

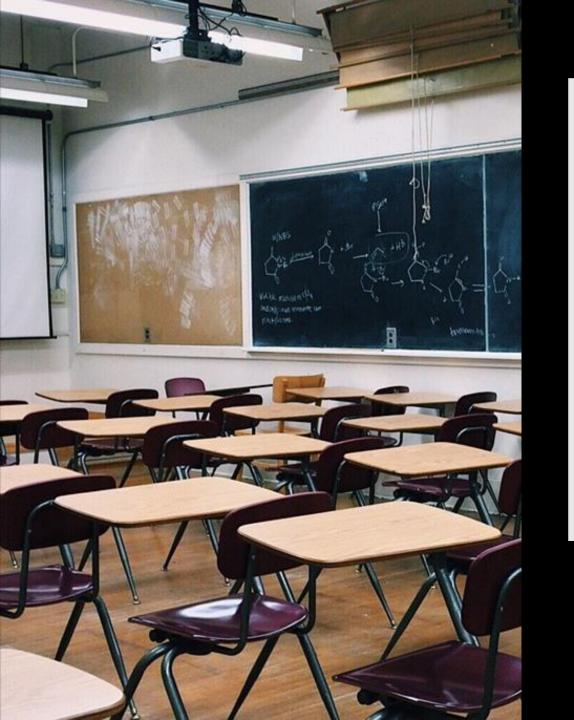
Jordan Burnham



GROWING UP









TRANSITION TO A NEW SCHOOL... AGAIN







DEPRESSION

Depressed vs. Depression

BEHAVIORAL HOSPITAL





SENIOR YEAR





Dear Jordan,

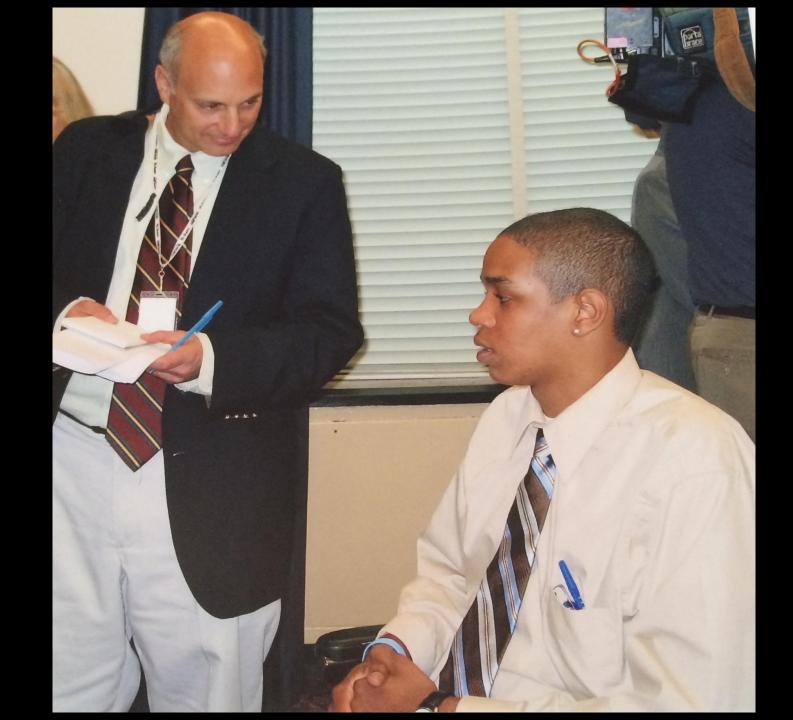












philly@com

RON TARVER / Inquirer Staff Protogr

A son's solemn promise to his parents that

Watch a video, listen to audio, and ask

a question of Jordan and his parents.

Also, ask an expert about depression

and find a list of Web sites on suicide

prevention at http://co.ahilly.com/miracle

Colleges uneasy

about Harvard's

By Kathy Boccella

deal on tuition

he "will never try to leave them again He made it with help from his sister. Tara

philly@com

vs. The Rising St

had done a skit together, a dance-

tion High, not to worry about

he cost of the tux - Jordan

ports anchor on the school's morn-

are so tight they call themselves

oted homecoming king. The day before his leap, Jordan

ad a golf match near his mother

school, and asked her to watch. A

w in Lansdale, she art

with four holes to go. When Jordan saw his mother, he valked over and "gave me a kiss on

the cheek," Georgette Burnham said. He was so excited. "'Did Dad

the League tournament. The next morning, F

first-grade teacher at Knapo Ele-

etball games

sming pep rally. It

anted to do

off at the hon

Honeymoon Help 🎽

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

8 to Watch in '08

tan Burnham welcomes a visit from Allison Colatriane, a close friend from Upper Merion High, Jordan, a popular athlete

After leap breaks body,

a miracle renews spirit

ther he nor anyone close to him ever expected him to do something so

Today, 114 days later, Jordan's

dy remains badly broken. With

the help of three therapists, he

stood on his right leg last week for

50 seconds. He still cannot stand on

Doctors can't promise he'll walk, but won't rule it out. He has sur-

prised them every step of his recov-ery, beginning with his survival. His

parents hope the miracle continues.

