



CRAIG

UNYIELDING DETERMINATION.
EMPOWERING LIVES.

BACK TO WORK AFTER AN ON-THE-JOB INJURY

On Aug. 1, 2014, Adam Driver was working to construct a buffalo corral to bring a herd of bison back to a native grass prairie as part of an environmental effort with The Crane Trust. He and a co-worker were setting fence posts using a payloader. As Adam adjusted a corner post, the payloader bucket fell off, dumping one ton of dirt and the bucket on top of him. His co-worker dug Adam out and called 911.



INJURY OVERVIEW

As Adam waited for the ambulance to arrive, he remembers not being able to move his legs. Once at the hospital he underwent a nine-hour spinal cord surgery for a nine-level fusion of his L4-T9 spine.

REHAB AT CRAIG

Adam first heard about Craig Hospital through his workers' compensation case manager and learned that Craig was a nationally ranked rehabilitation facility. Four days after surgery, Leigh Ann Metscher, a clinical liaison from Craig Hospital, met with Adam and told him about the opportunities at Craig. Adam flew to Denver to begin his rehabilitation on August 6. "When I got to Craig, I was still trying to wrap my head around what had happened," Adam says. "Growing up, I was an athlete and a collegiate pole vaulter, so everything I've done my entire life I had to work for. At Craig, my integrated care team started my therapies right away - they don't mess around. They helped me work hard to understand my new normal."

His biggest challenge in the beginning was the lack of strength in his back, which limited movement after his surgery. "Allowing my body to heal and reconnect all that tissue takes time," Adam says. "I was used to exercising, but I had to adjust my perspective of what my new normal was going to be like. I've always had a positive outlook, but adjusting my expectations of what my body could physically do was difficult. It did not stop me from continuing to be positive throughout rehab."

Adam's rehabilitation program also put him in a peer group of others going through the same therapies. "I met a lot of people and was able to ask questions and learn what to expect," he says. "Community was so important and I developed good friendships."

OUTCOME

Adam left Craig on Oct. 11, 2014. He went back to work part time for The Crane Trust as a facilities manager. "It's totally an amazing place in the pristine prairie grassland and Platte River in Nebraska. I help manage the land and conservation projects, doing what I'm capable of doing with the skills that I have." He also coaches track and field for Hastings College, coaching pole vault, long and triple jump athletes. "I hope I am making a difference in athletes' lives. I want them to see that you can overcome any setback in life. You just can't be afraid to try," Adam says. "I want my athletes to take full advantage of the opportunities presented to them, because you never know when life can change." Adam was named Midwest Regional Female Athletes Assistant Coach of the year last year for his coaching.

He recently received a grant from the Nebraska Greats Foundation to purchase an Action Trackchair and an enclosed trailer so he can continue his love of hunting and fishing. "I can get in and out of my pickup and into the all-terrain Trackchair, which has opened up a lot of doors that I thought were closed." Adam enjoys hunting deer and waterfowl. "I am able to go deer hunting independently with my Trackchair, which was something I really enjoyed doing before my injury," Adam says.

Adam also has a girlfriend in his life, who he met before his injury. She was with him throughout his rehabilitation at Craig and understands the hurdles that Adam goes through on a day-to-day basis. "My support system is great. Not everyone has that. It has been a lifesaver to say the least."