



If you would like to learn more about options for community transition, please contact the Marshall Habilitation Center at (660) 886-2201 or Lacie Varner at The Center for Human Services at (660) 886-4261.

9/2011

Community Membership  
New Friendships



Entrepreneurial Skills  
New Interests

Independence  
Responsibility



## Gary's Story...

Gary remembers that day, years and years ago, that his mother took him to a hospital in St. Louis, Missouri because of his "problems". Gary describes these "problems" as feelings of rage, anger, and hopelessness that he was unable to explain or control in any way. His mother was unable to care for him and he was placed in the Marshall Habilitation Center (MHC) where he lived for many years.



Gary described himself as being unable to navigate difficult situations and feelings and that no matter how hard he tried his "problems" followed him. But Gary had a strong desire to be "on his own" and as independent as possible. With the support of his staff at Marshall, his mother, and his sister, Gary set out to gain the independence he dreamed of. An opportunity presented itself and Gary began the process of integrating into the community.

However this first attempt at community living proved to be unsuccessful. His weight and eating habits spiraled out of control, followed by his temper and lack of focus. Gary became angry and withdrawn and was placed back at the MHC. He felt like he had failed. Gary said that's when he decided to meet his "problems" that had long been pulling him down "head on".

In 2005 Gary moved from Marshall to the Finck & Associates ISL in Fulton, Missouri. In the six years that Gary has been living in Fulton he has conquered many of the milestones he once thought impossible. Gary is a valued and trusted employee at Kingdom Projects. He is called on by his supervisor often to step up to challenging duties and has worked his way up to being a part of the "road crew" that maintains rest areas along I-70, a prestigious position that only few employees ever achieve. Gary has developed entrepreneurial skills and mows lawns for some 15-20 families in his community. Gary has made many friends in his neighborhood and is often planning BBQs and outings with his friends.

As part of his plan Gary is an active member of the local YMCA as well as competing in Special Olympics athletics. Gary no longer turns to food when he is upset, he instead utilizes exercise as well as talking things out with his many friends and staff as a way to cope.

Gary's new found coping skills were put to the ultimate test in October of 2010 when his beloved sister passed away unexpectedly. This was devastating for Gary. This relationship with his mother and sister has always been a driving force in his life. Gary utilized the support of his staff, friends, and family to get through this tragic time.

Gary has come a long way in his quest for a responsible and independent lifestyle. He says he's not done yet! He is striving for more and more everyday and is looking forward to what life has in store for him!

## Susie's Story....

Susie transitioned to Sister's Supportive Living in 2005 and the victory she experiences daily was not easy or immediate. The transition demanded love, patience, dedication, determination and structure. With input from Susie, her parents, case managers, her guardian, the home coordinator and workshop staff, her individual plan was amended numerous times to shape successful community inclusion.



Susie's first few years were rocky, but she was given the opportunity to learn her new found access at the home and sheltered workshop. Susie and her team met weekly and sometimes daily to develop incentives for making appropriate choices. Her plan was continually revised to include behavior plans and to allow her to make her own choices and learn valuable life lessons, particularly since some of her actions resulted in suspensions from the workshop.

With assistance of one-on-one staff she eventually returned to the workshop. She learned to fight the urge to consume extra calories, follow her diet and to adhere to the workshop regulations.

Susie also worked to improve peer relationships and has made many new friends. She met a boyfriend with whom she developed a dating relationship. They occasionally set up lunch dates and often attend planned parties or functions together. Susie goes home two weekends a month to visit with her mom and dad.

Susie has learned responsibility in other areas as well. When she first moved to her new home she was not an organized person. Now, her bedroom is organized and she independently cleans and rearranges it each week.

She takes pride in her appearance and has grown her hair out so she can wear headbands or hair clips and she loves to wear earrings and makeup. Susie exercises daily at the YMCA or walks in her neighborhood to complete her exercise goals. Each year, she participates in Special Olympics track and bowling and attends Camp Wonderland.

Susie is a good example to her peers and others. She has transitioned into a more grateful, loving, caring individual, ever learning and striving to be triumphant in her day-to-day living.