One million American high school students, like Jordan, attempt sui-

studies, and about 150,000 are treat-

ed at hospitals. In 2004, more than

2,000 teens between 15 and 19 killed themselves. Nearly all suffered from

depression or some mental illness.

cide every year, according to federa

his left lest encased in scaffolding

pulsive, so lethal "I had everything to live for," he

says now.

— in Cambodia

City Edition ...

A talented student

rebuilds his life after

battling depression -

and falling nine floors.

By Michael Vite:

n the evening of Sept. 28, at

nham, 18, a senior just nomi-

an apartment complex in King of Prussia, a tragedy and a miracle occurred 2.5

The tracedy took place when Jor-

nated to the homecoming court at

Upper Merion High School, jumped

The miracle hannened 90 feet be-

Jordan has no recollection of go-

and survived.

Slow publication

Founders'

letters lag

vexes scholars.

when he hit the ground at 50

The Old Pro A dedicated family's care .. helps bring Jordan back

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

trouble with my parents, I get a real down, depressed feeling of let of embarrassing myself. I get just ashamed, really."

Jordan Burnham

saved him." tro From the first day, Ea^{let} From the first day, carried to the first day, carried to the first generation of the first day of the first to Canada. "We would tell them 00 his kidneys are failing. ysis, and they'd pray itno neys and they'd come ild-Georgette. "Then we up white blood count is Jugcounts would come up the boggling how God has and now he's healing h⁸. Earl and Georgette sphio five days at the hospit arl hotel room next door. want to leave; they dirgh they'd ever see Jordan! When they finally wevas a night, Earl and Geelnit into Jordan's room. "I ove clothes and sat on his have some sense of Johnson said. He put his son's 1 back pocket, and has kre, to have something of h

Searching for an aell After three weeks of a on ses in the ICU, doctors his lowly woke up. Jordan couldn't spealthe his tracheotomy, a besids, in his throat for his mhis in his threat for his master-les. But he could mset-Late in October, he ask/ed er what had happened out The Burnhams had b^{ang} to tell Jordan that he l Doctors wanted to knyket calif understand, whatee

ered, whether he hader Georgette told he he hospital, that he h "Did somebody rate dan asked, most "No. No one threw plied. "What do you re He was upset. He coulood ter. "Did 1 jump?"

outhing the words.

dren's Hospital of Philadelphia "I'm not sure, Jordaone "It's, Things aren't going well, I'm my day was, and they would always under a lot of pressure, I've disap-pointed my parents, I can't fit in, but I just wouldn't let it happen." him "I wasn't there. De and what often happens there's a foundation that's fragile ... and always upbeat, always positive, some incident will be the straw." even when I didn't feel like it on the some incident will be the straw." even when I didn Diamond urges parents of chil-frank discussion about suicide. "Some parents fear that this will "I probably d "What about after?" .agh "That's all I remembly His parents wanted Be-find out why he had stre didn't want to upset hi Tara visited at Hallovow "That was a horrible^{fan} me," Tara recalled. ⁴ to The time that not to be the case, school there tunary about two par-had in fact, if addoescents are out ties at the not a month Mont of said, he just feil went thinking about it, they find their those times at those parties 1 was parents? concerns slif) but protech the designated driver.⁷ He knew people level tive, ... If they are thinking about said don't give him a answer: ... He looked uve. ... If they are tunning acoust the con-that look in his eyes, use it, then adolescents find the con-versations a relief.... I can finally "When I did drink, it was the sister - we always tell everything," and he mostrytalk with some one about this."

taking was to blame. taking was to blame. I was feeing down, I wouldn Many experts, including Staab, drink. That would be dangerous." Jordan's HUP psychiatrist, do not He felt lots of pressure.

stress, primarily when it came to



A motherly hug for Jordan is one of the ways Georgette Burnham prepares him for another the months after the fail, Jordan is not yet able to walk --- but he has come to an understanding of why he jumped a "My parents were asking me how heen a factor the day he in

