

## **ERIC OLIVIERI'S VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT**

On August 13, 2007 my life was completely changed as a result of an event that happened at my summer job. I walked out of my house that morning not knowing that 1 month later I would be pushed back into my house in a wheelchair. Since that date my life has not been the same and I am not sure that it ever will be.

I spent an agonizing month in the hospital where I was unable to do anything for myself. I was afraid to sleep because of the nightmares that I experienced in which I relived the incident over and over again. I listened to doctors, nurses, occupation and physical therapists tell me all the limitations that I would have placed on my life at the age of 16. I have had 3 surgeries and have been told there are knee replacements in the future. I will also be having another surgery this coming year. I am tired of being in the hospital, being poked and prodded, having to be dependent for everyone else to do things for me. Every day I get up I am reminded of what happened to me when I am met with the searing pain in my knee as I try to get out of bed. I see all the scars on my body and feel like Frankenstein. I am self conscious to wear shorts, sleeveless tops and a bathing suit. I will forever be reminded of August 13, 2007 because of the scars and limitations on my body.

I have lost an important part of my teenage years to this incident. I should be driving by now but I am still dependent on my parents and friends to take me where I need to go. On my lunch hours I don't hang out with friends like I used to do before because now I have physiotherapy 3 times per week. I can't play hockey anymore or any of the other sports that I loved to do. I can only hope that in future I will one day be able to do these things. For someone like me who is totally competitive, the thought of having to do things I was once the best at just average is very disheartening. I have had to adapt the way I do everything because of my knee. I cannot kneel down anymore, I go down the stairs hopping on my good leg and I always have to sit in the front seat of the car because my knee won't bend enough to allow me to get into the backseat of a car. I have lost significant range of motion in my left knee. Unfortunately, I have probably have another surgery to look forward to this year that will attempt to rip up the scar tissue that has formed in my knee and leave me once again dependent on everyone else. As soon as I get a little mobility I feel like it is instantly taken away from me with another surgery. Instead of heading off to college this year I had to go back for another year of high school. All my physiotherapy and potential surgeries would have made college impossible this year. I have made my applications to colleges but am not sure whether or not I will be able to do what I really want to do in life, to become a paramedic. I have listened to doctors and specialists tell me that I will never run again, I will always walk with a limp and that I had better get used to a desk job for the rest of my life. All of this has mentally crippled me at times. Fortunately, I am surrounded by family and friends who will not allow me to give up and set limitations on myself. Every time I am told I won't do something I tell myself that I will do it and prove that person wrong. I am tired of being treated as a statistic and not as an individual.

I think that what is most disturbing to me is that I do not know how this incident will impact my life in the future. I do not know the full extent of the side effects of all the x-

rays, cat scans and MRI's that I have had done. I also wonder whether or not I will be able to do a job in life that is meaningful to me. I worry about having a family one day and the effect my injuries will have on my family and whether or not one day I will be able to do all the things with my children that I have always wanted to do. For the rest of my life I will be affected by the events that occurred on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. On that day life as I knew it was forever changed.