

## Chris Molnar's Story



Christopher Molnar is a 19 year old life-long resident of South Brunswick who dreamed of becoming a US Marine since the 4th grade. He led a normal active childhood, playing football and lacrosse in both Middle School and High School.

In November of his senior year of High School Christopher turned 18 and the very next day he picked up papers to enlist in the Delayed Entry program for the Marine Corps. He graduated in June 2012 from South Brunswick High School and entered into Basic Training for the United States Marine Corps in August. After graduating as a Private First Class from Basic Training on November 16th, he returned home to Kendall Park for a 10 day leave before Marine Combat Training.

On November 25th Christopher suffered a stroke and was rushed to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and was admitted to Bristol Myers Squibb Hospital where it was discovered that he had a fatally enlarged heart and was in end-stage heart failure. The diagnosis was grim;

Christopher's heart was 5 times the normal size and he would need to be transferred immediately to a hospital where they specialize in heart disease. After waiting 48 very long hours a bed opened up in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit of Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital-Columbia Presbyterian. Once he was there it was determined that he would need immediate surgery to implant a VAD (Ventricular Assist Device) to keep him alive while awaiting a heart transplant. While waiting for the surgery Christopher suffered a TIA (a mini stroke). This would be Christopher's third stroke and fortunately he has no permanent deficits from any of them. On December 3<sup>rd</sup> Christopher had the surgery to implant the VAD after which he spent 1 1/2 weeks in Intensive Care before being moved to a regular room.

Christopher was discharged from the hospital on December 21st and was sent home to continue rehab and to heal and regain his strength for the next operation. During a routine checkup it was discovered that his pump and heart were not responding as expected and a blood clot was suspected. On January 24th Christopher was re-admitted to Columbia-Presbyterian for further testing, where he will be until minimum February 4th. The pump issues classify as a pump malfunction and warrant his move to the highest tier on the transplant list where he will remain until the transplant.

We hope the heart transplant will take place within the next year at which time he will be facing another long stay in ICU and the hospital, possibly for several months.

We look forward to the day when this is nothing more than a scar on his chest and he can embark on his new life.

