

Noah:

Pickens Technical College has truly changed my life. When I first started the welding, I was a pretty typical student. I had a little knowledge and some experience, but I was intrigued by the idea of making really good money working in the oil fields in Eastern Colorado. But Mr. Oliver and my classmates taught me more than I could ever dream possible.

When I started welding, we were working on a project for the fire department. It was a community service project where we made a prop door for the firefighters to train. It is used to simulate breaking through a locked and bolted door. It was awesome to see how much they appreciated it. Not long after we finished the door, my life took a drastic turn.

While driving home from school on January 13th I was hit by a semi-truck. After spending 6 ½ months in the hospital I finally went home, paralyzed from the chest down. As I sat in the hospital, and then my bed at home, I began to worry that I would have to change my entire future; all of my plans were gone. But throughout, Mr. Oliver and my classmates came to visit me and kept encouraging me to come back to class. This gave me hope.

Finally, when I was strong enough, I was allowed to return to welding. The welding program at Pickens was a God-send for me. It's keeping me focused on my future; and as Mr. Oliver always says, "Being stubborn always helps". I'm not going to sit around and be upset over my limitations; I'm going to continue with my plans.

So, although I may never work in the oil fields as a stick welder, my future in welding isn't over. I plan to pursue a career in TIG welding and I owe that, in part, to Mr. Oliver and my classmates' encouragement and support.

Mr. Oliver:

Noah is one of the strongest people I've ever met. When others would have laid in bed wallowing in self-pity, he got up and got on with his life. Noah has an amazing can-do attitude that makes his prospects almost limitless.

When we heard about Noah's accident the class made it their mission to give him whatever he needed to get back to school. We knew how passionate he was about welding and we knew he needed to be back, so whenever one of us would go to visit him we would ask him when that would be. At first he wasn't sure, but then as his strength and determination grew he decided to return. The day he rolled back into the welding lab there was such a level of excitement from his peers, it was awesome.

I know Noah has had to change his vision of the future because of this accident but, just as surely, I know he will be an outstanding welder. His drive and attitude will make him a successful MIG/TIG welder, fabricating custom parts.