

Beyond the Headline

* *AirLife: AirLife, #12. Denver, Colorado, over.*

Emergency Room personnel: Go ahead, #12.

AirLife: Leaving the scene of a motorcycle accident. Female patient in critical condition. En route to your location, ETA 7-8 minutes. Stand-by for report, over.

Emergency Room personnel: Ready for report, over.

AirLife: Female, approximate age 25-30 years of age. Patient is non-responsive, severe head trauma. Arrhythmic heart rate, BP 90/50, can't get a good O2 sat., a central line has been placed. Initiating defibrillator. She's a code blue, over.

(15 seconds of silence)

Emergency Room personnel: Got it. Trauma team is ready for your arrival, over.

*AirLife: 10-4, over.**

Later, on the local news that night the anchor would lead with the story, **Two in critical condition after motorcycle accident**. One of those was the female patient, Diana Cathey.

For many people watching the news that night, they would think it was unfortunate that someone was involved in such a bad wreck. And, then that headline would fade away. For Diana Cathey, that headline, the wreck, would be the beginning of a fight for her life.

Diana suffered life-threatening injuries. In fact, she was clinically dead for 4 minutes as emergency response personnel worked to revive her. She sustained a broken neck, breaking the C2 vertebrae in half, and also breaking the C3 vertebrae.

She survived and spent a month in the hospital recovering. She wore a halo brace for six more months. Because of the severity of her injuries, Diana had permanent nerve and brain damage.

She spent months and months in physical therapy re-learning the most basic of things, including how to speak again and simple motor skills.



Lubbock Area United Way

After making it through the wreck and its aftermath, Diana was now facing the obstacle of getting back to a normal life, including getting a job. She moved to Lubbock. She began the job hunt and searched for months applying for anything and everything, with no luck.

One day, she went into the Goodwill store on 34th. There was a 'Now Hiring' sign, and Diana applied, with her fingers crossed. She received a call back that day and scheduled an interview.

Sandra Perez, the Director of Sales at Goodwill, interviewed Diana the next day and hired her on the spot. Looking back on it, Diana says, "They gave me a chance."

And, that's all she needed. Within three months, she was a manager-in-training. Soon she became the General Manager of the retail store on Spur 327 overseeing all store operations and the 16 employees there. It is the largest Goodwill retail store in Lubbock.

Diana talks about Goodwill and says it's like a family. She likes to go to work because she feels like she's helping others. She points out that she works with others who have disabilities and how they wouldn't have the opportunity to work if it wasn't for Goodwill.

When reflecting on everything, Diana says she believes that there is always a plan for everyone. She ends with, "... so maybe the accident was part of the plan- so I could come here and help others."

* Fictionalized recreation of the AirLife transmission en route to the hospital after Diana Cathey's motorcycle accident.

Find out more . . .

Funding from the Lubbock Area United Way helps Goodwill of Lubbock pursue its primary efforts aimed at training and placing people with barriers to employment in useful and productive jobs.

Find out more by visiting: www.lubbockgoodwill.org or call 806.744-8419