



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Julie Alley • biodesigns, inc
(310) 717-1024 • jalley@biodesigns.com

Mark McLaughlin • Ron Sonntag Public Relations, Inc.
(414) 354-0200 x106 • Mark@rspr.com

QUADRUPLE AMPUTEE LIVES LIFE TO THE FULLEST

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif. – Four years after a flesh-eating bacteria attacked Aimee Copeland in 2012, forcing doctors to amputate her left leg, right foot, and both hands, the 26-year-old is not deterred from living life to the fullest.

Equipped with bionic hands, and a revolutionary socket system that holds it all in place, Aimee is kayaking, driving her own car, using an iPad, resuming her passion for cooking and just completed her second master's degree in social work. This summer, she will be interning at The Shepherd Center, an Atlanta hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury and brain injury, a place where she too underwent intense rehabilitation following her quadruple amputations.

Key to Aimee's success and independence is her positive attitude, spirit, drive and belief that anything is possible. Recently Aimee gave the commencement address at Georgia Gwinnett College where she reminded graduation seniors "No matter what challenges in life you face, if you want something bad enough, you will find a way."

Also helping Aimee achieve her daily independence is Southern California-based prosthetist Randall Alley, CEO of biodesigns inc., creator of the HiFi™ Interface, and Touch Bionics, provider of the i-limb quantum™ hands.

The HiFi Interface (or socket) captures and controls Aimee's underlying bone in her residual limb, making a secure connection between Aimee and the quantum hands. Its unique and patented and patent-pending compression and release design differs from conventional socket designs that focus on total encapsulation of the limb

"I was in traditional sockets previous to the HiFi and they felt bulky, loose and heavy. In my new HiFi, my prostheses feel connected to me, like they are a part of my body," Aimee said.

“They feel lighter, more comfortable, secure, and I forget they are there. I am able to wear them more comfortably, even in hot Georgia weather, and they have better range of motion for doing my hair. I never have to worry about them falling off or sliding around in them. They look great and feel more natural than ever before. The windows allow my arms to breathe and provide a fleshy pad for doing transfers (in my wheelchair).”

Aimee’s bionic hands, the quantums, act as fully functioning hands. They respond to commands faster, are lightweight, and their anatomical styling in three sizes fits female amputees. Finger flexibility and grip options allow for typing, picking up small objects holding delicate items, and much more.

“The quantums have enabled me to do a lot of complicated tasks that I couldn’t do before, Aimee said. “Once I became an amputee it became a lot harder doing my hair, makeup, cooking, which is something I always enjoyed. Now I’m able to do it again, which is awesome. In addition to that I’m able to clean up around the house and I’m getting back to some arts and crafts.”

Aimee demonstrated the HiFi and the quantums at the Amputee Coalition’s annual conference in Tucson last summer. “A lot of people at the convention were amazed, especially when I could show them how effortlessly I could switch between finger grips. I’m pretty sure some people went back to their prosthetists to ask for the HiFi interface and the quantums.”

At the beginning of her journey as a quadruple amputee, Aimee didn’t see herself as being this active, being able to enjoy outdoor activities, kayaking, training her service dog, Belle, and keeping up with her graduate studies. But her enthusiasm and can-do attitude – as well as her high-tech prosthetics – have made it possible. She also has become an advocate for people with disabilities, serving as a board member of FODAC, (Friends of Disabled Adults and Children) and on the advisory council of Tools for Life, Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program.

Aimee’s next stage in life is to start her non-profit organization. She envisions acquiring land to build a sustainable community for people of all abilities, with raised campsites and a staff of nurses, therapists, and instructors. She wants to create a place where the wilderness can be available to anyone. The center will also offer individuals group therapy as well as other holistic modalities.

As a graduate now from Valdosta State she also intends to become a licensed clinical social worker in private practice.

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Aimee videos:

Aimee being fit with prostheses:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHkfV3KroFo>

Aimee post fitting/feedback on prosthesis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZ2xtVWxbmY>

Aimee commencement address:

<http://www.ajc.com/news/news/local/watch-aimee-copelands-inspiring-ggc-commencement-a/nrMRL/>

About biodesigns inc.

Southern California-based biodesigns, inc. is a technology-driven prosthetics company specializing in the most advanced patient care, research and product development for individuals who have experienced upper and lower limb loss or deficiencies. The company's approach utilizes innovative clinical techniques and the most biomechanically advanced prosthetic interface systems available, including the High-Fidelity Interface and Imager System. biodesigns works with upper and lower limb wearers of all ages and activity levels, but also provides interface/socket training to other prosthetists, as well as consulting services in and outside the field of prosthetics. For more information visit www.facebook.com/biodesigns, www.youtube.com/biodesignsvideos and www.JoinHiFi.com