

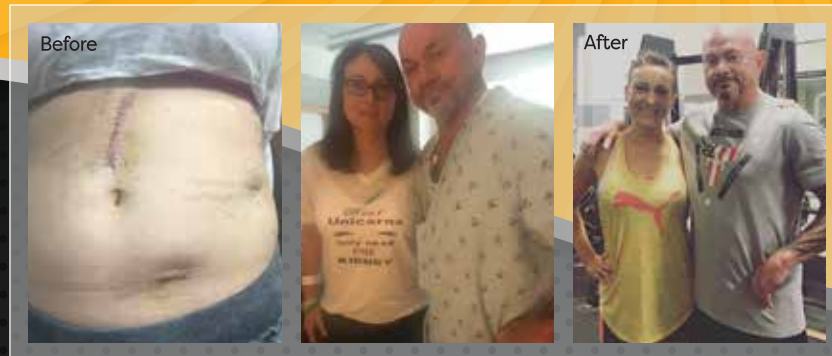


2019

SOUTHERN MUSCLE GUIDE presents

COURAGE AWARD WINNER

ALISON FRANK



My story is perhaps different than many that you will read. I started my fitness journey roughly 4 years ago. I wasn't overweight nor did I have any health issues that required me to change my habits to a healthier lifestyle. I was what you would consider skinny fat. I had always been active growing up but adulthood got in the way as I moved out on my own and became a productive member of society. My journey started simply because I was tired of feeling run down and not being my best self. The first order of business was to start back at the gym with my old personal trainer, John White.

Exactly one year after starting back training, I competed in my first Figure competition. I ended up walking away with a First Place and two Second Place trophies. It was an amazing accomplishment!! One I couldn't have done without John's guidance, motivation and help.

Despite being there every day pushing me and his other clients to be better, stronger, John's health was declining. He was feeling fatigued and weak, among other things. This was his life for several years. Finally in September 2017, doctors gave him the news that his kidneys were failing.

In June 2018, John started dialysis 3 days a week while continuing to maintain his normal training schedule. No matter how tired he was or how bad he felt, he was there to train his clients. We talked about his situation and he explained how his friend was going through the process to become a Living Donor for him but was rejected. I did not know this was a thing! I was curious so I began to research it. After tons of questions, lots of research, and

one long heart to heart with my husband, I decided to become a Living Donor for John. I started the extensive testing process in September 2018.... 9 doctor's appointments, 47 vials of blood, 2 24-hour urine collections, an EKG, a CT scan, meetings with a donor coordinator, social worker, a nephrologist and a donor advocate. After 7 months, I was finally approved to donate a kidney to John. Donation/transplant day was on April 24, 2019!!!!

It has been an amazing journey and I've learned so much about an issue I wasn't familiar with. Learning that most people on the kidney transplant list end up dying before they get a kidney is heartbreaking. Becoming a Living Donor is a big decision and certainly not for everyone. However, it is the biggest and most generous gift that you can give someone. I'm walking away with a few scars that will fade in time or maybe they won't. John is walking away with his life back. To me, that is absolutely priceless.

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We are roughly 4 months post donation/transplant and we are both doing amazing! I have been back in the gym for around 2 months now with John by my side kicking my ass. I am training hard and getting stronger every day. The goal is to compete again in 2020. I can't wait to show the world my scars and that life doesn't stop with just one kidney.

Celebrating Inspirational Transformation