

Crossroads Connection

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www.crossroadslongmont.org

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Defining Success... by Janet Streed

Tyler Lehl's Story

Schools across the country use graduation rates as a barometer for success. This past year student Tyler Lehl and Crossroads staff teamed up. Their combined efforts mean Tyler won't be graduating from Crossroads. How does that define success?

As a little guy, Tyler had a fascination with clocks. He would take them apart to see what made them work. His fascination with gears and mechanics continues to this day, and he eventually hopes to build things by working as a welder. But along the way, Tyler lost hope. He started school in Longmont, and by fourth grade he was struggling. He found it difficult to make friends. Thinking a different school environment might be the solution, parents Lisa and Marty Lehl enrolled their son in an area charter school. There Tyler was bullied. He continued to struggle socially. He gave up trying to make friends. "The charter school shut me down," recalls Tyler. "I felt so bad I was threatening to hurt myself." A month prior to his completing seventh grade, Tyler's parents "yanked him out of the charter school," desperate to identify a better learning environment.

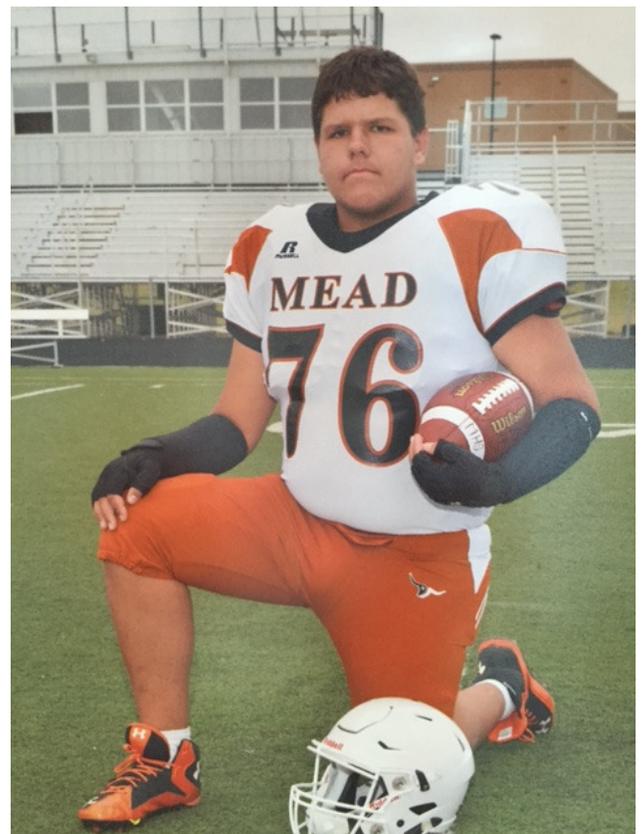
Lisa's research led her to Crossroads. "It was a sign from God," she said. "We had a need and they had an opening."

School staff took time to work with Tyler one-on-one. Testing revealed Tyler to be gifted and talented. For the first time Tyler could get his homework done at school. Mom no longer found homework assignments stuffed under couch cushions and elsewhere. At Crossroads, Tyler was in an environment where he could be himself, study at his pace, and work on social skills. When he and another student would get in a conflict, staff was right there to address the issue and deal with the social aspect. "Crossroads opened me up to people, and gave me the time to be myself," says Tyler. Mrs. Keuter, a favorite teacher, explained how things were, in black and white. Abstract doesn't work for Tyler.

At the Friends Dinner and Auction this past April, each student held a hand-made sign with a comment about what Crossroads means to them. Tyler's sign: You Showed Me the Road to Success.

Today Tyler is a freshman at Mead High School, where he has made friends and where he plays both offense and defense for the Mavericks. At the recent Homecoming game he was named one of three most valuable players out of 48 total. He is earning A's and B's in his honors level classes, and is thankful that "Crossroads taught me that there are different people and we're not all the same. I give everyone a second chance."

Not joining the ranks of Crossroads graduates is a huge accomplishment for Tyler on his Road to Success. Crossroads helped him overcome his struggles in a traditional school environment so he could realize his potential. In keeping with the Crossroads mission, that too defines success.



Teaching For Success ... by Barb Bulthuis

Intentional School Programs Make a Difference

Crossroads has developed several program components that intentionally give students like Tyler the best possible opportunity for success. The first is academic remediation. All students are given the Wide Range Achievement Test, a standardized academic assessment, when they first enroll at Crossroads and each year thereafter. Any students with academic deficits (in other words, any who are below grade level in reading or math) receive one-on-one remediation, involving specific activities targeted toward the academic skills they need to improve. This year, just over 50% of our students are receiving remediation.

Beyond remediation, all of our students receive a self-paced, individualized curriculum. That means that standard content is tailored for each student and presented in a variety of ways that help them learn best. If necessary, they review and re-learn until they achieve mastery (75% or better). Students are not allowed to fail; they simply do not move on until they have mastered the material. In each classroom, eight to ten students are all working on different content. The teacher serves as a coach and mentor, helping individual students as needed and making sure everyone stays on track and has the materials they need to be successful.

In addition, classroom volunteers are regularly available to assist individual students or small groups with their remediation goals or their class work. These volunteers bring a variety of skills, experiences, and interests, and are able to complement our staff in connecting with, challenging, and encouraging our students.

All of these tools—small classes, individualized curriculum, volunteer support, and academic remediation—provide a “safety net” for struggling students, giving them, often for the first time in their lives, the courage to really try, to find success, and to build confidence to continue to try. This is the Crossroads formula for building hope and a future for our students. Thank you for partnering with us to change our world—one life at a time.



Food & Fellowship

Join Us for One or All of These Fundraising Events!



JANUARY: Subway (Sat, Jan 16, 11 am-3 pm): Enjoy lunch served by Crossroads students, and the school receives \$2 for EACH sandwich purchased!

FEBRUARY: Chick-fil-A (Thurs, Feb 11, 5:30-7:00 pm): Eat chicken, hang out with Crossroads staff, students, and friends, and turn in your receipt in the basket. Crossroads receives 20% of proceeds. We hope to see you there!



MARCH: Inta' Juice (Mon, Mar 28, 4-7 pm): Enjoy a delicious juice smoothie and benefit Crossroads! Crossroads receives 20% of ALL sales during those hours!