"A lot of parents aren't racis but they don't like interracial d ing," said Jordan. "I found this of At school, "I was the funny guy, the hard way The father of one senio even when I didn't feel like it on the fused to allow Jordan to date dataghter. There was nothing Jo dan coold do to change his min and it devastated him. "That definitely added to my d Alcohol, he believed, didn't figure into his depression. "I probably drink less than the put ideas in their head," he said. typical high school student. At my pression," he said. "We find that not to be the case, school there's usually about two par-At his lowest m about him, but at the same time h

alk with some one about this." From the day Jordan jumped, arl and Georgette wondered three to four shots. That never got me wasted or out of control. Just whether the antidepressant he was something to get me loosened up. It I was feeling down. I wouldn't

He felt lots of press Dectains ITUP prychaeses and the second seco thoughts in teens. As a result some and "risk factors" that can trigger he said. "When I get in trouble u

thoughts in teens. As a result, some and "risk factors" that can tragger he said. "When i get teens stopped taking their drags depression. I and suicides increased. Last year, the FDA modified is the fit in But he said heing in a most disc, of embarrassi just ashamed, really.

ing what if I wasn't here any jumped. And how had he felt "That's something I remen

"Especially with my r Jordan had been taking his medi-dating. He did not think this had felt like every time I

was unable to believe it

soared or plunged daily jersey over his gown. As usual, he also wore around his when the plastic of the static solution in the static solution in the solution of the solution in the solution and had to fight back / or the

He went to get a haircut, to play the piano in the lounge with his said. "He hugged uz- right hand. He had taken lessons for five years. He went to the gift shop and bought But when Jordan buck tout to names ma900 stuffed dog to give to Allison. His mother decorated his door for Christmas with candy canes, a Later, back in bed, after Jordan

things as best we could. There's no blueprint.' tell you about homecoming?" she recalled him asking, "I said, 'Yes, that's very exciting. You better get Georgette Burnham recalling how she and Jordan's father had tried to help him That evening, more good new lordan learned he'd be the one colftherapist, weekly. A psychiatrist more serious. Neither Georgette check in She was leaving field bocker from his school in the Suburban the logge tournament, by the logge tournament, out with someone else. distraught. So heavybeazted." "What's Jordan felt so guilty, so bad about Earl then called Tara, who asked her. ment, Jordan bimself, that he had lined up on his bed all the pills he could find in the think, and said I didn't want my The just tired," abe told him. "Re-ally tired." Then Earl walked in with the duffamily medicine cabinets and locked his bedroom door. she'd call back. "I didn't want my dad and mom to make too big a fel bag full of alcohol. "This is where I could see Jortransfer the golf clubs to his own ir, he saw a blue Wilson duffel Frightened, Allison called Jor-. It was open. Inside were 13 cans of Natural Light dan's parents on the house phone. dan had seemed to be doing well." dan's whole dem alf-gallon of Captain Morgan credit card, Jordan hadn't piced Rum. Earl was crestfallen -- and angry. Georgette said experts had told them this was a cry for help, not necessarily a suicide attempt. Jordan went to Brooke

Early signs of depression Earl did not confront Jordan right away. He just drove him to the Glen Behavioral Hospita ring in silence, and in Fort Washington for ried to think of the best way to week. Few students at U Jordan's depression complicated be situation. Thra, Jordan's dister, first spotted Back at school, he is depression, though she didn't seemed to have a new ap

olize it. When he was a ninth grad-preciation for life. Allis r she came home from Ponn State said his snir weekend and sensed an im-Then came three on sadness in Jordan. member just crying when I sodes with alcohol. Last spring, police for school, telling him how sor-

I felt that I couldn't make him stopped a car and arrested sel better," Tara, 23, recalled. "I Jordan and the driver for Teel Detter," Tark, ZJ, reclaited, "I Jurdan and the driver for underage drinking. Jordan The depression finally burst into view in the summer of 2006, a few Life League in a finet-of-months before Jordan's 17th Birth-day, when he flipped out after fail. In August, he howied a howled and the summer failer of the source of the summer summer of the summer of the summer of the source of the modes before summer of the summer of the source of the summer of the summer of the source of the summer of the modes of the summer of the source of the his driver's test for the third party when his parents He argued with the instructor, went to Pittsburgh ever

His mother, who went to get him, fast when parents go away.

