

## SPC Shawn Cheshire (Veteran)



*"No matter what life hits you with, never give up."*

### **Current Location:**

*Camillus, New York*

### **MOS/Current Occupation:**

*Paralympic athlete*

### **Warrior Transition Unit:**

*N/A*

### **Hometown:**

*Camillus, New York*

### **School(s):**

*Los Fresno High School, Texas; SUNY Upstate Medical University (paramedic), New York*

### **Events training for:**

*Tandem cycling*

### **Injury or Illness:**

*Blind*



For former U.S. Army armaments specialist Shawn Cheshire, participating in the Invictus Games is a "chance of a life time" and ranks "second best to serving in the military." She said she "gets goose bumps just thinking about representing the United States" and competing against warrior athletes from around the world.

Cheshire's journey to these games began in 2009. While working as an emergency medical technician, she fell while carrying a patient to the ambulance and hit her head, resulting in a complete loss of vision, as well confidence. Thinking her life was over, the divorced, single mother of two daughters instead made a choice to overcome her debilitating fear and step into the world of adaptive sports.

"Adaptive reconditioning has given me a focus to get out of bed and to the gym to train. I am in better shape, which helps me to feel confident," she said. "My statement through all of this is 'I'm in the process of finding my greatness.'"

Cheshire is a tandem road cyclist and biathlete, and she is clear about her goals. Her short-term plans are to finish the road cycling season and "to be proud of myself" and the growth that she's experienced as an athlete. She will "never let blindness keep me from experiencing the awesomeness of life." Long term, Cheshire said she wants to "teach her daughters that no matter what life hits you with, never give up." She hopes to be an inspiration to everyone she crosses paths with.

Her plans after the Invictus Games? "Racing at the Paralympic Games in Rio and being a medal contender is my ultimate athletic goal for cycling. I will also be training to compete in Korea at the next Winter Olympic Games in biathlon."

