

Mission: Possible

Dan Brendemuhl has grown up surrounded by love. He lives on his family's farm with his parents and brothers and is blessed to have a very close-knit extended family. Like most guys his age, Dan enjoys sports, both watching and participating, he loves to fish and enjoys walking with the deer hunters. Dan has always been a busy young man, so, when waived funding slots opened up in 2001, his family signed him up and chose CCRI to be their provider and, as stated by his mom Diane, "have watched Dan blossom into a wonderful human being ever since."

"What CCRI has done for Dan is something we as parents could never do", says Diane, "what teenager wants to be seen with their mom and dad all the time out in public teaching them, correcting them, showing them the way? CCRI has been the glue that has put the puzzle pieces of Dan's life together!" What Dan has learned in school and at home has been put to use and practiced out in the community and



Dan Brendemuhl

There are more than 400,000 people living with Down Syndrome in the U.S. Life expectancy for people with Down Syndrome has increased from 25 years in 1983 to 60 years today.

One in every 691 babies is born with Down Syndrome.

The chance of having a child with down Syndrome increases with the mother's age, however, 80% of occurrences are in women under the age of 35.

the real world with Dan's caregivers. They teach too, but they bring it all together in ways that are fun and functional for Dan. Dan has a caregiver approximately 45 hours per month. With the support of his caregiver, Dan is able to participate in many community activities while practicing both life and social skills; bowling, Y workouts, swimming lessons, dances, sporting events. Best stated my Dan's mom, "CCRI caregivers are helping Dan become a very well-rounded young man."

Diane states the staff and services provided by CCRI have been "exceptional and above and beyond what we had anticipated. We have a high confidence and comfort level with Dan's caregivers knowing that his personal safety and well being are their top priority. We are very grateful for all they have done for Dan. He is the young man he is today because they met his needs and made it feel like a family effort and not just a staff effort." It was this comfort level that prompted a very spiritual opportunity for Dan.

Every year at their church, Christ the King, mission trips are offered for children in grades 7 thru 12. Dan's brother Adam had signed up to go on a mission trip to Puerto Rico. Diane and her husband Wayne had toyed with the idea of Dan going too, but did not want Adam to have to be responsible for Dan even though they knew he could be a great asset for Dan on the trip. They visited with their church staff and were pleased with the immediate answer of "yes, Dan can go"! For the trip to be successful, they knew that someone who knew Dan well would have to accompany him. They visited with Seth Dahle, his caregiver at CCRI, to see his interest. Seth states that he "was honored and excited to have an opportunity to go on this trip with Dan." Diane visited with Rebecca See, Dan's Clay County Coordinator, and Dan's team started the process of making the trip happen! Clay County Social Services and CCRI worked together to make sure that Dan could go on this important mission with the support of a 24-hour caregiver—Seth.



Dan and crew check out the beach in Puerto Rico



Dan and Seth in Puerto Rico

It took months to prepare Dan for the trip, stated Diane, "Wayne and I, Dan's brother Adam and Adam's friend Travis, along with Seth, talked about and primed Dan for the trip—from the bus ride, plane ride, working with and helping others in need, to being part of a group of friends, worshipping and doing God's work and even about going to the beach. We had to keep pumping him up with the various scenarios of the trip." Seth made sure to get a lot of "face time" in with Dan so Dan would be comfortable with him. He also shared his excitement about the trip with Dan. As the trip got closer Dan got more and more excited for it!

Diane shared that Seth's role on the trip was to help Dan with some of his personal needs, assist Dan in being a servant to God, help with his money and monitor him 24 hours a day but mostly be a friend and big brother to Dan. Seth would also be responsible for leading a small group of mission kids in the community. Dan was placed in a group with Adam,

Travis and several others. Seth advocated that Dan volunteer with children and from there the work began.



Dan cherished his swimming time

and discuss the highs and lows of their day. Dan's low was always that there was not enough swimming. Seth shared that "this trip was an amazing opportunity to see Dan in an environment that would make anyone nervous and it was a blessing to see how he reacted and how he made the trip better for everyone."

The week the group was in Puerto Rico was extremely hot and humid and no air conditioning was available. Dan's mom commented on how none of the kids complained about the conditions upon their arrival home because they had so much going on in their minds, hearts and souls.

When the bus pulled into Moorhead at midnight, Seth shared that everyone was tired and a little down that the trip had come to an end. The Youth Leader, Kurt, asked Dan if he would like to be the first one off the bus. Dan flew off the bus, ran full steam and threw his arms around his mom in a big bear hug shouting "Mom, Mom, Mom"! Diane shared that she was told by many it was a "touch-the-heart" life-loving moment for many. Seth said it was "the biggest hug that I had ever seen, an amazing moment and the perfect end to the trip."

