

Patrick Rummerfield

AUTHOR AND CONSULTANT, ST. LOUIS



SPECIAL TREATMENT
This cycling machine is used in ABR therapies.

In 1974, a car accident left Patrick Rummerfield a quadriplegic with only 72 hours to live. But Patrick recovered and, thanks to 17 years of intense physical therapy, regained mobility in his arms and legs. Always tenacious, Patrick pursued his childhood dream of driving a race car, even during his recovery period, and he has 38 world records and firsts to show for his efforts. Patrick says that his greatest dream is to “use my challenges to inspire both disabled and able-bodied individuals to keep the faith.”

Living in St. Louis and working in Baltimore, Patrick is a proud Rapid Rewards Frequent Flyer program A-List member. He works as a consultant with neurologist Dr. John McDonald at the Kennedy Krieger Institute’s International Center for Spinal Cord Injury. They focus on activity-based restoration (ABR) therapies, designed to help individuals with longterm spinal cord injuries recover sensation, movement, and independence. Patrick spends about a third of each month in Baltimore, working with individuals who are undergoing ABR therapies.

Patrick’s autobiography, *Green Bananas: The Patrick Rummerfield Story*, details his life’s journey—from his childhood spent in an orphanage to his current work fundraising for paralysis research and providing hope to those in need. Among other achievements and accolades, Patrick was the first person with a spinal cord injury to complete the IronMan triathlon, and he received the Henry Viscardi Achievement Award in recognition of his efforts supporting spinal cord injury research. Patrick says, “Our dreams and goals, mixed with determination, perseverance, consistency, and a lot of prayer, will drive us to our futures.”

Patrick travels on Southwest Airlines several times a month, and it’s no surprise that he has formed friendships with Employees he sees regularly. They catch up on each others’ lives, sharing about families, baseball, and the news of the day.

Patrick, your enthusiasm for supporting spinal cord research and the ways you touch lives every day are awe-inspiring. You truly are the Spirit of Southwest! —Michele Kyle