

Melissa Stockwell

American War Hero – 2016 Paralympic Medalist – 3 Time World Champion – Leader - Mother

Speaker Profile



Melissa,

Thanks again for being such an important and special part of our first-ever school wide commencement ceremony. You were the perfect speaker and set an impossible standard for those who will follow.

Your story and message to our health professional graduates was inspiring, challenging and encouraged each of us to live bold and full lives. It moved, not only our graduates, but the 1600 family members and friends in attendance. It was the first time in my 25 years of academics to see an entire audience spontaneously rise to give a commencement speaker a standing ovation...and that ovation was well-deserved.

Harold P. Jones, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor, School of Health Professions
University of Alabama Birmingham



Melissa Stockwell

At first glance Melissa Stockwell may appear to be the quintessential Mid-western All-American girl, but she is far more. She is an American war hero who has triumphed over personal tragedy to achieve greatness, World Champion status, and she has dedicated her life to chasing remarkable accomplishments while giving back to others, particularly those who face challenges similar to her own.

In 2002, Melissa graduated from the University of Colorado and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. In March 2004, she deployed to Baghdad, Iraq. Just three weeks later, a blast from a roadside bomb struck Melissa's Humvee causing the loss of her left leg above the knee. After enduring numerous infections and surgeries, Melissa was medically retired from the Army. She is the first female soldier to ever lose a limb in active combat and has been awarded both The Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart.

Following her accident, sport became the road to recovery for Melissa. In April of 2008, she became the first Iraqi War Veteran to qualify for the Beijing Paralympics. She competed in three swimming events and was honored by her fellow Team USA athletes to be selected to carry the American flag in the closing ceremony. After Beijing, Melissa turned to the sport of Paratriathlon and is now a three-time World Champion. She was named USA Triathlon's female Paratriathlete Of The Year for two consecutive years and was twice nominated for an ESPY award.

On September 11, 2016, at the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Melissa raced in honor of her fellow soldiers and their families who had given the ultimate sacrifice serving and protecting America. After a grueling race, the day ended on the podium, as the newly crowned Paralympic Bronze Medalist.



"Melissa's story inspires and drives home an important message fitting for any audience: success is driven by focusing on what you do have as opposed to what you don't. What Melissa has already accomplished in her life is remarkable and it is clear her best is yet to come."

The Chicago Bears

"Melissa Stockwell tells an American story that is all about inspiration and not at all about self-pity. I have seen her bring a whole roomful of legislators to tears with her straight talk and sincere patriotism."

Nancy Livingston
Director of Community
Relations and Outreach,
Century College

Melissa has shared her remarkable story, and the inspiring insights she has uncovered along the way, to standing ovations across the country for Fortune 500s, military bases, professional organizations, charities, government events and countless schools.

[watch Melissa speak](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWInSH4KUfY)

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What Melissa Speaks About

If you ask Melissa Stockwell to describe herself one of the first things you'll hear is, "I am a Patriot, a lover of the red, the white and the blue." So much so that she had an American flag stitched to the inside of her wedding dress.

Melissa proudly wore the uniform of the United States Army, where she very nearly gave her life for her country. Today, she proudly wears the uniform of Team USA as a World Champion athlete and Paralympic medalist.

Melissa shares her inspiring story, from the battlefields of Bagdad to the podium on the beach of Rio de Janeiro, in an emotionally powerful presentation that leaves audiences forever changed to see ability not disability, to maximize what you do have and forget about what you don't and to apply, as she details, "...the amazing power of choice."

"Thank you again for being our keynote speaker. The sharing of your experience gave all present a new heightened sense of our mission. You truly delivered a 'gold-medal' message that a can-do, must-do direction is what it takes to succeed. Thank you."

Anna Dodelin
SRA International, Inc.



"Melissa, you forced us to take stock of how we view our own lives with your TEDxVail Talk, "Choose Your Story." We laughed when you flipped your leg completely around to show off your sweet new dance move. You stand on one leg with more courage and grace than many of us do on two. You moved hundreds to tears in the audience. Thanks, Melissa, for your powerful idea! You entice us all to choose life stories worth repeating."

Kat Haber
TEDx Vail - 2016

"We knew Melissa's story would be inspirational. What blew us away was the power with which she told her story -- with a perfect mix of humility, humor, and the most positive spirit I've ever had the opportunity to witness. If you're looking for someone who can relate while providing perspective, challenge and inspire while being humble, and leave a lasting message around resilience and a winning attitude, you should reach out to Melissa immediately! She touched every member of our organization both professionally and personally, and left us wanting to be better in every aspect of our lives."

Megan Bailey,
Senior Marketing Manager
Roche Diagnostics

"We were so happy to have Melissa speak at our Sales and Marketing Offsite. There was not a dry eye in the audience and she left us all feeling inspired, motivated and incredibly proud to have her on our team."

Peter McGuinness
Chief Marketing Officer
Chobani

I can't say enough about how great Melissa's keynote was! She was amazing. So much inspiration. People are still talking about it! All the best to you and your team. It was wonderful working with her!

Suzi Klimek
Executive Director of Corporate Marketing
Surestep

The guests at our Kids Rank: Ribbons of Character Benefit were completely engaged and inspired by our honoree Melissa Stockwell. Her story of determination and perseverance all with an optimistic attitude were exactly why she was chosen for our annual award. Beyond her incredible combat story, it is her continuing life's journey and her ability to make a human connection with people which made her time with us an unforgettable experience. Thanks,

Kelcey Liverpool
Founder
Kids Rank



Some of Melissa's previous engagements include:



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**Melissa's website:
www.melissastockwell.com**

