

## *Working Together to Change Each Other*



One of the pillars of the Flight program is the fact that we share life with one another. Participants and staff work together to help each other; nobody goes at it alone.

Over the past several months we have been working on a project together to remodel a cabin at the Diakon Wilderness Center in Boiling Springs. This cabin will be our new weekend home for the program. The cabin hadn't been used for some time and needed a lot of work. It is the kind of project that can only be done with teamwork.

Working on remodeling the cabin together has helped us develop a closer camaraderie and sense of family. We have hammered nails, painted walls, fixed windows, laid flooring, cleaned gutters and fixed plumbing together. It has taken everybody working together to get the cabin from where it was to where it is

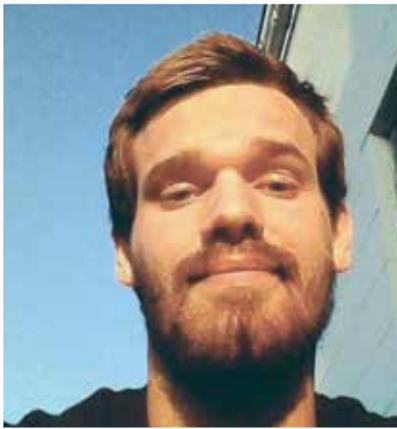
now.

The cabin project is a lot like the lives of our participants. They all come with the need for some help to get where they want to be. It takes hard work on their part and on the part of the team to make those

changes. We have to be able to come together, meet each other where we are and work as a unit to help each participant become who they want to be. The lives of our participants, much like our cabin, come out looking brand new when we work together to meet our goals.



## Jesse's Story



Following high school Jesse was lost and without any real direction in his life. He struggled to find his way and ended up hanging out with negative

peers and getting into trouble. After receiving some criminal charges in the adult system, Jesse was given a chance to be a part of Diakon's Adult 30-day Course Program. Completing this program allowed Jesse's charges to be lowered and gave him a second chance at life.

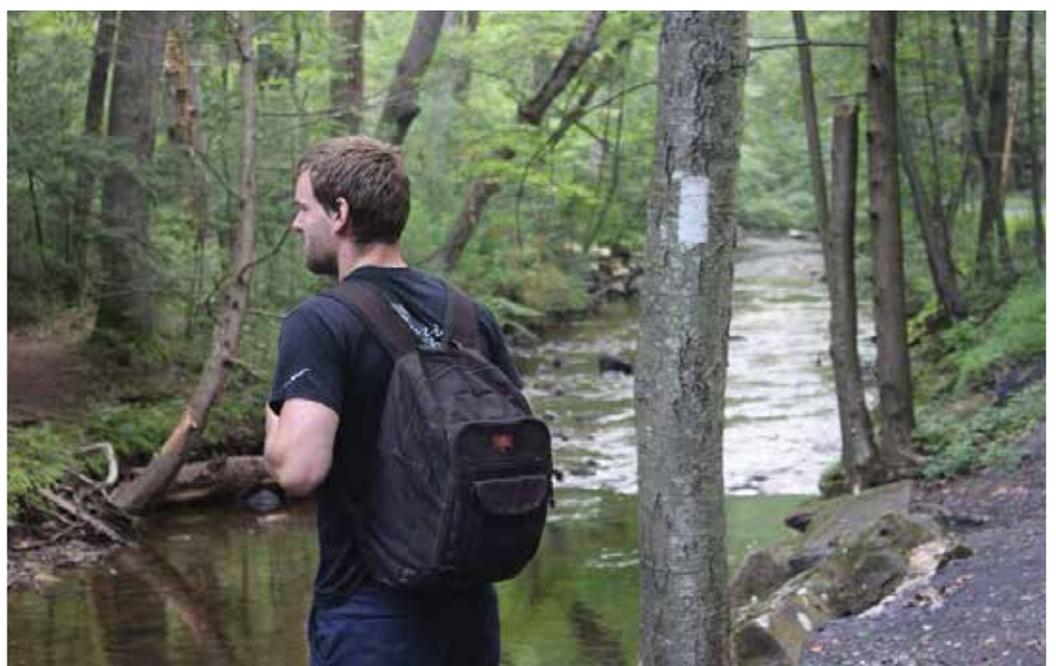
Jesse recognized his need to turn his life around and chose to join Flight after his time in the 30-day program. At that time Jesse was going from dead-end job to dead-end job, living on friends' couches and struggling to have any motivation or direction in life. He was just "existing", but not moving forward.

