

Creating Possibilities

Empower
SUMMER | 2023

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David was a completely independent, active, and social father, Naval Reservist, and husband when his life changed out of the blue.

David was helping a friend remove a tree and had climbed up into the branches when he experienced a stroke.

This sudden event shocked David and his family because he was only in his early 40s at the time. David served in the Navy for 17.5 years with several overseas deployments. He was still in the reserves and thinking about deploying again. As a civilian, he was working as the Maintenance Supervisor at the Mitsubishi chemical plant. He worked on cars for fun, and also painted and sketched as a way to calm and re-center. However, all of this changed when the

David's New Voice.

stroke took away his speech and his strength and mobility on the right side of his body.

Initially, he expected to have a fast and promising recovery due to his young age; however, his progress quickly plateaued. He was unable to return to work and do many of the hobbies he once enjoyed. On top of the physical challenges, David faced new social challenges. Many of David's friendships dwindled because he was not able to talk with them. This social change proved to be the most difficult obstacle for him.

David enrolled at Turnstone for speech therapy shortly after his stroke. After learning more about Turnstone's comprehensive services, he began receiving physical and occupational therapies. Thanks to his persistence with his Turnstone therapy team, he saw great progress in his mobility

and went from using a wheelchair, to walking without assistance! In speech therapy, he has started experimenting with an alternative augmented communication (AAC) device, but primarily communicates using gestures and other non-verbal cues. Though he made progress physically and in his communication, the social isolation had not yet improved.

After graduating from occupational and physical therapy, he was referred to Turnstone's Fitness and Aquatic Center and Adult Day Services. These programs allowed David to socialize and maintain his progress. In the Fitness Center, David works out independently using the adaptive strength training equipment and follows a workout plan that was created for him by Turnstone's specially trained fitness staff. In the Adult Day Services program, David socializes with a new group of friends

and enjoys activities like painting, cooking, trivia, and card games.

"[David] has made friends and the staff is so patient in communicating with him and trying to figure out what he is trying to say. He can go down the hall and say hello to everyone. In the beginning, when he had his stroke, there was no one around but, ever since starting here, he looks forward to it because he has a group of friends again," said David's wife, Kim.

Well-known at Turnstone for his artistic abilities, David adapted his painting technique after his stroke. He transitioned from painting with his dominant right hand to his left and found a new voice through his art. He regularly has the opportunity to hone his skills through Adult Day Services' arts programming where his paintings, once only painted in black, white and grey, now bloom with colors. This is a

testament to the positive transformation in his mental health.

"David has been involved in a lot of programs here at Turnstone, but no matter what activity he has been involved in, all of the staff is nice, friendly, patient, and understanding. He was taken into the tribe almost immediately. He became friends with everyone right away," said Kim.

David is still a motivated and active individual who knows exactly what he wants out of life. Now, at Turnstone, he has found a place where he can enthusiastically, and independently, pursue his goals. Where the skies were one grey, David decided to paint them blue. Though some clients measure their success at Turnstone through their physical results, David's success can be measured by his newfound friendships and the joy he spreads all through the building.



Cole's Shot.

The journey for a basketball player to make their first basket can feel like a long road. Just like every athlete's first, making a basket requires hours of practice and determination.

For Cole, he started his journey to that milestone at the age of four when he was introduced to Turnstone.

Throughout his many years at Turnstone, Cole has collected many fond memories of the different services he was involved in. From playing in the Kimbrough Early Learning Center (KELC) and practicing skills with the therapy team to meeting new friends through wheelchair basketball, Cole has grown up at Turnstone. In KELC, Cole socialized with a diverse group of kids of all abilities and learned the fundamentals which set him up to become a successful student. His time in therapy taught him how to navigate and adapt to different situations. But most of all, Cole has done much of his personal development at Turnstone as a wheelchair basketball athlete.

Even as a toddler, Cole demonstrated a strong level of commitment to basketball. Wheelchair basketball became his passion, a sport that defied all limitations and grew his strong character. Turnstone's Sports and Rec Manager, Kevin, introduced





Cole to basketball which started his successful athletic career and was the first step to making his first basket.

"I remember being new to coaching and seeing the potential in him at such a young age. I knew if he kept it up, then he would surpass all expectations, which he did," said Kevin. Kevin acted as a mentor and coach, teaching Cole the fundamentals of basketball and encouraging him to challenge himself.

