**Introduction to this Resource Tool**

**SCI Connect** is a group of connected Northwest Ohio/Southeast Michigan individuals whose lives have been impacted by a spinal cord injury (SCI). Our group includes individuals living with an SCI, caregivers, family, and friends.

*Our mission is to create a forum for awareness, education, advocacy, and support for individuals in our area living with a spinal cord injury.*

We have created this tool as a resource for newly injured individuals and their families. Our goal as a group is to provide you with an outlet to connect with any of our members in hopes that we can assist with the myriad of questions accumulating in your head. The members of our group can truly relate and can help try to understand what has happened to your loved one and how you will manage it. We remember those early days of our injuries and how overwhelming it seemed. We remember howfew resources were available from the hospitals or physicians to help us determine where to go for inpatient/outpatient rehab, how to arrange transportation, navigate insurance, arrange for home care, necessary home renovations, etc. We remember how devastated you and your family member most likely feel in this moment, and we want to help lighten the load.

On the following pages, you will find some basic information about each one of our members. Find someone who seems like a good fit and reach out. We are all here to answer your questions, address your concerns, or to just listen. We understand. We’ve been there. We want to change the prognosis for the spinal cord injury community and improve the quality of life for all of us affected by SCI.

We have also assembled a list of resources we’ve found to be helpful as we learned about our injury and what it means.
Jeremy Bigelow

Birth Year: 1983

Injury Level: C3-4, incomplete

Date of Injury: 10/3/2010

Rehab Hospital:
Ohio State University Medical Center,
Craig Hospital (Denver, CO)

Residence: Holland, OH

Insurance:
Waiver program
(Ohio Medicaid/Medicare) Buckeye Health Plan

Family Caregiver (if any): Mom, Dad and
Fiancée (if needed)

Ventilator experience: Yes; weaned off after 8 months

Type of Catheter: Suprapubic

Primary Care Physician: Dr. Brian Hinch - UTMC, Toledo, OH

Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Steven Farrell - UTMC, Toledo, OH

Interests: motivational speaking, advocating, faith, hunting, painting, coaching, hockey, football, concerts, and physical rehabilitation at Walk the Line to SCI Recovery.

Personal Motto: “Slow and steady wins the race!”

Phillippians 4:13: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Contact info: jbigelow22@gmail.com  419-297-2906
David Casares

Birth Year: 1986
Injury Level: C4-5
Date of Injury: 8/29/2010
Rehab Hospital: University of Michigan
Residence: Oregon, OH
Insurance: Frontpath, Medicaid/Medicare - Primary
Family Caregiver (if any): Roommates/Ben
Ventilator experience: Yes
Type of Catheter: Mitrofanoff
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Powers
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Farrell - UTMC
Interests: music, movies, reading and travel
Personal Motto: "Can't stop, won't stop."
Contact info: david.casares1258@gmail.com 419-262-1287

Breck Davis

Birth Year: 1972
Injury Level: C5-6
Date of Injury: 6/14/1993
Rehab Hospital: Craig Hospital (Denver, CO)
Residence: Perrysburg, OH
Insurance: TriCare, Paramount, Medicare
Family Caregiver (if any): Parents and Brother
Ventilator experience: Yes, for 10 days after accident
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Schaffer - UTMC
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Woocher - UTMC
Interests: pool, fantasy football
Personal Motto:
Contact info: 419-297-5882 Father (Bill Davis) - 419-376-1952
Jason Finn
Birth Year: 1969
Injury Level: C5
Date of Injury: 1/9/2016
Rehab Hospital: Rehab Institute of Chicago
Residence: Old West End, Toledo, Ohio
Insurance: MMO/Medicaid
Family Caregiver (if any): Girlfriend and Sister
Ventilator experience: Yes; 8 weeks
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Brian Hinch - UTMC
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Steve Farrell - UTMC
Interests: music festivals, nature, and holistic medicine
Personal Motto:
Contact info: 419-377-0383

Tiffany Fox
Birth Year: 1978
Injury Level: C4 - complete fused to C7
Date of Injury: 9/29/2013
Rehab Hospital: Shepard Center (Atlanta, GA)
Residence: Montpelier, OH
Insurance: Medicare and Medicaid
Family Caregiver (if any):
Ventilator experience: Vent for 2 years
Type of Catheter: Urostomy
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Zimmerman (Bryan)
Physical Medicine & Rehab:
Interests: art, nature
Personal Motto: "Don’t live in fear or you’ll never live.”
Contact info: 419-212-6132
Cortney Hoffman

Birth Year:  1986
Injury Level:  C5-6
Date of Injury:  7/30/2002
Rehab Hospital:
St. Vincent’s, UTMC,
University of Michigan, and Craig Hospital
Residence:  Lambertville, Michigan
Insurance:  Medicare, Medicaid, and
Michigan Auto Insurance
Family Caregiver (if any):  Mom, fiancé
Ventilator experience:  None
Type of Catheter:  Mitrofanoff
(staight cath through belly button)
Primary Care Physician:  Dr. Gould, University of Michigan
Physical Medicine & Rehab:  Owen Perlman – St. Joseph Mercy, Ypsilanti, Michigan
Interests:  concerts, traveling, boating, fishing, sporting events, crafting, yard work
Personal Motto:  “You can choose to dwell on the past or make the best of what you have. I choose to live the best I can.”
Contact info:  419-467-2935
Dwight Jones

