



CREATIVE TALENT AGENCY

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WESLEY HAMILTON | FULL BIOGRAPHY

Wesley Hamilton was born and raised on the east side of Kansas City, MO, where it was difficult for a young African American male to find opportunity outside of the streets. By the age of 16, he became too much for his mother to handle (which was a common lifestyle for kids in his neighborhood) and moved out to be on his own. By the age of 22, he became a father to his daughter, Nevaeh.

Two years later, at only 5-foot-4 and 230-pounds, Wes was non-athletic and vastly overweight as a single father, working full time at an auto finance company and had just won sole custody of his then 2-year-old daughter. But only 5 days after his 24th birthday (January of 2012), everything about Wes's life changed dramatically. As he was walking back to his car, Wes was shot multiple times, with one bullet slicing through his chest and fracturing a rib. The other entered his abdomen, partially severing his spine and paralyzing him below the waist. The shooter was a guy he'd never met.



Wes spent the next three years in recovery, which also included two of those years fighting the severe emotional depression that arose from his belief that his life would forever be bedeviled by medications, surgeries and limitations.

But for the overwhelming love he had for his daughter, Wes knew he had to set an example for Nevaeh. He started down a path of taking ownership back in his life. He started a fitness and nutrition regiment, which was completely foreign to him – as he never ate healthy a day in his life, nor had any experience exercising. Wes learned everything he could about nutrition and started cooking (and now is known for his culinary skills). The fitness side of everything also took off, and in the first year led him to lose 100 pounds – which is incredible, especially for a man who doesn't have the use of his legs. He became a powerhouse of inspiration and felt his transformation had the potential to help others who are struggling in similar battles, so he founded a non-profit called, Disabled But Not Really (DBNR). DBNR has helped so many individuals with disabilities (not just physical) to feel empowered and has helped so many lives overcome any mental limitations they may have – which is the driving force of the organization. The passion Wes has for DBNR is evident by its expansion. DBNR joins community events to raise awareness about the role of good mental and physical health in overcoming life's challenges. It has expanded a scholarship program for disabled individuals who learn ways to improve their nutrition and fitness, as well as support the homeless population in his hometown of Kansas City providing dignity care packages, water, and food. Wes has been recognized many times for his entrepreneurial success, and has been honored with a number of philanthropic awards.

Wes has also spent the past four years being recognized as a role-model in the Crossfit Community, winning a number of bodybuilding competitions, even being featured in Men's Health Magazine climbing a rope with his wheelchair. He has had the opportunity to speak to many community groups, schools, universities, organizations and associations sharing his story and inspiring so many lives. He has a stack of hero letters from all ages thanking him for sharing his story. Wes transformed yet again when working with the Fab Five on Season 4 of the Netflix hit show, *Queer Eye*, who taught him how to be true to himself, leaving him humbled by the experience. Wes believes that the highest human act is to inspire – and knows that is his purpose in life.

In March 2021, *CNN* recognized Wesley Hamilton as an official [CNN Hero](#) for everything he has accomplished and contributes to our world. His dedication to inspire every single person, no matter their situation, truly is his superpower.