

Comp Laude® Award: Injured Worker

Billy Parker

After undergoing a traumatic work-related injury in which he lost both of his arms, Billy overcame physical limitations, significant emotional trauma, and today uses his experience to positively affect change.

Billy has his own Youtube channel where he teaches other amputees how to cope with the loss of their limbs and how to use their upper limb prosthetics.

"When I was first in rehab and received my left arm prosthetic, the PTs and OTs could only show me the basic features. I looked all over for a resource to learn how to use my prosthetic, but there wasn't anything out there. So, I had to train myself from real-life situations. People came up to me and asked where I received my training. It gave me the idea to make and post online videos that showed other amputees how to use upper limb prosthetics. That's why I love making videos. Amputees may not end up doing things exactly as I do them, but they get ideas, and more importantly, amputees see that they're not alone."

Billy is also a member of Moving Forward Limb Loss Support Group, where he helps bring amputees and caregivers together. He also wanted to find a way to help amputees at hospitals, so in August 2017, he became a Certified Peer Visitor (CPV) with the world-wide Amputee Coalition.

"I wanted to be able to work with amputees early, so I could help them know what to expect. Everybody's different, but I let them know they're not alone. I'm here for them, if they need help or just someone to talk to. We can get on a phone call or meet on Skype."

Looking to return to work, he started his own business, Lending a Hand, LLC, to deliver speaking engagements. Billy has designed a safety presentation, "Saving Limbs and Lives," in which he shares his story in hope of preventing it from happening to others. To date, Billy has delivered more than 55 speaking engagements and has reached more than 10,000 people with his story.

"When I had my arms, I didn't go out of my way to help people. My amputation put me on a better path and gave my life purpose. I'm using my personal tragedy to help others. Now when I look back, I wouldn't change a thing that's happened to me."