"What I have seen from Dan after the trip are a stronger feeling of self worth and pride, of really becoming and being part of a group. He was accepted and treasured and loved for the wonderful person he is. I was proud of him for taking the challenge of stretching his wings and not wondering where we were, of living in conditions that were probably way out of his comfort zone, and of being of service

Seth explained that the mission work consisted of "working with children and teenagers with a tougher background than what most of us had experienced. Dan did a wonderful job of interacting with the children and teens and everyone seemed to build a connection with him." The language barrier for the group was a challenge for most, but for Dan it didn't seem to faze him. He was amazing at making everyone laugh and smile and was a true asset to the team. Seth shared that Dan was willing to follow the group anywhere and never seemed nervous. It was his ability to be flexible that allowed the group to really relax and make a real impact with the community. Every night the entire group would gather for devotions



Dan and fellow members of the mission team take a break and relax with one of the "locals"

to others whose needs were greater than his own. When I watch Dan at church it is plain to see that he is just one of the guys and in my very being I feel a difference in those who were on the trip with Dan too... a genuine 'wow' for Dan, and not only of acceptance, but a hey, you are really cool Dan! Dan exudes that too, he is comfortable in his own skin and he knows he belongs, he is a fountain of smiles when he is with the kids from the group."

Parents shared with Diane about how much their children enjoyed the trip and many told her that their kids had said that Dan made the whole trip awesome. One parent shared that her daughter was planning on going into education after graduation this spring, but because of Dan she was going to go into special education. Her daughter just loved Dan, and he was, for her, "the best part of her trip." Another parent shared that her son said that "Dan always smiled! No matter how tired he was or what we were doing he always had a smile on his face. He also loved to make us laugh and played a game with us where we would call out any animal and Dan could make the sound—even a buffalo. We all laughed and he was so proud to have made us giggle. Dan is a GREAT guy!"



Dan loved to monkey around with local kids

After the trip, Diane and Wayne invited Seth over to their home so he could share his pictures. Diane enjoyed seeing the trip through Seth's eyes. "It was so natural for Seth to be on the trip with Dan because Dan sees him as a friend and big brother rather than a paid staff person—perhaps this was the most important thing to celebrate."

Dan and Seth shared their gratitude with the entire congregation at Christ the King on Mission Sunday. Seth read a few scriptures and Dan stood by his side. It was a proud moment for all and a great way to wrap up their adventure.



Dan and Seth enjoying some Puerto Rican hospitality

Dan's experience is a good example of CCRI's mission of enhancing and enriching the lives and learning of people with disabilities. We were thrilled to be able to provide the support that he needed to be successful on the trip.

Often a person expects that a mission trip will be the beginning of a journey that will change their life while helping others. Few people expect to make a large impact on those sharing their journey—Dan certainly did both.

CCRI & TNT Kid's Fitness Team up With a Bang



Kahlid enjoys some time in “the pit”

Last year CCRI teamed up with TNT Kid's Fitness to start an adaptive fitness program giving CCRI clients access to a fitness program that is unique and fun for them. At TNT Kid's Fitness, clients get to utilize the cardio equipment, floor trampolines, foam pits, swings, and many other items that provide sensory input and physical activity to those that need it. CCRI and TNT staff work together to determine what a client's abilities are and help develop a custom routine for their time there.

Since the environment at TNT is much more stimulating than the environment at home, many clients are more successful at completing their range-of-motion exercises and are more engaged in the process. Many participants have developed better muscle elasticity and two are now holding their head



Nate helps Rebecca off the trampoline after a session of bouncing

up more easily than they could prior to starting at TNT. The ability to complete range-of-motion exercises in a way that strengthens the muscles in their neck is an opportunity they haven't had before.

The workouts are more successful at TNT due to the way clients respond to the



Sara enjoys the pedaling part of her workout

trainers. For example, Nate Hendrickson, TNT Director, has some clients working on the weight machine and to motivate them to complete reps, will wrestle with them between reps. Nate has gotten one client to speak the word “wrestle”—something caregivers at home have never been able to get him to say. Wrestling time is a very treasured part of the routine for those clients.

It is evident that this is a wonderful program that clients truly enjoy and, thanks to donors, is one that clients can afford to continue.

CCRI Makes Due With Change

Over the past few years there have been compounding cuts to our industry due to the financial constraints of local, state and federal funding. In 2009, we received annual cuts totaling \$390,000 and, as predicted, the 2011 legislature handed down additional cuts totaling \$281,000. This is a grand total of \$671,000 in annual cuts on a \$12 million dollar budget. Even more discerning is the financial forecast for the state and nation over the few next years—things don't look like they will improve by the 2013 legislative cycle. The government services that we have all come to depend on are going to change as our government is making it clear that current service funding levels are not sustainable. CCRI is being proactive and is preparing for further cuts and service changes.

