

NEXUS CHAMPION

ASHLEY OCAMPO



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Ashley graduated a year after discharging from Nexus Children’s Hospital.

Ashley Ocampo was just 16 years old when her younger brother found her sick in bed, and not moving. After trying to help her, Ashley’s mother and father called for an ambulance; however, the hospital she arrived at did not know what was wrong with her. After transferring to a second hospital, doctors diagnosed Ashley with a cerebellar hemorrhage due to an arteriovenous malformation (AVM), which is an abnormal connection between arteries and veins in the brain.

After hearing the news, Ashley’s mother Elizabeth recalls being told **“to say our farewells as there was nothing they could do for her.”** However, they couldn’t accept that outcome.

Determined to not give up, the family requested a referral to a different hospital. Upon transfer to a new facility in the Houston Medical Center, Ashley received a lifesaving surgery. In the following weeks, she started therapy – which is when her family met clinical liaisons from Nexus Children’s Hospital. After hearing about the facility and services, Elizabeth decided to transfer her daughter.

“We realized the hospital was close to home,” explained Elizabeth. **“Since I have two other kids, I thought it was perfect because I could stay with Ashley while keeping an eye the others. Plus, there were no other options we found appropriate since she was still a child.”**

Elizabeth also remembers how welcoming the Nexus Children’s Hospital staff were, explaining, **“When we arrived, I first asked if there was anyone who spoke Spanish and they said they did.”** She went on to say, **“Even when there was no Spanish-speaking staff available, they always found a way to translate. Since the first day, they were professional, and we were always very happy.”**

Upon arrival, Ashley couldn’t move, speak, or take care of herself. Participating in physical, occupational, and speech therapy, she regained skills.

“The rehab team taught her everything again from how to move to how to say syllables and words,” said Elizabeth. **“And honestly, I was very surprised that after a week and a half, they were lifting her and helping her take steps.”**

After doctors at the first Houston hospital told Elizabeth her daughter would not live a normal life and would stay in a vegetative state, she was very encouraged by the progress Ashley quickly made.

“I was very impressed with Nexus’ doctors,” explained Elizabeth. **“We learned that in most cases, it takes one or two years for patients to re-gain body movement, but they helped Ashley move almost right away.”**

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