



# Inspirational Stories

*"Helping you be your best" is a philosophy shared by Liquid Sun Rayz, which led them to become our Inspirational Stories Sponsor and 2018 Southern Muscle Guide Courage Award Sponsor. As you read the stories of Whitney, Joe and Ernie, know that you also have the means within you to take your own journey to success.*

In the fitness industry, healthy and strong is a mantra we live by. In the sport of bodybuilding, we take healthy and strong to another level, shaping the body and leaning out to present the best possible package on stage. In between, it is the journey that we take, the process we go through in transforming the body that enables each and everyone of us to be a shining inspiration for someone else. Overcoming obstacles, persevering, and surviving can be seen in so many stories. And, if you are inspired by someone and become your best, then you in turn, can be the inspiration for the next person. Each of us has a story to share.

## WHITNEY WISER, IFBB BIKINI PRO

Age: 31

IFBB Pro, NPC Judge, Personal Trainer, Promoter

Sponsorships: Liquid Sun Rayz, Optimum Nutrition, Defiance Fuel

I have always been active playing basketball, volleyball and track & field in high school as well as being a lifeguard. I began weight lifting when I was sixteen as part of basketball training but got serious about lifting when I was a senior at Middle Tennessee State University.

### Competition

While working as a bartender, a trainer observed that I might be well suited for figure competitions. At the time, I didn't know a thing about the sport of bodybuilding, but the seed had been planted. I decided I would give it a try. I was young, and didn't fully comprehend the requirements of discipline and consistency that this sport demands. While my first prep was only 8 weeks long, I managed to place 2nd in the Bikini division of the 2009 NPC Knox Classic. That first competition fueled a fire in me.



I trained for a whole year before I did my next show. This time I tried both Figure and Bikini and once again I placed 2nd in the Bikini division. In 2011, since I was qualified, I decided to see how I would do on a national stage so I competed at the NPC JR. USA Championships with a personal goal of placing in the top 15. I won my height

class! After that, a trainer strongly suggested I compete at the NPC JR. National Championships and again, I won my class!

### Off Stage

Momentum was with me; I was on track on a national level and I was featured in Flex Magazine. Unfortunately, also during this time I found myself in an mentally turned physically abusive relationship. I finally decided I had to leave this relationship. But one day in 2011, he called me at work saying he wanted to talk. We met in my work parking lot. After discussing the end of our relationship for a few minutes, I started to walk back across the parking lot to go inside. The next thing I knew, he was driving full speed ahead and straight towards me. The front of his SUV hit me. I was then pulled under the vehicle and dragged several feet across the parking lot. As my body collapsed to the ground, the rear tire rolled over my midsection crushing my spine and ribs.

I was so lucky there were two eyewitnesses: one was a former EMT and the other called 911. I was taken to the Vanderbilt University Medical Center for emergency back surgery. The vertebrae in my back was fused from T-10 to L-2. There were many additional injuries, but the crushed vertebrae was the worst. God was definitely watching over me that day because no one was sure if I would even walk again. The doctors initially thought I would be paralyzed because of the nerve damage I had sustained. My family was very supportive and helpful, but they were also trying to prepare me for the fact that I might not ever be able to compete again.

### Back On Stage

Determined, I was back on the stage after one year, but I knew I needed more time to get back to a nationally

competitive level. I continued to make progress and three years later in 2014, I earned my Pro Card at the NPC Jr. USA Championships. It took another year before making my Pro debut in 2015. I competed in several more shows that year but in 2016, I placed 1st at the Muscle Mayhem Pro which qualified me for the Olympia. It was beyond my wildest dreams to compete at the 2016 Olympia. It was an experience I will never forget!



Photo by npcnewsonline.com

### The Future

I am fortunate to be sponsored by several companies including Liquid Sun Rayz. It is an honor to have the opportunity to represent them in this article in hope of inspiring others. I have traveled all over the world and learned so much about the sport. Moving forward, I am promoting my first show, the 2018 NPC Nashville Fit Show. I have such passion for the sport and truly want to share what I've learned over the years to create a great experience for competitors. The NPC Nashville Fit Show is one of the first-ever ALL female shows. I believe a strong and healthy body is empowering and anytime you can bring women together in a positive and uplifting environment, it creates a strong bond. This is the experience I am striving to bring to women in Nashville on May 12th. I am excited for the sponsors, the vendors, the organizers and all of the many people who are helping to put the show together with me. And most importantly, I am excited for the participants and spectators to all come together to see how great this sport is.

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