



# MISSION MOMENTS

## ...made possible by YOU!

### *A Second Chance*

Many of us don't think about communicating with others or how easy it comes to us. How often do we experience barriers to communication, where we don't speak the same language as someone, or can't understand what someone is trying to tell us?

Stephanie is one individual for whom communication was a barrier, but found a way out of isolation through Tangram's services.

Stephanie attended the Kentucky School for the Deaf until her sophomore year. After this, she lived in a facility from 2004-2015, where she probably didn't communicate regularly or meaningfully with staff members who oversaw her care. Stephanie is largely non-verbal, and during this time, she lost some of the American Sign Language (ASL) that she might have learned and used while at the Kentucky School for the Deaf, due to the fact that most of the people around her did not sign.



Bobbie (left) and Stephanie (right)

When she moved out and began receiving services through Tangram in April 2015, she was using simple gestures and "home sign" to communicate, she had few independent living skills, and she had several aggressive behaviors.

Over the past year and a half, Stephanie has reduced behaviors that had been barriers to her success, has worked closely with Tangram staff to develop independent living skills, and now attends a day program.

Most importantly, Stephanie has rebuilt her communication skills. In June 2015, Bobbie, a volunteer who is deaf and has a degree in social work, approached Tangram about offering ASL classes to clients and staff to help break down barriers to communication.

Bobbie volunteers an average of 5 hours per month and has made significant strides with both staff members and clients. Stephanie has restored and increased her ASL skills and developed independent living skills through her work with Bobbie.

Bobbie's passion is working with individuals with disabilities and she has proven to be a volunteer who goes above and beyond to ensure that those served by Tangram have the best shot at success. Before going on vacation last year, she volunteered more than double the amount of time she typically gives so that clients wouldn't experience any gaps in their ASL lessons. In addition to giving ASL lessons, Bobbie also serves as a great role model for Stephanie and Tangram's other deaf clients, who may not have had much exposure to other deaf people or deaf culture before coming to Tangram.



The impact of Tangram's services and Bobbie's outstanding volunteer work is readily visible in Stephanie's increased communication with others and her overall improvement in self-confidence. With Tangram's support, Stephanie has found a second chance to become her true self.

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