

Mission Moments

Made Possible By YOU!

Edition 57, February 2021

Major Moves

A wheelchair can be the difference between dependence and independence for people with mobility disabilities. This was true for Kurt. When he pinched a nerve, ongoing pain made it difficult for him to walk, so he started using a wheelchair.

While Kurt's wheelchair allowed him to maintain his independence, it also required him to trust those around him to help transfer him in and out of the chair. As a Deaf individual, there is often a communication barrier between Kurt and those around him, which made it difficult for him to build trusting relationships. Additionally, Kurt had less pain when he was using his wheelchair.



A triumphant Kurt in his recliner

All these factors led to Kurt spending most of his time in his wheelchair, even sleeping with his wheelchair instead of a bed. Jovonna, his Tangram Program Manager, says that Kurt hasn't slept in a bed for about 15 years. "Ever since I have worked with him (about two years), it has been a goal for him to get out of his wheelchair and into a bed. We tried a lot of different ways to make that happen—bought a new hospital bed for him, a new massaging recliner, and they even put me in the Hoyer lift," she explained.



Kurt and his son, JD

But the magic moment came when Kurt's son, JD, became a Tangram DSP and could help Kurt's team communicate what to expect when it came to the transfer process. JD is fluent in American Sign Language, which is Kurt's first language. With JD's help, Kurt and his team were able to achieve his long-time goal of getting out of his wheelchair. Kurt spent 30 minutes in his massaging recliner. Jovonna was overjoyed with this accomplishment, exclaiming, "You don't know how exciting this is for us as his team!"

Kurt's Behavior Consultant, Ruth, echoed this excitement, saying that for Kurt's son to be there and help with this was awesome. "I couldn't have orchestrated it better. It's perfect."

Kurt now knows that anything is possible and he will continue to work toward his goal of sleeping in a bed. Not only has his quality of life significantly improved, but he has so much to be proud of. We can't wait to see more great things from Kurt!

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