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\$1,200+ RAISED TO HELP MAN PARALYZED BY GUN VIOLENCE

Finding Hope and Purpose, Michael Walthall Says “It’s Bigger Than Me”

CHICAGO—This year, 37-year-old Michael Walthall recognizes 10 years since the shocking act of violence that forever changed his life. Today, he is approaching life with paralysis with a big dose of hope and purpose. To help fuel that journey, his community has raised over \$1,200 with the nonprofit Help Hope Live, assisting with paralysis-related costs that insurance does not fully cover.

Donations are tax deductible at: <https://helphopelive.org/campaign/19035/>

On March 3, 2016, Michael was in his car waiting for a traffic light to change. A car full of strangers pulled up next to him and began shooting at his car. Michael had to force his car off the road to avoid the deadly gunfire.

Jaw-dropping YouTube footage shows Michael’s car dangling dangerously off an overpass after the accident before he dragged himself to safety:

<https://youtu.be/7NbOmzhaqoU>

<https://youtu.be/kettIW9mAdc?si=wQeGEBE0ENrvIWMg>

Michael emerged from the shocking act of random violence with paralysis. That diagnosis has in no way limited his commitment to his future, his fitness, his education, and his community.

Now 37, Michael’s life includes working with Chicago gun violence advocacy groups, sharing resources with other paralysis survivors, pursuing outpatient rehabilitation at Shirley Ryan, and pursuing his master’s degree at Devry/Keller Graduate School. He plans to return to classes this fall to finish up 9 remaining credits for a 2029 graduation.

See Michael's participation in a community conversation about gun violence and disabilities from 2024: <https://vimeo.com/946166802/aeadf2cdcc>

He is passionate about fitness and participating in adaptive sports with an athletic career that includes wheelchair basketball, softball, and handcycling.

See his Chicago Hornets wheelchair basketball team in dynamic action at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2922gWdHyp0>

Michael kicked off a modeling and acting career in 2024, and he will be participating in his first fashion show in June 2026.

Many of the milestones Michael has already achieved over the past decade have only been possible thanks to his family and community's support.

Insurance covers only a fraction of what individuals with paralysis need to heal, live, and thrive. In Michael's case, uncovered costs include home modifications for accessibility, specialized medical equipment, prescriptions, an accessible vehicle, outpatient rehabilitation, adaptive sports fees, and more.

That's why he turned to the trusted national medical fundraising nonprofit Help Hope Live. His community has raised over \$1,200 so far at
<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/19035/>

An exciting milestone lies ahead: Michael is pursuing an exoskeleton device for personal use, a game-changing piece of equipment that will allow him to stand and move upright for rehabilitation.

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

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