

# Uncommon Success

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## Bethany Hamilton – Uncommon Success and Courage

Bethany has been surfing since before she could walk. Her mother and father were active surfers along with her two older brothers. She quickly learned how to surf on the beautiful beaches of Kauai. She won the first surfing contest she entered – the beginning of her amateur surfing career. In 2002, at the Volcom Puffer Fish surfing contest she placed 1st in 14-under girls, 1st in 17-under girls, and 2nd in 12-under boys – yes boys! As of April 2002 Bethany was rated 1st in Open Women's, 2nd in Open Girls, and 2nd in Menehune Boys in the Kauai Surfing Federation.



At 13 years old, Bethany Hamilton has already achieved many of her dreams. She is an amateur surfing champion ranked No. 8 in the world and was planning on a professional surfing career. In mid October, 2003 she'd come in second in the National Scholastic Surfing Association contest on the Big Island of Hawaii.



Things changed for Bethany on Halloween morning, October 31, 2003. The day began as a typical beautiful Hawaii day. At Makua Beach, on the island of Kauai's North Shore, the water was clear and the waves were relatively gentle. Just as she did most mornings, Bethany was surfing with her best friend Alana

Blanchard and several other surfers.

Tragedy struck that morning – it struck Bethany hard and fast! At about 7:30 am, a ~14-foot shark emerged from the water below Bethany and took a 17-inch-wide bite out of her orange, white and blue surfboard. It also bit off Bethany's left arm just below the shoulder.



Bethany is recovering and is already back in the water surfing. Is her dream of becoming a professional surfer gone forever? I don't think so! Bethany has incredible courage, a positive attitude about her life and a strong spiritual belief.

**Uncommon Courage:** We all must overcome challenges in our lives – Bethany is no exception. Bethany has put years of hard work in reaching for her dreams and goals – with more hard work, courage, dedication, and encouragement, I believe her dreams will come true. You can follow her comeback story and send her an encouraging email by contacting her at [www.bethanyhamilton.com](http://www.bethanyhamilton.com). Bethany Hamilton, a story of uncommon success and courage!

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Uncommon Success is a program of the Uncommon Friends Foundation designed to inspire, motivate and empower tomorrow's leaders through character and leadership education. We help students make their dreams come true.

### Uncommon Friends Foundation

PO Box 811 - Fort Myers, FL 33902 - (239) 335-2110 - [www.uncommonfriends.org](http://www.uncommonfriends.org)

### Uncommon Success - David Boon, Director

2306 Cotswold Ct - Fort Collins, CO 80526 - (970) 484-7031 - [dave@uncommonsuccess.org](mailto:dave@uncommonsuccess.org)