

HELP FOR GOOD

Nehemiah



Stark County
Board of
Developmental
Disabilities



Nehemiah

Meet Nehemiah Culver, age 14. He is the son of Leslie Culver and Randolph Young, and a student at Canton City Schools' Crenshaw Middle School. According to his mom, Nehemiah weighed in at 1lb 4oz at birth and was diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

Nehemiah had an early start with Stark DD. From about 6 months of age until his 3rd birthday, Nehemiah received services in his home through the Stark DD Early Intervention program. Through these services, not only did E.I. staff members provide speech, occupational and physical therapy, a developmental specialist along with the therapists also worked with Nehemiah and his family to learn what they could do within their home and daily routines to assist Nehemiah to progress and develop self-help and independence skills.

When Nehemiah turned 3 years old, he became a student in Stark DD's preschool program where he received educational and related services for two school years.

According to Tammy Maney, Stark DD Preschool Director, Nehemiah was known as "Mr. Personality", always the first to reach out to speak to anyone new who came into the classroom.

"Nehemiah's social skills were one thing that did not need to be improved upon in preschool," she said. "Nehemiah always had definite preferences and even back then he wanted to be a policeman when he grew up! It was exciting to see Nehemiah's gross motor skills progressing and to watch him using a gait trainer and later a walker. But even if he was just on the



floor, if Nehemiah wanted something, he would figure out how to get to it, whether by scooting or rolling to the item. He could persevere until he got what he wanted with the best of them!”

On June 6, 2012, Nehemiah graduated from Stark DD’s preschool program at Eastgate and moved onto his home school district to continue his education. He was definitely a child the preschool staff was sad to see go!

Nehemiah and his family got involved with Stark DD again in 2021.

SSA Courtney Downey received an email from a co-worker asking if someone needed a porch wheelchair lift. Courtney reached out to Canton City Schools Physical Therapist Dona Brown and they collaborated for Nehemiah to receive this lift. They realized that it would require a new outlet to be installed and some concrete, both which are not free. Courtney called Hammer and Nails and their volunteers installed it. A local agency then delivered the lift for free. After further discussion, Dona and Courtney realized that Nehemiah was not involved with Stark DD and they assisted the family in going through the intake/eligibility process.

As in preschool, Nehemiah’s dreams for the future are to have a career in law enforcement. His Stark DD SSA Jeremy Mayer, learned about Nehemiah’s dream and used his personal connection with Tim Wires, Chief Probation Officer with the Stark County Family Court to help Nehemiah.

“On a warm September afternoon we surprised Nehemiah with a field trip to a local fire station where he met a US Marshal, try on some of the Marshal’s tools, and tour the Marshal’s vehicle in September 2021,” said Jeremy.



“His excitement and passion showed through immediately. And from that moment on I don’t know if we could contain him. You could see the dream come through and I could tell we were doing a good thing that day,” said Tim.

“Nehemiah is a great kid who is always positive and upbeat. Nehemiah is focused on working in the law enforcement field and never lets his disability effect his future goals. Nehemiah always looks at the bright side of any situation and his happy go lucky personality is refreshing. Nehemiah’s family is supportive and his mother is always pushing him to try new things and obtain his goals. This is a family who is truly deserving of representing Stark County as an ambassador for the Stark County Board of DD,” said Jeremy.

