

New book tells family's faith journey after car wreck

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Before November 2017, the Moody family lived a normal life.

The parishioners at Immaculate Conception Church in North Little Rock were active in the community. David Moody, the head of the family, has worn many hats: former NASA program analyst, startup business mentor and investor.

Eager to forge his path in entrepreneurship, his son Josh cofounded a technology start-up, Innovis Labs, when he was a senior at Catholic High School in 2014. The start-up initially received six figures worth of funding. Josh spent hours discussing business logistics with his father, pitching to potential investors and building prototype products.

As Josh's friends went off to college over the next few years, Josh lived with his family in North Little Rock and worked on his start-up, which proved to be more challenging as financial backers became less prevalent.

On the afternoon of Nov. 10, 2017, David and Josh decided to do something they didn't normally do — take the afternoon off and drive around Burns Park in Josh's 2002 Toyota MR2 Spyder convertible. They took turns driving, running through gears, talking and laughing.

David eased into the driver's seat, and soon, the convertible hugged the winding curves of the road through the North Little Rock park.

“I came to a place in the road where ... it went up the hill and made a sharp left turn into a straightaway,” David said. “As I approached the top of the hill, a car was coming from the other direction, in their lane, but it startled me. In Burns Park, there are no shoulders, so once you leave the pavement, you’re in the woods.

“I had a knee-jerk reaction ... I went off the road, and at that point, there wasn’t much I could do. We were heading toward trees. It flashed in my mind at that point that I needed to turn the wheel to the right as hard as I could so that when we hit those trees; it was going to be on my side of the car. ... Maybe that would keep Josh from getting hurt. But I was wrong.”



Josh Moody's 2002 Toyota MR2 Spyder convertible, seen here at the scrap yard two weeks after the November 2017 accident, was wrapped around a tree in Burns Park in the wreck that changed the lives of Josh and his dad, David. (Courtesy David Moody)

The Toyota Spyder wrapped around a pine tree. Josh was slumped over in the passenger seat, and David was pinned in the car’s crumpled frame. Paramedics took Josh, then 21 years old, to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences for a traumatic brain injury. David’s pelvis was crushed, and paramedics cut him from the twisted metal.

Josh remained unconscious in the ICU. In the middle of the night, five days after the accident, swelling in Josh’s brain led to an emergency craniotomy.

One evening, David had a vision of Josh, as he looked before the accident, standing beside his bed alongside Jesus. In the vision, Josh was rewiring his own brain, working to make sense of it all and setting things straight, as Jesus laid an encouraging hand on Josh’s shoulder.

Josh remained in the ICU for 19 days. Finally, he was well enough to leave the hospital, but he would need to relearn how to walk, talk and carry out daily activities.

Josh and his mom, Gwen, spent five months at the Texas Institute for Rehab and Research in Houston while David, still in a wheelchair, returned to work.

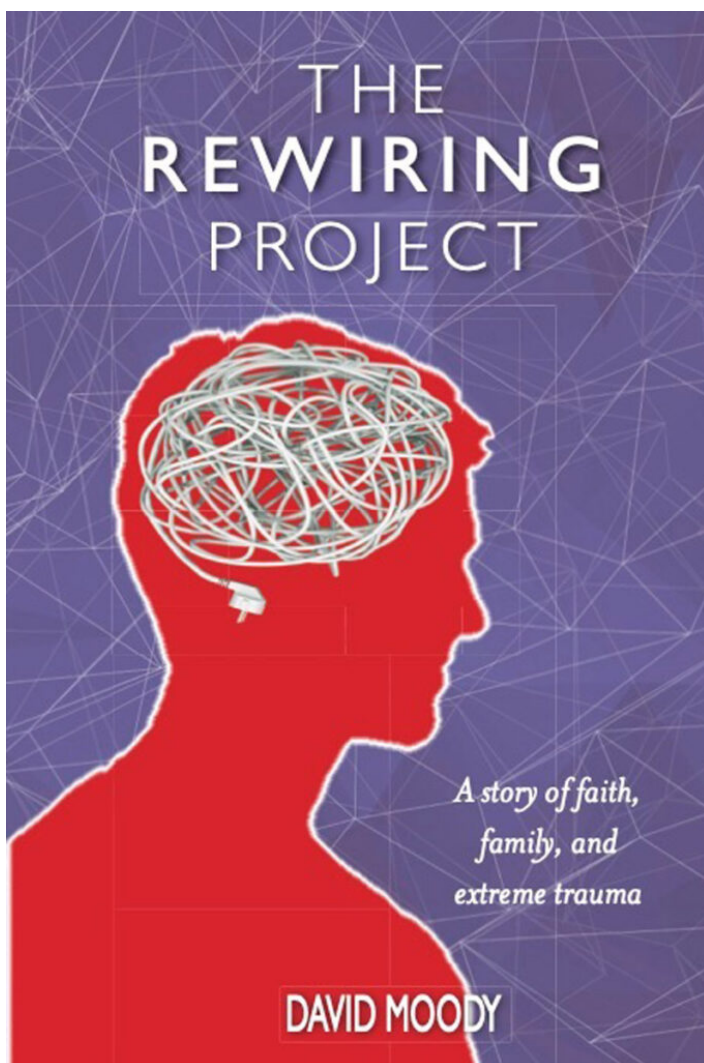
“It was a miraculous journey,” David said. “There were so many people put in our path, so many things that happened that were just clearly divine intervention.”

Over the next five years, David said he felt called to write a book about the journey.

“You don’t go through something miraculous like that and get to keep it to yourself,” he said.

In 2017 and 2018, the Moody family received support from the Drake family. Mary Drake became well known across the Catholic community following a car wreck when she was 16 that left her with a traumatic brain injury. Mary’s parents, Jim and Patti, members of Christ the King Church in Little Rock, helped the Moody family in their recovery and supported David throughout the publishing process.

More than half of the book proceeds will be donated to nonprofits.



The cover of David Moody’s new book, “The Rewiring Project,” chronicles his family’s faith journey over the past seven years. (Courtesy David Moody)

David’s book, called “The Rewiring Project,” is a nod to Josh’s tendency to tinker with technology and to the vision that David had of Josh and Jesus while Josh was recovering in the hospital.

“The book is about ... trauma that anyone can experience at any point in time, and how we

were able to maneuver through that by leaning into our faith, and all of the things that happened because we did that," David said. "All I did was tell a miraculous story. And my job was to not get in the way of the story. ... I feel like I've done what I was called to do."

Bishop Francis I. Malone of the Diocese of Shreveport, La., said of the book, "It is a story of unyielding faith and the refusal to surrender to the odds of survival. It was also a young man's rewiring as so many good friends who were a part of a story while ever so patiently waiting for a happy ending that was never guaranteed. By the book's end, we are reassured that in the world of God and faith, hope springs eternal — something we should never forget."

Josh, who turned 28 this year, is happily married and living in Virginia. David is hard at work in the business world once more.

The book is available for \$23.99 plus shipping at davidmoody.co.

"Honestly, I don't know how somebody who doesn't have their faith to lean into makes it through. I don't know that we could have gotten through it. It may have torn our family apart had it not been for our faith," David said. "And it's not unusual, unfortunately, when tragedies happen to families. Spouses are blaming each other for something that happened to one of the kids. It never goes back to where it was. That didn't happen to us. We actually got stronger in our faith."