nace in a appointment wire justice using parents of away. She used in a meeting when her reference ad covering the Works She disposed depression. But does not be the second of the second se ad been warning signs: His grades cause he had violated their trust. therapist, Phillips, ad fallen: he couldn't concentrate: In accordance with school policy. She told him he



tore sirens. Lots of sirens when I saw all these per the ground, I saw Earl. II nher the shirt he had remember the shirt he has ue and white striped - and Earl also thought i fire drill. Entil he saw the

r asked Earl if he knew ened. Had the bo

ne of tragedy oung son and other chi ding to the polic she heard a load thad and and to see Burnham or

5 on his back." His left le and almost complete I his right leg," and Jorda him and was abl ne, I asked Bury

Are you They discovered Jordan had Yeah. Waded the door with his desi fou know The window - two feet by ght?" big enough for an agile teen "Yeah." nb out — was open. The "OK, beca was on the bed. &" re told Earl and Georgette to

RON TAMOR / Inquire that Photogra Earl Burnham massages Jordan's right foot before his release from the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. riving toward Philadelphia. The golitich would call to tell them Earl spent seemingly endless hours easing his son's pain from nerve damage She notic Jordan was being taken. ed strange, in moments the Barnham-"I'm not that strong. I just believe that through God I get my strength.

rastic. ttery was dying. They hope "Why ared until police called.

cs later. Jordan didn't get angry

They talked it through r a few minutes. The

7:04 - ", heard the news and o don't go pic the hospital at 9:30 p.m. Earl 7:05 - "Prr not to come right away, one needs us at 1:30 a.m." he said.

- 10 minutes away - and 7:12 - got Jordan's car. He'd be me." pite was still on the couch. "I didn't wn, and I'll need you here." After Alvas the happiest kid

ohe Marquis, the Burnham's wouldn't lotory apartment building "And I'm s of students had gathered.

¹⁰¹ with out is more result.
¹⁰¹ wit

and the old sily. Each stand, a doctor and was titisting about saided here maining branch, are seen sub-convertationer was a 60 percent chance "P part made me reality on any so that the stand seen stand and the stand seen stand and the stand seen stand and the stand seen st

"lasked why. Earl remembered her: "He'll probably be dead



That's why I believe you're going to get well.

Because of your faith in God, you're going to recover.'

Earl Burnham

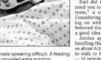
telling Jordan of his love and confidence in his son's recovery

ness profes at R.4 in college, and processes and events of the Zaraward and the Section of the S

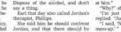
or protest. "I'm just no good," he told them. "I didn't say that," Earl

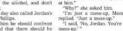
on came to understand that there had created for his father, and be Earl that day also called Jordan's

She told him he should confront



She was in a meeting when her right back

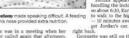






in the particular trabhorgh over-sist Earl's sick an fuller plan Jordan's tracheolony made speaking diffcuit. A feeding to walk to the high school the party, but word travels tube through his nose provided extra nutrition.





bugged. Earl did tell his son, "I

Supportive messages from friends and family adorned Jordan Burnham's room at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania Just mil

"It's hard to separate normal teenage issues and depression

issues, and know how to handle them. We tried to deal with

on his bed, he kent in touch with his friends at Lloner Merion High by texting them or



















Joey Pantoliano

Ross Szabo

Jordan Burnham speaks out on depression.

From the brink of death to D.C.'s national stage

By Michael Vitez INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

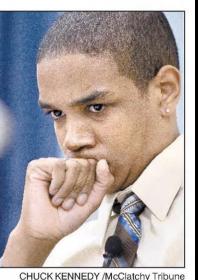
WASHINGTON — Joe "Joey Pants" Pantoliano, who won an Emmy for his portrayal of Ralphie on *The Sopranos*, spoke at a congressional briefing on the stigma of mental illness yesterday. So did the actress Marcia Gay Harden. And Minnesota Rep. Jim Ramstad.

But it was 18-year-old Jordan Burnham, sitting in his wheelchair and brushing back his tears, who received the only standing ovation for his remarks.

It has been eight months since Burnham jumped from the ninth floor of his King of Prussia apartment building in a suicide attempt he miraculously survived.

He is urging that the stigma surrounding depression and suicidal thoughts be removed.

"I'd like to share a story of two frustrated parents," he began in a hearing room in the Rayburn House Office Building, "frustrated See **TESTIMONY** on A16



CHUCK KENNEDY /McClatchy Tribune Jordan Burnham, Upper Merion High senior, added his inspiring story to a congressional briefing on mental illness.









