



Motivational Guest Speaker Jessica Cox

Jessica Cox was born without arms. The doctors do not know why she was born “differently-abled.” But she does. Jessica has made achievements with her feet that most people only dream of. Now she shares her story with people around the world.

Born in 1983 in Sierra Vista, Arizona, Jessica has learned to live her life with her feet. There were many questions at the time about whether Jessica would be able to live a “normal” life. However, Jessica’s father has said he never shed a tear about her birth condition. He had full confidence in her potential. With the support of her parents and family, Jessica became confident in herself as an adult and continued to explore the world with her feet.

As a child, Jessica studied dance in her home town. When the first performance arrived, she asked to be put in the back row. Her dance teacher told her there was no back row. Tentatively she took the stage with the other students and performed her routine. When she finished, the applause from the audience gave her encouragement and the confidence to continue dancing for 14 years. Jessica’s parents eventually met a Taekwondo instructor named Jim Cunningham. His response when told of her birth condition was that she would be more than physically able and that only her attitude could hold her back. At the age of 14, Jessica earned her first Black Belt in the [International Taekwondo Federation](#).

After graduating from high school, Jessica attended the University of Arizona where she earned a bachelor’s degree in Psychology. When talking about her degree, she frequently explains that psychology credits the way people think has a greater impact on their lives than a physical limitation.

During college, Jessica found an [ATA Martial Arts club](#) and resumed training in the sport of Taekwondo. Even though Jessica already had one black belt in a different style, she had to relearn all of the color belt material. The instructors created a curriculum that would be accessible to any future armless students. Jessica then became the first armless person to earn a black belt in the ATA.

Jessica's most famous accomplishment was learning how to fly. It took three states, four airplanes, two flight instructors and a discouraging year to find the right aircraft: a 1946 415C [Ercoupe Airplane](#). She received the [Guinness World Record](#) for being the first person certified to fly an airplane with only their feet.

Jessica now works as a motivational speaker. Jessica enjoys continuing to take on new challenges, the latest of which are [slacklining](#) and rock climbing. She gives back to the global disability community as the [Goodwill Ambassador for the Nobel Prize winning NGO Handicap International](#). As a personal passion, she mentors children with limb differences and their parents.

Jessica's TV appearances include: Inside Edition, The Ellen Show, Beyond Belief, CNN, Fox and Friends, BBC, Power ng Pinoy, and more. She has also appeared on local stations in Greece, Ghana, Kenya, the Philippines, South Korea, China, Japan, Mexico, Russia, England, Germany, France, and Brazil.

Jessica has also been a part of numerous radio programs, podcasts, newspapers and magazines including [AOPA Pilot's Magazine](#), [Investor's Business Daily](#) and [Women Aviation International](#).

[Jessica's website](#)

[Book: Disarm Your Limits](#)

[Movie: Right Footed](#)

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