Jesse began his time in Flight learning about himself and about the reasons that he was stuck in life. He worked with staff do deal with issues surrounding his family, his past decisions and his ability to move past those issues so that he could progress in life. Flight helped him reconnect with his father and reconcile

their relationship after a couple of rough years.

Once Jesse had been able to move forward, he decided to make some big changes. With the support of Flight he found an apartment and moved from Bucks County to Cumberland County, starting his life over with a clean slate away from negative peers. He learned how to set up a budget, pay bills, make meals, do laundry and take care of himself on a day-to-day basis. Flight also helped him get a job at a local carpet store, which led to an apprenticeship with a carpet installer. Jesse is now working full-time learning a trade and living independently.

Flight has given Jesse some of the tools that he needed to be the person that he has always wanted to be. Jesse has developed a passion for serving the community and those in need around him. He has learned about his strengths and his weaknesses and how to manage both of those to be a positive part of his community. Jesse is a different person today than he was when he started in Flight; he is a leader in the program and the community.



# *What we've Been Up To*

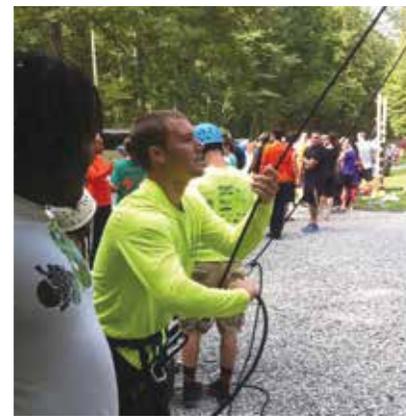
In 2014, Flight has donated over 250 community service hours!



*5-mile Ride for Ataxia bike ride to support friends with the disease.*



*Picking apples for Project S.H.A.R.E.*



*Assisting with the Diakon Outdoor Adventure Challenge 5K trail run*



*Helping Diakon Senior Living in Frostburg, MD with their recycling project*



*A 20-mile, one-day hike to raise money for our service trip to Haiti*



*Flight Participant Marcus recently bought his first car with saved money and some guidance from Flight staff*



*Flight graduate Milan was recently engaged and will be married 12/13/14!!!*

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*The Flight Program  
is completely funded  
by benevolent gifts  
from donors. If you are  
interested in how you  
can help be part of  
changing the lives of  
these young people  
through giving, please  
visit:  
[www.diakon.org/dwc](http://www.diakon.org/dwc)*

## Who We Are:

We are the Flight Program. We are a group of young men who made poor choices when we were younger and some of us were referred to youth programs at the Diakon Wilderness Center. Most of us have been in and out of the juvenile justice system, placements, and detention centers. That was the past.

Today is our future. Today we are voluntarily participating in the Flight Program, and we're taking new and challenging steps in our lives to change and become successful. We rely on one another for support. We attempt to do what is right, not what is easy. We now look toward the future and our goals instead of living "in the moment." We want the best that this world has to offer, and we're now ready to go after it, the honorable way. We are separating from our old friends. They don't know what to think of us anymore. Our families don't know us anymore. They're impressed. Our old teachers, probation officers and everyone else in our communities (whom we struggled to understand) are beginning to see that we're going to make it.

We now have positive dreams and goals. We believe in helping others along the path to success:

"As Iron Sharpens Iron, So One Person Sharpens Another." We are discovering and using the tools and resources in our communities to achieve our goals. We are breaking free from our comfort zones and Soaring to New Heights.

We sacrifice our weekends to be with our brothers. We let go of the old Friday night parties, now we spend that time helping each other and the community. We're not afraid to cry in front of one another. We're not afraid to ask for help. We dropped that front. Fridays and Saturdays are now about positive people, places, and things. We're on the move, in and out of state, going to new events, helping wherever there is a need, meeting new people, hiking new trails and always... telling our stories.

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