

William Richard Gibbs

October 8, 1987 ~ September 8, 2023

On Friday, September 8, 2023, our beloved son, brother and friend, William Richard Gibbs, climbed His highest earthly peak, and is now climbing to new heights unbounded by earthly limitations.

Will's smile would light up any room and make everyone around him feel happy. He always had a joke of the day or a goofy riddle handy to bring a smile. He used this affability everyday while teaching skiing at Deer Valley. While he tolerated adults, he loved teaching kids. It was the kid in him that made the kids he taught always request return lessons. Armed with his jokes and riddles he would soon have his lesson chasing through the woods to find Quincy’s Cabin or playing in Bucky’s Backyard.

Will had a passion for the outdoors. Whether it was skiing, mountain biking, surfing, hiking, wake boarding or just floating on a boat, he loved all that nature offered. He also was always on a quest for perfection. When he combined his love for skiing (or any of the other sports he enjoyed) with this quest, he would study the mechanics involved tirelessly and then practice each thing endlessly until he had mastered it. This meant endless rides down the terrain park in Park City, first learning a 360 off the jumps, then 720, then landing backwards and then doing Mistys and D Spins and nameless other tricks and sliding rails. When winter waned, you would find him at the Olympic jump park, coaching kids and flipping and spinning into the water. He never had the need to compete; he just enjoyed being on the mountain and perfecting his skill.

William had a quiet determination that allowed him to conquer many obstacles in his life. 5 years ago he was in a mountain biking accident where he suffered a spinal cord injury. After 7 hours of surgery, he awakened to the doctor’s prognosis that he would never walk again. He had no feeling or movement in his feet or legs. Believing there was still hope, he set a goal to climb to the top of Half Dome in Yosemite. Everyday, he did physical therapy and worked tirelessly on the prescribed exercises. The therapists at NeuroWorx embraced his goal and crafted therapies that helped him progress. The progress was slow and the work grueling, but he was able to accomplish this goal 1 year after his accident. This example of his belief and work ethic toward bringing that belief to fruition is how he lived his life.

Will loved helping others. He served a mission in Argentina and from that experience he learned to serve people of all walks of life and that all are equal before God. This belief formed the foundation of his life thereafter. He always had two criteria for a job; was it outside and was it helping others.

William loved adrenalin sports; skiing, surfing, mountain biking. The faster or higher the better. From the time he first learned how to ski or ride a bike, he always wanted to go faster and jump off of everything. While this was what he was known for growing up, the thing that really set him apart with people who really knew him, was his kindness, positivity, quiet demeanor, determination and ability to encourage all those with whom he came in contact.

Our Will exemplified his name throughout his life through his determination, his sheer Will to reach amazing heights, perfecting whatever he set his mind to, achieving and overcoming, prevailing! We will always find him in the peace and respite of the mountains and in the beauty of the great outdoors, always honoring and paying tribute to his extraordinary life.

Will was born October 8, 1987, in Salt Lake City, Utah to William Clark Gibbs and Elizabeth Dowell Gibbs. Will is survived by his parents and four siblings, Whitney (Brad Butler), Lauren (Lars Reber), Madeline Eliza (Nate Goldhardt), and Graham (Mary Fraser); and seven nieces and nephews.

A private celebration of William’s life will be held in September.