Birth Year: 1980
Injury Level: C4, C5, C6 incomplete
Date of Injury: 5/28/2007
Rehab Hospital: UTMC
Residence: Toledo, Ohio
Insurance: Aetna Better Health, Medicare and Medicaid
Family Caregiver (if any):
Ventilator experience: None
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic
Primary Care Physician: Ryan Richardson
Physical Medicine & Rehab: N/A
Interests: video games and chilling
Personal Motto: “No struggle, no progress.”
Contact info: 419-418-1035
**Tyler Keller**

Birth Year: 1995  
Injury Level: T5, T6  
Date of Injury: 2/25/2015  
Rehab Hospital: Craig Hospital- (Denver, CO)  
Residence: New Boston, MI  
Insurance: Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Auto No Fault Michigan  
Family Caregiver (if any): Parents and friends  
Ventilator experience: Yes  
Type of Catheter: Speedy cath and straight cath  
Primary Care Physician:  
Physical Medicine & Rehab:  
Interests: The Recovery Project, Walk the Line, personal training, sports, sled hockey, video games and rodeo  
Personal Motto: “Every day is a new day to reinvent yourself, but are ya silly? I’m just gonna send it!”  
Contact info: tkeller533@gmail.com  734-644-6418

**Eric Krompak**

Birth Year: 1972  
Injury Level: C5  
Date of Injury: 1/22/1995  
Rehab Hospital: RHI Rehab Hospital of Indiana  
Residence: Maumee, OH  
Insurance: Paramount Elite  
Family Caregiver (if any):  
Ventilator experience: 6 weeks on a vent trach experience  
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic  
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Thomas Cox  
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Szapiella  
Interests: travel, movies, music, dancing and yoga  
Personal Motto: “I break easily, but I don’t die.”  
Contact info: echair@bex.net
Allie Leatherman

Birth Year: 1987
Injury Level: C6-7
Date of Injury: 7/19/2014
Rehab Hospital: University of Michigan
Residence: Northwood, OH
Insurance: MyCare Ohio
Family Caregiver (if any): Agency
Ventilator experience: N/A
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Liz Mayer
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Mary Free Bed, Cleveland Clinic
Dr. Michael Wheaton and Dr. Frederick Frost
Interests: history, politics, philosophy with friends, food, nature and music
Personal Motto:
Contact info: 419-917-7037 (cell)

Brock Mealer

Birth Year: 1984
Injury level: T12 and L1
Date of Injury: 12/24/2007
Rehab Hospital: St. Vincent’s, Univ. of Michigan
Residence: Wauseon, OH
Insurance: Paramount/Medicare
Family Caregiver (if any): N/A
Ventilator experience: None
Type of Catheter:
Primary Care Physician:
Physical Medicine & Rehab: University of Michigan
Interests: guitar, flying, motivational speaking
Personal Motto: “Impossible is nothing.”
Contact info: 419-583-6153
James Murtha III

Birth Year: 1989
Injury level: C4
Date of Injury: 10/5/2014
Rehab Hospital: Craig Hospital, Denver, CO
Residence: Ann Arbor, MI
Insurance: Medicare, Blue Care Network, Medicaid
Family Caregiver (if any): Parents help with meal preparation, transportation, laundry, some exercising and shopping. I have paid care for morning and evening help.

Ventilator experience: Yes; 6 weeks
Type of Catheter: Suprapubic
Primary Care Physician: Dr. Gary Yen in Ann Arbor (U of M Briarwood Family Medicine)
Physical Medicine & Rehab: Dr. Edmund Chadd (Burlington Building, Ann Arbor)
Interests: family, music, football, college basketball, art, painting, movies, YouTube, self-improvement, volunteering, Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living, Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, comedy, spirituality, meditation, photography, beaches, dogs and food
Personal Motto: “Other people have gone through this and live(d) successful and fulfilling lives; I will do it too.”
Contact info: jmurtha89@gmail.com  989-906-3339
Useful Resources/Websites/Blogs/Groups
Ohio SCI Connect: www.ohiosciconnect.org
The Ability Center: www.abilitycenter.org
Spinal Cord Injury Zone: www.Spinalcordinjuryzone.com
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation: www.christopherreeve.org
Unite 2 Fight Paralysis: www.u2fp.org
AbleThrive: www.ablethrive.com
Struggling with Serendipidity: www.strugglingwithserendipity.com

Adaptive Sports/Recreation Resources
Michigan Adaptive Sports: www.michiganadaptivesports.com
Adaptive Sports Connection: www.adaptivesportsconnection.org
Adaptive Sports Program of Ohio: www.adaptivesportsohio.org
Be Adaptive Equipment: www.beadaptive.com
Wheeling Sportsmen: www.maumeevalleynwtf.com
Action Trackchair: www.actiontrackchair.com