



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Linda Anderson Smith
Public Relations Director
Champaign Residential Services, Inc. (CRSI)
An agency providing solutions for successful living to individuals in your county
937-653-1324
lsmith@crsi-oh.com

DATE: August 2004

RE: Community Team Work Helps Family

Patrick Crawford first came to Champaign Residential Services, Inc. (CRSI) as a consumer referred to the agency's Job Development program by the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR). He had just lost his job at Compass Foods (caterer for KTH).

Before coming to CRSI, Patrick was unsure of himself and had trouble making decisions. "I would get frustrated with them (Compass Foods) and they'd get frustrated with me," Patrick says of his previous work experience.

Since his involvement with CRSI's Employee Development program, in which CRSI is CARF accredited, things have changed. "They taught me how to look at other alternatives and how I can have a more positive self-image and that's really helped out a lot", says Patrick.

He was referred to the program by BVR to assess what type of work he would like. After some trial and error, he was evaluated for employment at CRSI and supervisors liked his work so much that he was hired by the agency for part-time maintenance work. Patrick hopes this will turn into full-time.

Initially, Patrick was "job coached" as he performed his job but is now working on his own. "We've built a support system for Patrick so that he can get answers to his questions and move on," says Vocational Director Tom Craemer. "He has grown so much in such a short period of time and is making more decisions for himself and he keeps the place great."

Patrick's wife Becky, who is also a CRSI consumer, was referred to the Job Development program by the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI). Becky suffers from Glaucoma. In addition, certain life experiences had affected her ability to maintain employment.

"When she came to us she had extremely low self-esteem and could not make eye contact," says Craemer. "We took her through Life Skills and Job Readiness training and she saw a social worker."

After assessing her interests and working through other issues, Becky became employed by Midwest Extended Care in Troy as a home health care worker. She is able to drive to work but her Glaucoma

prohibits her from driving at night so daytime employment is important. Her love of job and her success working with patients has earned her high praise from her employer.

“I now have a successful career,” says Becky. “I started in floral arranging where I have talent, but soon learned that wasn’t getting me anywhere,” she continues. “With the help of the Job Development program at CRSI, I decided on a career change which had to be approved by BSVI. I’m developing a support system and I love what I do.”

Married for ten years, the couple has a son, nine-year-old Kevin, who is also living with challenges. He was born with club feet and has mild mental retardation. He attends special classes at Graham South and daycare in Westville when not in school.

The Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) has been involved and is working together as a team with CRSI to provide support for the family. JFS pays for child care and is assisting with medical expenses and food stamps according to Becky. Eventually these services will be decreased and then eliminated as the Crawford’s become more and more self-sufficient.

“We want to get off the system and take care of our own needs,” says Patrick proudly as he looks around at his place of employment. “When I walk-in here (CRSI offices) the people and everybody have supported us so much. I feel like a real person and I feel like I’m a part of something.”

Craemer adds, “Both Patrick and Rebecca have a great deal of potential that they were never able to tap into before, but they’re tapping now. They’re soaring like Eagles.”