While this all sounds progressively more depressing, the bright side is that the state's current economic crisis has caused us to reevaluate the ways in which we serve people and implement creative options to maintain the level of service CCRI is known for. It is clear that the government cannot afford to continue doing "business as usual." CCRI leaders saw this crisis coming five years ago and started making changes while things were going well so that CCRI could be ready. One of the changes made consisted of realigning and reorganizing departments and CCRI continues to do so—you will see some major changes in SLS for 2012. CCRI also transitioned many one- and two-person SLS sites into four-person homes and will continue to focus on moving people who

can be successful into four-person homes in the future. The budget crisis also forced us to reduce accruals for vacation and sick leave and continue to freeze wages. CCRI strives to look for ways to maintain a high level of service while working with less funding from government agencies.



Currently this region funds 24-hour services or hourly individualized services with no "middle of the road" services offered. The state needs additional, cheaper service models developed to reduce the state's dependence on corporate foster care (SLS) for people who don't need 24-hour care. Many CCRI clients with mild disabilities could be successful living independently with slightly more help than hourly services can provide. They often fail on their own and end up over-served in 24-hour services.

CCRI is in the process of starting a new program that supports men and women with disabilities in living safely and independently. This new "middle of the road" service model is necessary to serve people better and use our limited resources to benefit more people. This exciting program involves 10–14 apartments in an existing multi-unit complex with a paid live-in professional caregiver. Clients will share an apartment with a roommate and CCRI will monitor them using a new automated sensing technology system. The system will improve safety, enhance quality of life and increase the options for greater independence for individuals requiring support. The technology provides a wide variety of coordinated

sensors to provide a complete package of custom monitoring tailored to meet the unique needs of the individuals we serve. The system continually monitors activity, or lack of, through a 24/7 response center to ensure that individuals are safe. For example, if a person needs supervision with administering medication, sensors will be placed on the medication cabinet. If the medication cabinet is not opened when it should be, the system will call the on-site caregiver provided by CCRI who will respond to the alarms and general client concerns and needs.

Add-on services will be available and could include a caregiver coming into a person's home for a specified number of support hours. The number of support hours will be based on

what the individual needs to learn for greater independence. Training could include cooking, cleaning, managing medications, budgeting money and caring for themselves.

Clients can participate in the program for as little as six months or indefinitely depending on their abilities and needs. As the client masters skills, the number of caregiver hours could be reduced. If participants are ready to live independently they can stay right in their existing apartment and the monitoring equipment will be removed.

While cuts aren't enjoyable to anyone, they do force change upon us which can provide new and exciting opportunities and isn't always bad...just different.

Help Make a House a Home

CCRI ARMHS (Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services) is designed to assist people who have a mental health diagnosis learn skills to successfully integrate into the community.

Referrals often come from area homeless shelters and include individuals and families. Often, people in this

situation find themselves with no financial stability or source of income. CCRI may assist someone who is homeless in obtaining necessary resources and connects them to other community services.

We assist people in identifying and meeting their personal goals. When someone is

homeless and finally able to unlock the door to their new home, it brings a sense of accomplishment. However, they often have only the clothes on their back and no means to make their house a home. Imagine not having a bed, pots and pans to cook in, or even a shower curtain to take a shower.

We are in need of the following items—whether new or slightly used these items will enhance the lives of those that are just getting their life back.

Bathroom items

Towels, wash cloths, rugs, shower curtains, shower curtain hooks, toilet brushes, toilet paper

Bedroom items:

Beds, sheets, pillows, blankets, night stands, lamps, dressers, and mattress pads

Household Supplies

Dish soap, laundry detergent, bleach, household cleaners, mops, brooms, dustpans, vacuums, laundry baskets

Furniture

Chairs, end tables, lamps, coffee tables, televisions, radios, kitchen tables

Kitchen items:

Dish cloths and towels, bowls, cookware, silverware, coffee pots, plates, cooking utensils, can openers, toasters, etc.

Contact Carmel at 218-331-2009 for drop off information. If you want us to do the shopping, just send a check.



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The mission of CCRI is to enhance and enrich the lives and learning of people with disabilities.

The vision of CCRI is to provide an environment where people of all abilities may experience life's possibilities.

DMF and Impact Foundation Help Donors Give Big

To encourage greater and more effective charitable giving, Dakota Medical Foundation and Impact Foundation are giving individuals who donate online at www.impactgiveback.org an opportunity to win one of ten \$500 grants to an approved nonprofit organization of their choice. Between now and December 31, 2011, every person who makes a charitable online contribution will get their name entered into a drawing for one of the \$500 grants. Each individual contribution receives an entry into the drawing. Qualifying organizations are found under the "donate what I can" section of the website and, yes, CCRI just happens to be one of the eligible organizations.

**Save
the
Date**



**Feb.
14
2012**



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