

## Meet Charles



### *Second Chances*

A star athlete with a zest for life, Charles was about to graduate high school with dreams of getting a degree in communications and working in sports radio. Tragically, just four and a half hours after receiving his diploma, Charles was in a severe motorcycle accident that required him to be life flighted to Vanderbilt. From that moment on, everything changed Charles and his dreams.

Charles suffered a traumatic brain injury resulting in partial paralysis to the right side of his body. He spent eighteen months in rehab with intense cognitive, speech, physical, and occupational therapy. He was determined to be as self-sufficient as possible. While he had wonderful support from friends and family, it was his mother's determination that kept him fighting. She suffered a stroke at the age of 31 but she never allowed her limitations to keep her from living and loving. Her life was the best example Charles had for not giving up.

Just two years after his life changing accident, Charles began taking classes at Nashville Tech and later that fall he transferred to Middle Tennessee State University. During his college career, he was in a fraternity and held a steady job. In 2006 after a lot of hard work, Charles graduated with a Major in Psychology and a Double Minor in Sociology and Social Work. He never once let his experience define or deny him and truly enjoyed his college days.

Upon graduation, Charles moved close to his hometown for a few years but then decided to come back to Murfreesboro. From a few years, Charles worked for a company called RHA as a job coach for individuals with disabilities. When he left RHA, he decided to spend a few years selling items on E-bay and doing various odd jobs. In June of 2013, Charles began working for the Keith T. Jordan foundation. He is currently serving as a job and life coach for individuals with disabilities or limitations. Charles often uses his own life experiences to educate, motivate, and encourage his clients.

When Charles moved back to Murfreesboro, he moved into an older apartment built in the early 1900's. He has lived in the same apartment for almost 10 years. Charles had always dreamed of owning a home, but due to his finances, he could never qualify for a conventional mortgage. He was beginning to wonder if his dream of home ownership would ever come true.

Charles was driving by the Habitat ReStore in early 2015 when he decided to stop in and inquire about the process. No one had ever taken the time to tell him about Habitat for Humanity. He was both curious and hopeful. As soon as Charles heard he was accepted as a Future Homeowner in the Habitat Program, he started to dream about homeownership.

Throughout this experience, Charles has learned a great deal about budgeting, home up-keep, made new friends, and found joy. He is extremely thankful to everyone who is providing him the opportunity for a second chance to live again.