

Dear TNSTEP Friends & Families,

As the year comes to an end, we want to take a moment to thank you for your support, volunteer hours, and engagement in our mission at TNSTEP. There are more than 10,000 children and youth with disabilities in Tennessee, and through your help, TNSTEP can continue to work toward ensuring a brighter future for all of them. Here's an inspiring story about one of the families we serve:

We're not given a manual with step-by-step advice on how to handle each situation and what resources are available, but every parent with a child with special needs learns they have to be the advocate, investigator, voice, and caregiver for their child. Our son Weston was diagnosed with autism at age three, and TNSTEP has been a great resource for us. Anytime we had a question, they helped us figure out a solution.

TNSTEP was especially helpful as we were exploring options for Weston after high school. We assumed he would be living with us and hopefully be able to get a job. They showed us he could do much more. Their Secondary Transition Specialist helped us identify our son's strengths and weaknesses and ultimately a plan full of opportunity.

With TNSTEP's help and letter of recommendation, Weston got into the UT FUTURE Vocational Rehab Program, and he loves it! He's grown in independence just in the month he's been there. He has the feeling of accomplishing something and is proud of himself. He has a sense of belonging. Next year he'll be living on campus! We're so thankful to have such a caring team walking alongside us. TNSTEP definitely helped transform Weston's dreams and goals from possibilities into reality.

TNSTEP is excited Weston is living his best life as a valued, contributing member of his community. We believe in Weston's potential and the potential of every child and young person with a disability. Together, we can help transform their possibilities into reality by connecting them with information and community resources that make a difference.

As we focus on the great work ahead of us, we are asking for your help. Will you please consider making a financial contribution to TNSTEP? No gift is too big or too small, and every dollar tells a parent, "You don't have to walk this journey alone."

We appreciate your support and hope you have a wonderful 2023.

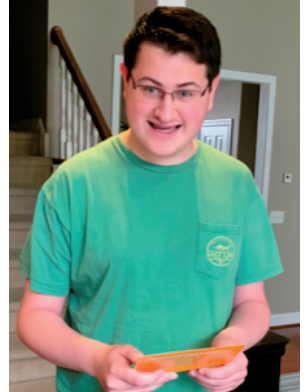
With Gratitude,



Karen Harrison, Executive Director



Joanne Cunningham, President, Board of Directors



Weston opening his acceptance letter to the UT Future Program