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Charles Schafer started at Kingsway Learning Center in 1999. He had been in the public school system and his mother wanted to find a place where Charles could receive an education suited to his individual needs. When she found Kingsway, she knew it was the place for her son. Charles loved it on his first visit and said he felt it was a magical place to be.

On his first day, he was very nervous about being in a new place and not knowing what to expect. He met his teacher, Debbie Schibbner, and she made him feel right at home. Charles remembers her as a kind and devoted person who listened and gave great guidance. As time went on, Charles noticed that all the staff members at Kingsway were kind and compassionate. They served as wonderful role models for Charles.

When asked about the biggest difference between him as a new student and him now as a member of the staff, Charles says he is more relaxed and social. He is no longer easily distracted or shy and nervous. His fine motor skills have improved and he is a social butterfly.

Charles graduated from Kingsway in 2009. His mixed emotions about graduating stemmed from both being proud of his accomplishments and being sad because it was time for him to leave Kingsway. But he wasn't leaving unprepared. The Community Based Instruction program prepared him for the transition to life after Kingsway. He received invaluable workplace training, such as what to expect from an employer and how to utilize public transportation.

Charles' proudest accomplishment? Without a doubt being hired at Kingsway in 2013. Charles recalls the moment he received the call that he would be hired as a 1:1 aide and smiles at the memory. Kingsway has had a monumental impact on Charles' life. The caring nature of Kingsway helped him become the person he is today in so many ways and Charles brings the heart of Kingsway into the community no matter where he goes.

