

Patrick Seveland

I nominate Patrick Seveland for his outstanding achievements in 2004 in academics, horseback riding and community service. In addition, Patrick is a charming, outgoing, articulate, fun-loving young man who will become a well-respected member of society.

Patrick had been diagnosed with ADHD since kindergarten. However, Patrick was not placed in Special Education until he was 16 years old. At 16 years of age, Patrick's reading and math skills were at a 2nd - 3rd Grade level, despite the fact that he is of average intellectual ability. Marc Lewkowicz, Ph.D., who performed a Neuropsychological Evaluation on Patrick in 2004 stated that Patrick was the worst case of school neglect that he had ever seen. Dr. Lewkowicz added that it was remarkable that Patrick attended school at all.

I became Patrick's mentor in the summer of 2003. I was participating in the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency, Children's Services, Foster Youth Mentor Program and had been assigned a 15 year old girl, K.C. After I had been mentoring K.C. for a few months, K.C. mentioned that she had a friend, Patrick, who was also in foster care and who would like to have a mentor. As Patrick was about to leave foster care, he was not eligible for a mentor under the Foster Youth Mentor Program, so I agreed to mentor Patrick on an informal basis. I have been Patrick's mentor every since. We get together on a weekly basis.

It is a pleasure to participate in activities with Patrick. He is enthusiastic and appreciative. We go horseback riding, watch movies, have meals together and most, importantly, talk. In addition, Patrick has volunteered many hours where I work at the Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc. Pro Bono Program, where we provide free legal services to low income residents of San Diego County. At LASSD Pro Bono Program, Patrick has filed documents, assisted clients to complete their application forms and interviewed clients, etc. He performs these tasks willingly and shows considerable compassion and understanding in his contacts with our clients.

In 2004 Patrick mentioned that he liked horses and that he would like to learn to ride. However, he expressed doubts as to whether he would be able to do so. I have ridden for many years and knew that K.C. was receiving riding lessons at a local riding stable, Challenge Ranch. Challenge Ranch's owner/trainer, Jane Tomczak, runs an excellent program providing horseback riding lessons to disadvantaged youth at no charge.

The accompanying letter from Jane Tomczak describes Patrick's achievements in this sport. It has been a pleasure for me to watch Patrick progress from a tentative new student to a confident leader at the ranch. Not only has Patrick made tremendous progress in his horseback riding ability, he also helps others at the ranch. Patrick is always willing to guide the other, less experienced students and to help them with their horses. I have watched the way he has instilled confidence in the other disadvantaged

youth at the ranch, showing them that they, too, can learn and progress. Pursuant to an agreement with Patrick's father, Patrick now lives with Jane and her husband, Ron Tomczak, at Challenge Ranch.

Also, in the summer of 2003 Patrick mentioned to me that he was having difficulty in school. He mentioned that he knew he had ADHD but that "nothing had been done about it". Patrick told me that school was "OK" until about 7th Grade, but that he had barely passed a class since then. He felt his school situation was hopeless. Patrick's school attendance was slipping. I told Patrick that I would see what I could do, but that it would mean that when we got him in the right classes, Patrick would have to work very hard at his schoolwork. Patrick agreed to do so. I arranged for Patrick to be tested by Dr. Lewkowicz. Dr. Lewkowicz diagnosed Patrick with clear Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and impaired cognitive processing speed. Dr. Lewkowicz's confidential Neuropsychological Evaluation is attached.

I instituted the IEP process at Patrick's high school. The school agreed with Dr. Lewkowicz's diagnosis and agreed to send Patrick to Lindamood Bell Learning Processes to receive one-on-one tuition during the Fall 2004 semester.

It was a big step for Patrick to go to Lindamood Bell. The school was in Solana Beach, an affluent San Diego suburb, forty miles from Patrick's low-income neighborhood in Lakeside, in San Diego East County. Initially, Patrick was afraid to go. He knew no one at the school or in the neighborhood. Also, the bus would pick him up at 5:45 a.m. each morning, a 2 ¼ hour trip each way. However, Patrick agreed to visit the school and immediately liked it. From the first day, Patrick shone at Lindamood Bell. The accompanying letter from Alison Katos, Clinical Director at Lindamood Bell, describes his astonishing progress at the school. Patrick worked very hard and brought himself up to grade reading level in only 3 months. More importantly, as with the riding, Patrick discovered he could learn and that he liked it.

Patrick has now completed his instruction at Lindamood Bell and is back full-time at his high school, where he continues to do well. He is assisting his Special Education teacher to instruct other students in Lindamood Bell learning processes. Patrick plans to graduate in 2007, no mean feat for a student with 27.5 high school credits as of June, 2004!

Patrick is a delightful young man. He has taken full advantage of the opportunities offered to him in 2004 and has made stellar achievements. He continues to strive to achieve his full potential and become a respected, productive member of the community. Patrick is well deserving of this award.



Clare Madsley

Feb 9, 2005