what he loves to do SURF!

Although Jerry is unable to walk and perform normal day to day activities, this does not keep him from sharing quality time with his daughter. Jerry is an assistant coach for his daughter's soccer team.

Jerry's insurance no longer pays for the physical therapy that he needs. His goal is to purchase equipment that he can use in his home to help him continue getting stronger and to overcome this set back. He enjoys going to the Moto Cross track and talking to other riders to help and encourage them to focus and stay safe but most important, never give up, strive to be a good person and most of all that Christianity is the way to go!