Trauma Survivors Share Their Stories At Trauma Awareness Day Celebration

More than 20 trauma survivors and their families gathered at Memorial Regional Hospital on May 15 for a tearful reunion with medical staff, first responders and community partners. The theme for the program called “Firearm, Injury Prevention Every Day, Everyone, Everywhere” served as a venue for former patients and families to share their support and stories, continue healing and say thank you to their caregivers. The event was held in honor of National Trauma Awareness Month.

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (PRWEB) May 23, 2019 -- More than 20 trauma survivors and their families gathered at Memorial Regional Hospital on May 15 for a tearful reunion with medical staff, first responders and community partners. The theme for the program called “Firearm, Injury Prevention Every Day, Everyone, Everywhere” served as a venue for former patients and families to share their support and stories, continue healing and say thank you to their caregivers. The event was held in honor of National Trauma Awareness Month.

“Trauma remains an epidemic. It is pervasive and all around us,” said Andrew Rosenthal, MD, Medical Director of Memorial Healthcare System’s Division of Trauma Services. “The treatment involves prevention first and foremost. We have to increase our educational efforts with seatbelts, distracted driving, helmets, and impose legislation. Everyone can do a better job and we can all be a part of the solution,”

The program gave patients a detailed look at the scope of care they received from various hospital units and reunited them with staff who touched their lives in the aftermath of their accidents. It also brought to light some of the programs that Memorial staff participate and partner in to promote safety in the community.

“Today is a chance to reflect and celebrate,” said Judy Frum, Director of Operations at Memorial Regional Hospital. “We celebrate our survivors and their families who are here with us today. Although your journey has been challenging, we draw inspiration from your determination and fight.”

Trauma survivor Sharon Blackett, 31, started the patient stories by detailing her journey that started back in June 2018. Blackett was the victim of a car crash who was extricated with the jaws of life. She suffered from a broken femur and a compound fracture that severed the femoral artery. She started bleeding out.

Her boyfriend, who had sustained two broken arms, tied a shirt around her leg until a Florida Highway Patrol officer with a Stop the Bleed kit placed a tourniquet while they waited for first responders.

Doctors credit the quick actions of the officer for helping to save her life.

Blackett, 31, who is in the midst of rehabilitation from the complications of the crash had more to say.

“There are a lot of people I want to thank and some are not here today,” she said. “I am alive here today with my leg intact and able to walk because of the care I received. I thank the people who stopped on the road to help my boyfriend, the officer who kept me from bleeding, and the medical staff at Memorial who put me back together. I have a new purpose in my life.”
Blackett is now an ambassador for Bleedingcontrol.org, an initiative of the American College of Surgeons and the Hartford Consensus designed to educate the public with healthcare agencies like Memorial Healthcare System with information on bleeding control.

Motorcycle accident survivor Igancio Narce, 50, made an emotional speech thanking what he called his dream team of surgeons, physicians, nurses and rehabilitation staff.

“Thank you is not enough,” said Narce. “You not only took care of me but you made sure my wife and children were prepared for what was to come. You were all there around the clock for us and there are no words that can express the gratitude from me and my family.”

Narce, or “Nacho” as he introduced himself affectionately, was injured in motorcycle accident that rendered him partially paralyzed and with a lower leg amputation. Today, he has regained most of his movement and has begun to stand on his prosthetic. Recently he took part in the Tour de Broward with his family where he participated in the 3K walk by hand cycling.

Among other survivors were some whose injuries made local headlines. They include those injured by gunshots, car crashes, falls and fires.

For Pedro Amieiro, 36, has returned to thank his staff for a third Trauma Awareness event providing his medical staff the opportunity to see his progress over the last few years. Amieiro made headlines 10 years ago when his small plane crashed at North Perry Airport.

Amieiro was 25 years old at the time of his plane crash. He was a pilot for a banner company in Pembroke Pines. His plane stalled before plummeting 300 feet. He suffered a brain injury, collapsed lungs, a spinal cord injury, multiple broken bones and limbs. He was a hospital patient for 5 months in the Intensive Care Unit for critical patients.

For trauma surgeon Seong Lee, MD, seeing his patients in this venue during Trauma Awareness Month makes the moment that much more special.

“As trauma surgeons and medical staff, we want to stay connected with our patients. I met Pedro early on in my career here at Memorial. I have been here for 13 years and seeing Pedro recover over the years makes this so much more gratifying.”

“It has been a long road for me,” said Amieiro. “Thank you for saving my life and giving me a second chance. My accident was tragic but it has taught me a lot about life, family, friends and gratitude.”

Memorial Regional Hospital is one of only seven Level 1 trauma centers statewide, treating the most serious, life-threatening injuries. It is the busiest Emergency Department in Broward County.

Both Memorial Regional and Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital have received national verification by the American College of Surgeons as Level 1 Adult and Level 2 Pediatric Trauma Centers the first in Broward County to receive national designation. The dedicated State and Nationally Verified Level 1 trauma center and team sees more than 40,000 trauma victims each year with positive outcomes, discharging three-fourths of
these patients back to their communities. Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer Zeff Ross, FACHE was recently appointed to the Florida Trauma System Advisory Council.
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