

Mount Sinai inside



Bryan Steinhauer

PHOTO: Susan Watts/NY Daily News

Second Chance

Bryan Steinhauer wants the world to know that he has come a long way—thanks to the comprehensive and compassionate care he received at Mount Sinai.

Last spring, the honors student's life was changed forever when he was the victim of a brutal assault in a bar near Binghamton University in New York just two weeks before graduation. He spoke publicly for the first time on April 22 during a press conference held in Stern Auditorium. Major news media outlets, including CNN, The Associated Press, CBS, NBC, ABC, and ESPN, aired coverage of the event.

"I had a second birth and raising at Mount Sinai," said Bryan, 23, with an unflinching smile as he addressed the large photograph-snapping crowd of journalists. "Without the efforts and the care of my therapists and aides, I'd actually be a sad case. It's an ironic situation. I'm actually very fortunate. Many people struggle to get their lives back to normal in the shadows."

Bryan was transferred to Mount Sinai in dire condition in July 2008 after spending more than two months in a coma. The Mount Sinai Hospital is the only National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research-funded traumatic brain injury model system of care center in New York and one of just 16 in the country. Though Bryan's mother described him as "lifeless," his parents held out hope.

"Bryan came to us with serious injuries that deprived him of the ability to speak

clearly, walk, climb stairs, and eat," said Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and CEO of the Medical Center. "But today he is able to do all those things and much more. The combination of the Steinhauers' determination and Mount Sinai's expertise and dedication allows us to rejoice today at how far he's come."

Five months after his admission, Bryan left the Hospital using only a walker.

"Bryan's case was a significant medical challenge," said Brian D. Greenwald,

MD, Medical Director of Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Assistant Professor, Rehabilitation Medicine. "He suffered multiple skull fractures and a severe traumatic brain injury. He had hemorrhages and contusions affecting almost every lobe of his brain. He required a team rehabilitation approach that included the help of physicians, nurses, psychologists, and nutritionists—as well as physical, occupational, recreation, and speech therapists."

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Dr. Greenwald noted that Bryan's case also demonstrates one of the most critical—and sometimes overlooked—components to the recovery process: an unwavering spirit.

“Even in his darkest moments, Bryan had this wonderful smile and sense of humor,” noted Kristjan T. Ragnarsson, MD, the Dr. Lucy G. Moses Professor and Chair of Rehabilitation Medicine. “Bryan is an example of what

can be achieved through rehabilitation at Mount Sinai, hard work, dedication, and the support of family.”

Bryan continues to receive outpatient rehabilitation therapy four times a week. He graduated from Binghamton College and plans to pursue a career in accounting.

“I'm not a hero, just a normal guy stuck in a bad situation who kept a positive attitude and kept my head held high,” he said. “So please don't feel sad for me, because struggle brings strength; tragedy leads to wisdom.”

Bryan is an example of what can be achieved through rehabilitation at Mount Sinai, hard work, dedication, and the support of family.

— KRISTJAN T. RAGNARSSON, MD

LEFT TO RIGHT:
Kenneth L. Davis, MD;
Bryan Steinbauer; his
parents, Marlene and
Richard Steinbauer;
Brian D. Greenwald,
MD; and Kristjan T.
Ragnarsson, MD

