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Five Inspiring Tetraplegics Awarded Lifetime Grants from Brennan Rehabilitation Foundation
The Socrates Award recognizes individuals who have overcome disability with annual grant

CHICAGO – February 18, 2021 – Every year in the U.S., an estimated 17,000 people survive a spinal cord injury. While treatment and follow-up care varies according to the severity of the injury, medical expenses can easily exceed \$500,000 in the first year alone.

These staggering costs have inspired the Brennan Rehabilitation Foundation to create the Socrates Award, a lifetime cash grant to provide tetraplegics, individuals with paralysis caused by illness or injury that results in the partial or total loss of use of all four limbs and torso, with economic resources for therapy, equipment, prescriptions, and in-home care.

This year, five recipients have been selected to receive the Socrates Award for their efforts in working to achieve personal success while pursuing the daily grind of physical rehabilitation and recovery:

- **ADAM CRAIG** (Wauwatosa, WI) experienced a horrific diving accident in 2018 that left him paralyzed from just below the shoulders to his feet. Adam is beating the odds on his recovery as a C4 Complete Tetraplegia - he can breathe on his own, cough on his own and is slowly regaining bicep and tricep function.
- **MYA LYNN** (Chicago, IL) suffered three gunshot wounds during a kidnapping that left her a quadriplegic. She later identified the three people responsible for the attack, leading to a conviction for her attempted murder and kidnapping. Mya recently represented the State of Illinois in the Ms. Wheelchair America Inc. competition as Ms. Wheelchair Illinois 2020, and uses her platform to raise awareness around the connection between addiction and disability.
- **BRYON RIESCH** (Milwaukee, WI) was left paralyzed from the chest down, with limited use of his arms after a devastating accident in 1998. After graduating from Marquette University, Bryon started a career in IT and established the [Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation](#). Since 2001, the foundation has raised over \$4 million to fund medical research to find a cure for paralysis.
- **REVECA TORRES** (Palatine, IL) was paralyzed in a car accident as a teenager. Shortly after, she attended Harper College where she became the first student using a wheelchair to complete the fashion design degree. She continued her education at the University of Arizona where she earned a bachelor's degree in theatre arts. Today, Reveca is an artist who uses painting, illustration, photography, film, movement, and other media as a form of expression and a tool for advocacy and social justice. She started a nonprofit organization called [BACKBONES](#) that provides one-on-one support for individuals with spinal cord injuries.
- **DAN TSUTSUMI** (Arlington Heights, IL) after returning home from eight years serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, he suffered a traumatic accident in Lake Michigan in 2012 that has left him in a

quadriplegic condition. He is waging the biggest battle of his young life as he fights to recover and walk again.

Since 2018, the Brennan Rehabilitation Foundation annually recognizes the accomplishments of individual tetraplegics through the Socrates award. The award was originally created by Christopher Brennan, Chairman of the Foundation, during his tenure in sports media, and his father, Terry Brennan, a former head football coach at the University of Notre Dame, to honor collegiate athletes who achieved a combination of athletic and academic success. The award embodies the mantra of the Socrates creed, generally derived from the Latin phrase “mens sana in corpore sano” which translates to “Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body.”

“After personally suffering a spinal cord injury, the Socrates creed took on a profound meaning for me,” says Christopher Brennan. “I am honored to award these individuals who recognize that like a sport, life itself is full of incredible highs and frustrating lows, and that the daily pursuit of ‘a healthy mind’ and ‘a healthy body’ in the face of adversity is the true testament of one’s character.”

This year, the Socrates Award recipients will each receive a \$1,000 grant and the Foundation anticipates that number to continue to grow in tandem with the organization’s fundraising efforts and events. The honorees, as well as past awardees, will be recognized at the Annual Board and Advisory Board meeting on May 23, 2021 at Sunset Ridge Country Club, pending COVID-19 restrictions.

About [The Brennan Rehabilitation Foundation](#)

The Brennan Rehabilitation Foundation is a 501c3 charitable foundation located in Lake Forest, Illinois. The Foundation is committed to helping individuals, who have suffered cervical spinal injuries causing physical and cognitive disabilities, and their families and communities, by providing financial resources to help ensure a continuum of rehabilitation resources and provide opportunities for individuals to ultimately reach optimal health and independence. Please visit www.brennanrehabfoundation.org to learn more about donation opportunities and future fundraising events.

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