Desiree + You + Earn & Learn = Success

If you met Desiree today and saw what a bright, engaging young woman she is, you would be stunned to learn all she’s been through.

Adolescence was Rough

Her struggles with school began in middle school, when she was diagnosed with ADHD. In school, Desiree displayed an inability to remain focused; in addition, she was a very sociable and outgoing young lady with a tendency to act out of impulse, without always thinking directly about consequences and how they will affect her. Despite early interventions, Desiree consistently cut class, ran away from home and engaged in a number of dangerous behaviors. Her parents filed a CHINS (Child In Need of Services) petition with the Manchester Court system, which led to her placement in a variety of residential settings, and finally the Youth Detention Center.

Donor Supported Earn & Learn is the Answer for Desiree

While still on probation, Desiree participated in the GSIL Earn and Learn Program. The smaller group sizes and more individual instruction seemed to suit her very well. Her attendance and participation flourished. As the weeks progressed, Desiree began to demonstrate an increased understanding of responsibility and maturity. She completed the program, and even delivered a moving graduation speech.

And then, Desiree found herself faced with a new challenge – she was pregnant. Knowing full well that she needed to complete high school in order to better provide for her family, Desiree began attending the afternoon program at GSIL, where she worked online to earn even more credits towards graduation. Only a few days before the birth of her son, Desiree earned her high school diploma!

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Board Corner

Michael J. Hall – Senior Counsel, Northeast Utilities Service Company

Mike joined the board in 2013, and jumped right in, conceiving and initiating GSIL’s first golf tournament, and helping to secure a $2500 check for the Earn & Learn Opportunities Program donated by his employer.

A resident of New London, Mike shares his home with his wife, Fiona Mills Ph.D, a faculty member at Proctor Academy in Andover, NH and their three children Savannah (9), Finnegan (5), and Declan (almost 2!). They enjoy hiking and skiing here in New Hampshire but he was not always a “Granite Stater”.

Mike grew up in Connecticut, attended college in Maryland and received his Juris Doctor and Master of Study in Environmental Law from Vermont Law School. He has worked in Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, North Carolina and Oklahoma. Presently, Mike is Senior Counsel for Northeast Utilities (NU).

In his spare time (ha!), Mike’s volunteering centers on kids. He has served as President for the Board of Trustees at Longmeadow Montessori, in Longmeadow, MA and has performed recent pro-bono work for New London Early Learning Center in his hometown. GSIL’s Earn & Learn Program is the most recent recipient of his passion for education.

“To the extent I am able to set a good example, or help to elevate even just one other person’s position in the world, that might just make the world a better place for someone,” says Michael Hall

You know the old adage – “if you want something done, ask a busy person.” That personifies Mike and his life. We are pleased to have him serve on the Board of GSIL, and grateful for his excellent contributions.

Success by Numbers

Since we last talked...

235 Accessible Van Rides

15 Students in the Earn & Learn Opportunities Program

31 Successful Job Placements

19 Home Access Modifications completed, allowing individuals to keep living at home.

725 Rides Given in a person’s car or bus pass through the Transportation Reimbursement Program (TRP)

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Thanks to You

Desiree now lives in her very first apartment with her son and her boyfriend, which she is very proud of. With GSIL’s help she navigated the Community College system and is now enrolled in classes to become a Medical Assistant. And thanks to one very generous GSIL donor, she now has a MacBook laptop computer, which she uses for her college classes.

“In my opinion, this student is THE epitome of what Earn & Learn is trying to promote and accomplish for our kids. I really am quite impressed with her success and how far she has come.”
- Kerry Durso, GSIL Transition Support Specialist

Desiree has certainly come a long way since we first met her as a struggling 18 year old. She has taken many necessary steps towards independently obtaining her goals; to become a successful and self-sufficient young lady, with a very bright future ahead of her. With all of Desiree’s hard work, your generosity, and the support of the staff at GSIL, she will meet these goals, and provide a wonderful life and example for her son.

Peace of Mind with In-Home Technology Solutions

Do you worry about a loved one living independently in their own home? Or, do you know someone who does? Well we have a solution for you. For over 30 years, GSIL has been providing at-home services to seniors and folks with disabilities. That is our passion. Our goal, first and always, is to help individuals who choose independence to stay at home, be involved in their communities and stay in touch with friends and families.

But a personal care attendant is not for everyone. So we are exploring new avenues to ensure that our clients’ care is successfully managed in the way that best enables them to live life the way they choose.

Keeping an eye on your loved one. For seniors and people with disabilities, an emerging option to help “Mom” remain safe and comfortable at home is care through In-Home Technology Solutions. Technology solutions, such as sensors and mobile applications, can help you keep an eye on “Mom” and “Dad” and what could be happening (or not happening) in the home when you’re not around.

Choosing the right option for both of you. Are In-Home Technology Solutions right for you and your family? There are many benefits to a home technology service, including:

- Low Cost
- Private
- Easy to install, easy to maintain
- Provides some support for those that do not want someone in their home
- Helps identify daily routines that are occurring, or not occurring (especially if the loved one lives alone, and the family doesn’t know if they need extra support)
- Increased comfort and safety

Providing peace of mind. Home technology, as an enhancement for in-home care, is a low cost, non-intrusive option great for providing you and your loved one with the peace of mind you deserve.
You Better Not Pout!

Don’t miss out on the coming year’s best event! GSIL’s annual Hoops on Wheels wheelchair basketball tournament will be held once again in the Spring of 2015. Last year’s 21 teams competed, and laughed, got some exercise and left very sore. But they also had the warm feeling of supporting this great organization, and knowing that their day of fun helped folks with disabilities. So don’t be sad, sign up today!

New Teams Wanted

We are seeking 7 more teams to play and YOU can help make that happen. Do you have 7 fun-loving friends? Seven adventurous co-workers? A family of sports nuts? If so, please give Leslie Ari a call (603) 228-9680, learn the details and sign on for the ride of a lifetime.

We hope to hear from YOU!

A Special Thank You...

Northeast Utilities Powers
Earn & Learn

On behalf of our youngest consumers who will now be better prepared to access educational opportunities, a sincere thank you to Northeast Utilities for their gift of $2500. We are experiencing great success with this program; students with disabilities, who have all but dropped out, are succeeding beyond anyone's wildest dreams. In fact, 91% of our students have either returned to school, graduated or received their GED. This only happens because the amazing people at Northeast Utilities, like you, saw the promise. And responded.

Pictured above are some of this semester’s Earn & Learn students with (left) Michael Hall, GSIL Board Member & Senior Counsel at PSNH and Clyde Terry, GSIL Chief Executive Officer.