

The [zoom] Life

The Zoom Life shares the stories of individuals who epitomize the spirit of Zoomability and the Zoom itself. People who embrace their independence and choose a life of freedom and joy.

Meet Ivanna Brown, independence could very well be the defining theme of Ivanna's life. Injured in a car accident at the age of 25, Ivanna found a way to keep on moving and she doesn't plan to slow down anytime soon.

Born in the Shetland Islands off the north coast of Scotland, Ivanna was introduced to the military life at the age of 9 when her mother fell in love with an airman stationed in Greece. Living the life of a military brat, moving to different stations around the world, she graduated high school in Germany and decided the Air Force was the right path for her.

Ivanna was stationed at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona when a car accident changed her life forever. A spinal cord injury paralyzing her from the waist down forced her to relearn how to live.

Due to the very rugged terrain of her home in the Shetland Islands, Ivanna was unable to move back to the supportive circle of her extended family. "If the Zoom had been made back then, I probably would have been zooming around the Shetland Islands," Ivanna said. But as it was, the rough terrain and steep hills of her hometown made moving back there in her condition all but impossible.

Ivanna chose instead to remain in the United States and was treated through the VA at one of the spinal cord center in Long Beach, California. "With a spinal cord injury, you have to relearn how to do everything," Ivanna explained. Ivanna chose to leave the VA treatment center and move directly into an apartment on her own. "I wanted to make sure I could do everything by myself."

Ivanna credits her supportive team at the VA, not only for her recovery but for her overcoming attitude as well! "The VA here in Long Beach has a staff that is just really behind veterans living their best life. They really will do whatever they can to get you to try to do new things... They taught me how to be independent... They are just awesome, it's a really good VA!"

"I have the balls to drive cross-country by myself with two dogs and they did that for me! They told me I could do anything. I just love and adore my therapists."

More than 20 years after her accident, Ivanna was able to receive a Zoom through The Independence Fund. The Zoom has already made a big impact on her life, but will bring even bigger changes down the road.

For Ivanna and her two dogs, the Zoom is making life more fun. "One of the big things about having a Zoom is being able to go to Dog Beach (with her two dogs)... before the Zoom, I'd sit up on top of the hill and watch everyone playing with their dogs... The fact that I can actually get down there and run around with my dogs ... I cried the first time, I literally cried, it was just so amazing."

Ivanna is really looking forward to being able to access places previously unavailable to her in any meaningful way. "Yeah, you can do anything in a wheelchair, but it takes longer whereas in a Zoom you can really go places... Usually in rugged places, it's two people trying to lift up the front of my chair and drag me along ... but with this (the Zoom), it's cool."

Ivanna appreciates the freedom the Zoom provides, not only to get to places that are hard to access, but to spare her body in the process. "Now if I do want to go through a field or something I'm not going to rip my shoulder to shreds trying to participate in stuff. You can do it and you're not going to injure yourself and that's a huge thing."

The Zoom is about to change Ivanna's life in an even more significant way. She currently splits her time between her home in California and a fixer-upper in South Florida, often making the trip by car on her own. She plans to purchase an RV and take to the roads with her Zoom in tow. "Me and my dogs are going for it - we're going to go wherever we want and stay wherever we want. I can go to all these campgrounds now which were not fun before, because it's all gravel and dirt and takes 10 minutes to go two feet... I'm super ridiculously excited!"

"The Zoom has changed my life in that I am going to change my life - drastically!"

With her vibrant personality and love of life, Ivanna truly is A FREE MIND IN MOTION!

