

Kyle Alumbaugh is an Indiana native born in Grant County in Marion, Indiana in 1979. He currently resides in Westport, Indiana. His father, Jack was born with an unusual genetic defect.

HSP is a neuro muscular, hereditary, progressive, and leg-crippling disease. There are many genetic forms of HSP. HSP was passed on to both Kyle and his older brother Ben from Jack. Jack at a young age was told he had Cerebral Palsy. After having Ben & Kyle with their mom Tonya, Jack knew CP was not hereditary as he had problems. Therefore, he needed answers. It was discovered that Jack, Ben & Kyle had Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia (HSP). Kyle and Ben were able to enjoy the joys of childhood such as, riding a bike, playing sports, swimming, and other fun activities. As HSP progressed, Kyle began using a cane in his early 20's.

He was still able to work and achieve many tasks that a young adult needed to do including getting married. Kyle has been married to Gloria for nearly 20 years this November. As Kyle approached his late 20's, he was using both a walker and/or a cane depending on the level of activity he was participating in.

Approaching his early 30s, Kyle enrolled at Indiana University Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC). During his sophomore year, he was falling quite often.

He and Gloria decided that for him to remain active, going to college and working, he needed a wheelchair. Kyle finished his degree receiving a bachelor's degree in business (marketing) with a minor in communication studies. The career field was a bit rough for Mr. Alumbaugh.

Being disabled led to many closed doors. However, through Christian faith, and drive, Kyle kept moving forward. He knew he was uniquely designed to do great things! In 2021 at the age of 42, Kyle discovered the Spastic Paraplegia Foundation.

The Spastic Paraplegia Foundation, or SPF has been in the business of helping those with HSP and PLS or Primary Lateral Sclerosis for 20 years. The

foundation has an active board and committee members. The ultimate goal of the SPF is to find a cure. Kyle eventually joined the SPF as their Social Media Coordinator.

Kyle along with other volunteers organize fundraising events and an annual conference. In the Giving Tuesday Campaign of 2021, Kyle and the SPF team raised over \$300,000 higher in donations for the entire campaign, than the previous campaign in 2020. Other campaigns are Rare Disease Day, and the current campaign, the 5K Run, Walk, or Roll for Awareness Week.

Kyle decided that he would be a participant in this campaign. He has a photo and video editing background which he decided to use in his efforts. Three times a week, Mr. Alumbaugh goes to his driveway where there is a built-in ramp with rails.

He has his phone video recording and placed at the backdoor. Before each walk, Kyle completes a 1.52-minute "Kyle's Walk & Talk" video intro. This gives a fundraiser update, provides encouragements, and gives other key information. After the walk, Kyle loads both of the videos to the cloud, and journeys to his office to bring the video to life. With Mr. Alumbaugh's marketing background, he has pursued many businesses and individuals for donations.

He has received three sponsors. Gross Self Storage in Columbus, Indiana, and Bass & Gasper Funeral Home, and Odd Fellows Lodge both in Westport, Indiana. Other donors have been Layman Hummel Insurance in North Vernon, Indiana and several of Kyle's family and friends have contributed. This has given the SPF nearly \$4000 from August 1st – September 11th, 2022, which fully benefits research.

These efforts speak to many. Mr. Alumbaugh said, "If we change our mindset and focus on joy in our challenges, we can excel to great victories." Kyle's theme for his walk is, "To be a Beacon of Hope." May we all pursue that outlook in our lives.