"I used to pace with [Cole] in our Fort4Fitness training and at times I wasn't sure who was pacing who. He would take the lead."

After a few years of learning the basics and running drills, Cole finally made his first basket at 8 years old. Though it is his favorite Turnstone memory, Cole continued to build off of this moment, which led to many other notable achievements.

Now, as a teen, Cole has accomplished many milestones and is laying the foundation for a successful future. One of his proudest accomplishments is becoming a starting player on the wheelchair basketball team. Cole's success at Turnstone has included

earning countless All-Academic Conference Athlete titles; participating on numerous nationally-recognized teams both on the prep and varsity level; and being a starting player for several years. Beyond the skills and titles, Cole also developed meaningful friendships with teammates and coaches.

"I have a lot of basketball teammates who helped me come out of my shell more. Kevin is a big one—he's one of my go-to people for advice... whether it's for basketball or for just daily life," said Cole. "I am going to be driving soon so I asked him a lot about how to navigate in a car and how to best to maneuver my chair."

What started as a first basket, has turned into a successful athletic career filled with supportive friends. Cole's determination and persistence continues to push him further in life—including his next big milestone of choosing a university that will support new and endless possibilities for the future. Thanks to our generous community of supporters, Turnstone remains a place for clients like Cole to discover their abilities and ignite their passions. 🌟



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2023 - 2024



Upcoming Events

Board of Directors' Gala

| October 5, 2023

Help us celebrate Turnstone's 80th Birthday in style! The sparkles and suits get brought out for Turnstone's signature fundraising event hosted by the Turnstone Board of Directors. This event features dinner, and unique live and silent auctions. A special 'Mission Moment' is shared by a Turnstone client, which always proves to be the highlight of this extraordinary evening.

Giving Tuesday

| November 28, 2023

This #GivingTuesday, we won't be able to do it without YOU. We need your help to ensure people with disabilities continue to have access to the services and resources offered through Turnstone to support their quality of life.

Thank you to our Annual Sponsors



*All event dates and times subject to change. For the most up-to-date information about tournaments and volunteer opportunities, visit us at [Turnstone.org](https://turnstone.org)

Casino Night

| February 16, 2024

Fort Wayne's favorite fundraiser, Casino Night! Hosted by Turnstone, proceeds to this event will go towards supporting Turnstone's programs, services, and mission to empower people with disabilities. This evening is full of food, drinks, a variety of casino-style games, and other fun activities! And - you could bring home something new from our basket raffles and silent auction.

Center Stage

| June 6, 2024

Coming back for a third year, 'Center Stage: Fort Wayne's Premier Talent Show' will feature local performing artists of all talents and abilities at the Clyde Theatre on Thursday, June 6, 2023. Stay tuned for more details to follow.

*Contact us at 260.483.2100 or rena@turnstone.org to learn more about sponsorship opportunities including event sponsorships.



Join the PEP Club and belong to a special group of monthly donors who are committed to making a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. For more information about Turnstone's PEP Club and exclusive benefits, you can visit turnstone.org/donate/pepclub, scan the QR code below or contact rena@turnstone.org.

[Turnstone.org/Donate/PEPclub](https://turnstone.org/donate/PEPclub)



A NOTE FROM THE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mike Mushett

The promise of potential is a powerful force that propels us forward, and it is this very promise that lies at the heart of Turnstone's mission.

In this edition of the EMPOWER newsletter, we are thrilled to share stories about two individuals in our community who have demonstrated the true essence of perseverance and resilience: Cole and David. Their journeys exemplify the transformative power of providing hope and opportunity.

Cole's story of perseverance reminds us that challenges are opportunities in disguise. With the support of Turnstone and our dedicated staff, he not only overcame obstacles but also thrived, proving that with determination and support, possibilities can become realities. David's story is a testament to the unwavering spirit that resides within all of us. Despite unexpected challenges, David emerged stronger and more resilient than ever, highlighting the incredible capacity of the human spirit to adapt, endure, and triumph.

Together, as the Turnstone Family, comprised of our clients, devoted staff, volunteers, and donors, we share a vision of a more inclusive and compassionate world. It is your unwavering support that makes it possible for us to create a world where all individuals, regardless of their abilities, are valued and their achievements celebrated.

— Mike



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