

## KACEY

RECIPIENT OF: TISSUE ALLOGRAFT



## KACEY'S STORY

On April 20, 1999, Kacey was one of several high school students involved in the tragic shootings that took place at Columbine High School. Kacey is a survivor, but had severe damage to her right hand, arm and shoulder as a result of a single shotgun blast.

Kacey sustained injuries that most often lead to amputation and doctors thought that course of treatment would be inevitable. That was until Dr. Ross Wilkins, Medical Director of the Denver Clinic for Extremities at Risk, suggested a different course of treatment that might save Kacey's arm. Dr. Wilkins was able to use allograft tissue to replace the shattered part of Kacey's shoulder, using what muscle and skin she had remaining to rebuild her shoulder joint.

Nearly 15 years and multiple surgeries later, though she has very limited use of her right arm, Kacey continues to be thankful for her gift of tissue and leads what she would consider, "a mostly normal life." In December of 2004, Kacey's long-time boyfriend, Patrick, proposed to her during her participation as a float rider on the 2005 Donate Life Float, Many Families, One Gift, a part of the annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California.

Since then, Kacey and Patrick have been able to have a family and are parents to three adorable little girls. Whenever asked about her story, Kacey takes a moment to

reflect but is quick to express her thanks to the family and donor she received her lifesaving tissue grafts from.

"I would love to meet the family of my donor," Kacey says thoughtfully. "I would hug them and tell them thank you for the gift they gave to me. I was minutes away from possibly becoming a donor myself and to know that it has had—14 years later—a huge impact on my life and given me a second chance is unexplainable. I want to reassure others that donating tissue is lifesaving, not just life changing."

Kacey is a hero and continues to inspire all those she encounters by sharing her story on local and national stages.

