



Easterseals

ALL ABILITIES. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

TN

During the pandemic, Easterseals Tennessee members are adapting well to the modifications in their lives, thanks to the positive and endearing influence of Easterseals Tennessee program staff.

Stay safe and stay positive

David, an Easterseals TN member has been taking advantage of the safer at home phase to work on appliances, computers, cars, and engines of all types. His workmanship has earned him the designation of "electronics guru" among the ESTN Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), his roommates, and in his neighborhood. All support his hobby and handiwork that is keeping him safe, busy, and productive during this unprecedented time.

David is tech savvy, and seems to have the ability to build, restore, or repair anything he desires. David is self-taught and excels in computer installation and programming, along with car electronics and audio equipment overhaul, just to name a few.

The DSPs that support David and his friends are in awe of his expertise. Recently, David took an old vacuum that he found and completely rebuilt it. He also added to a well-worn grill a new leg and replaced some rusty parts inside the pit. Both the vacuum and the grill work like new and are currently in use. His ability to refurbish small appliances and equipment and share them with others exemplifies his community spirit. His 2nd shift DSP, Sherry, describes David's ability in one word, "Amazing!" David and his Easterseals TN job coach are making note of his electronic projects with the prospect of one day enabling David to take his trade exam in order to obtain his electronics license. Ultimately, David wants to expand his hobby into a business and become employed as an licensed electrician.

In his spare time, David is all about music and loves to DJ his favorite songs, which he often combines with his homemade and distinct colored light show extravaganza for a "picture-perfect" concert production. In addition, during the pandemic, David spent quality time constructing a transmitter out of a wooden box and adding paint and hardware so it would be event ready. (David's transmitter has all the components and looks of a professional transmitter. Also, he is very proud because he ordered most of the parts off the internet and saved several hundred dollars by designing and building the receiver from scratch.) With resolve, David wants to be prepared after COVID19 directives lessen to resume his sideline dream job of being a disc jockey at community events and friends' parties.

When David is not working on an electronic projects, his roommates will find him on the patio enjoying grilling for friends. With regards to our present circumstances, David is the first to let you know that everyone is currently practicing social distancing at his cookouts.

Fascinated by his determination, each of his DSPs brag that David has always taken the Easterseals TN Independent Living Skills program very seriously which has contributed to his capacity to multi-task and succeed. As a matter of fact, David is notorious for not asking for assistance because he prides himself on doing everything on his own.

Discovery and innovation are reshaping the world, and Easterseals TN is proud of David and his interests in technology because he shares his abilities with everyone in hopes of making his community a better place to live.



David finalizes the frame around his newly built transmitter.

Time Spent With Members Boosts Responsibility and Relationships

During the past few months, Easterseals TN Home Managers and Direct Support Professional (DSPs) have provided happiness and security during the safe at home directives in order to engage, mentor, and build stronger connections with members.

At the onset of this unprecedented time when members were unable to participate in community activities and in many cases unable to go to work, residential staff had a lot more one on one time with members. Fortunately, they recognized the opportunity to get better acquainted with each individual member and his/her personality and disposition. Their resourcefulness has been very beneficial to all involved.

Ryan, a new member of the Easterseals TN Residential Living Program, is a notable example of the positive impact that community "time apart" has generated. Initially, when Ryan began receiving supported living services within Easterseals TN at the cusp of the pandemic, he was very quiet and somewhat withdrawn. Ryan was content to be alone in his bedroom away from others. His DSPs took the "alone together" time to get to know Ryan, in conjunction with his likes and dislikes. In response, Ryan began to trust others more willingly, and to enjoy their company. Subsequently, Ryan eventually traded his time spent in his bedroom by hanging out in the living room with his roommate and DSPs.

As time passed, Ryan started to focus on cooking, as well as, participating in household chores. In addition, one DSP discovered Ryan's affinity for animals; therefore, as Tennessee communities opened up, she introduced him to visiting and volunteering at a neighborhood animal shelter. Enamored with his time spent there and after parental approval, Ryan and his roommate adopted a kitten. Ryan is currently learning to care for and feed the new pet.

Another of his DSPs have taken steps to introduce Ryan to other fun activities in the community, such as swimming while social distancing. His newfound responsibility of being a pet owner, combined with his newly revealed social enthusiasm, has given Ryan a sense of belonging and a sense of accomplishment.

Ryan is thriving, due to the foresight and compassion of his DSPs. His experience illustrates the power and ingenuity of DSPs to create new possibilities for members, no matter what is happening in the outside world.



Ryan is getting to know his new cat.

Volunteers Dedicated to Easterseals Tennessee

In Memoriam - Samuel H. Howard – Easterseals TN Emeritus

It is with deep respect and appreciation that we recognize the legacy of our friend and advocate, Samuel H. Howard, of Nashville, TN. Mr. Howard held Emeritus status with Easterseals Tennessee after serving as a board member from 1993-1997, and holding the offices of treasurer, secretary, and chairman.

At the national level, Mr. Howard represented Easterseals Tennessee as a member of the Easterseals National House of Delegates in 1994-2003. Elected to Easterseals National Board of Directors in 1998, he served on many committees during his tenure. He also served as chairman of the National board from 2001-2003. In October 2012, he was elected as a lifetime board member for Easterseals TN, and had continued serving as a member of the Executive Evaluation and Compensation Committee.



Throughout his career Sam Howard was a renowned businessman and esteemed veteran of Nashville health care industry. He worked as an executive with Meharry Medical College, and HCA Healthcare, among others. As an entrepreneur, Howard formed and led Xantus Corporation, a TennCare HMO, and until his passing owned Phoenix Holdings, Inc., a health care focused investment holding company.

In addition, he has been a member or board director of numerous local organizations including Nashville Electric Service, the Leadership Nashville Foundation and United Way. He served as the chairman of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Urban League of Middle Tennessee. Howard was founder and director of 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee.

As a result of Howard's business, civic, and philanthropic leadership, Easterseals Tennessee honored him as the 1998 Nashvillian of the Year. Samuel Howard's ability and hard work will be missed; however his contributions will be felt in many communities for years to come.



Tim Ryerson

President and CEO Corner

Easterseals TN Offers Zoom To High School Students

Even though COVID19 continues to impact services, Easterseals TN pressed forward with a focus to enhance offerings in a unique way to high school students. One program in particular was the Pre-Employment Transitional Services (Pre-ETS) offered in 5 school systems thru Easterseals TN. Pre-ETS main focus is to discover, explore and assist with acquiring skills tailored to student employment needs before graduating from high school. When COVID19 hit and school systems started closing, Easterseals TN quickly gained approval by the State of TN to offer services thru Zoom for continued engagement and support to high school students needing some extra assistance. With the population Easterseals TN supports, Zoom enabled our staff to continue learning options for those in the program this past spring and summer. Thanks to dedicated staff, Pre-ETS students continued their supports without a gap.

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