

Telling Stories

"PATCH jump-started a new way of living and thinking," says Jamie Craig as she recounts her experience at the youth ranch back in 2003-2005. "Before I arrived everything was about instant gratification and impulsive acting without thinking."

In elementary school, Craig regularly cut herself, stole from family and classmates, and sought attention in all the wrong ways. At ten, she tried to commit suicide in the school bathroom.

During her year and a half at the ranch, Craig learned to see the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, how to slow down and develop thinking patterns that changed her for the better, and how to stop hurting herself and those around her.

"At PATCH I learned to balance my emotions, and gained pride in who I am and what I have to offer the world," she says.

Today, Craig is developing her writing skills at college and hopes

to publish some books in her lifetime. Her first, she hopes, will be a compilation of stories and experiences from the staff and former residents at Project PATCH.

"I have a burning desire for change," says Craig. "God gave us the power of choice and we choose to respond or behave negatively or positively every day."

What motivated Craig's push for change in her own life was a saying she once heard: "You will remain the same until the pain of remaining the same is greater than the pain of change." Craig hopes her book will inspire people to step inside someone else's shoes rather than being quick to judge.

"I want people to break the unhealthy cycles that nurture negative behaviors," she says. "A child's environment really makes a huge difference in their thought process – positive or negative."

All royalties from Craig's book will be donated to Project PATCH.

"No matter what I do I want to give back to others," says Craig. "PATCH was a new beginning for me, and even though it took years for me to see, God's timing is beautiful."

To share your experiences for consideration for inclusion in the book, email Craig at projectpatchbook@gmail.com.

◀ **Former PATCH resident Jamie Craig is compiling a collection of real, down-to-earth stories from both staff and those who have gone through the PATCH program in hopes of publishing a book.**



CARES & PRAYERS

My grandson went through the PATCH program and he is just finishing as a medical assistant after first completing his CAN certification. Thanks for your part. – B.B.

I am very interested in the wonderful work you do for so many young people. How special it will be for you to meet many of these students again in heaven because of your efforts now. Your work is in my prayers. – E.H.

I will be eternally grateful to the help you gave our daughter, who was one of the "lost." You helped return her to us a mature, articulate, thoughtful girl who is sensitive to the needs of others. It is such a joy to experience this transformation. Thank you for bringing her back. – B.C.

At the family center my family and I were shepherded into a new season and new ways of walking together in it with greater resilience. Thank you. – W.T.

To share your PATCH experiences and offer encouragement and support to our staff, email info@projectpatch.org or write to us at 2404 E Mill Plain Ave., Ste A Vancouver, WA 98661.

AMY

Many teens that come to the ranch are behind in their schooling, having often skipped school and frequently neglected their homework. When traditional methods of teaching don't work, what do you do? You implement a different approach.

Nearly every incoming student at the youth ranch begins on the Start-Up Program.

"Our goal is to establish if the student understands how to learn, how to study, how to prepare for tests, and how to use a textbook," says Sharon Fry, Project PATCH teacher. "Once we are comfortable with the student's ability and knowledge in these areas, he or she is moved into our regular school program."

Still, not every teen manages to keep up with the typical classroom experience. Some require additional attention in specific areas before they can advance to standard school work.

"If the student is not trying, not learning, or is trying manipulation or other little tricks to get by, she may be moved into the AMY program," says Fry.

AMY stands for Academically Manipulative Youth. Students in the AMY program are assigned a textbook in a subject selected by the teacher. The student studies the first section of the first chapter and then takes a test over

Students who struggle or don't apply themselves to their classwork at PATCH are placed in a special program to increase their scholastic abilities and help them focus.

that small section. If the student passes the test at 80 percent or higher, he or she goes on to the second section.

However, if the student fails the test, he does a retake test on the same section. The second test is a little more difficult than the first. Some students go on to a third, fourth, fifth, or even a sixth version of the test. At some point disciplinary action may be taken, such as placing the student on work crew.

Adam* was placed on the AMY program at the beginning of the summer quarter and was very angry at Fry as he promised he was trying his best but she just didn't give him a break. She pushed him to keep trying harder because she knew he could do it.

After two months of determined encouragement from Fry, Adam passed his fourth test in a row and was taken off the program and placed back in the regular educational program.

"As the student begins to cooperate and learn, he will be moved back through the steps," says Fry. "We return AMY students to the regular school program as soon as possible."

As a student approaches his or her discharge date, he or she may

advance to Fast Forward. In order to be placed in this program, the student must demonstrate good work on regular worksheets, tests, and other schoolwork, and have completed at least three units per class. Using a single textbook, the student studies each section and answers every question asked throughout the book in such a way that assures the teacher that he or she understood the material.

"This is no small task," says Fry. "The student must fully explain each answer and include as much information as possible. For some, there is also a challenge test at the end of the book."

PATCH's goal is not only to treat teens' behavioral issues, but also to help them continue to succeed after they leave the ranch. This includes academic success.

"Ms. Fry is the best teacher I've ever had," says Adam. "She knew I had more to give and didn't take my excuses. I hope I have more teachers like her after PATCH."

To learn more about the many aspects of PATCH, including our education program, visit projectpatch.org/ranch.

*Not his real name



Identity: Who Am I in Christ?

Editor's Note: The following was written by a current ranch resident in response to a reading assignment.

When I think about how lost I am in this world, then reflect on the characteristics of Jesus, I am at ease more. It is encouraging that God loves me so much that he is willing to call me his child. It makes me feel important and gives me a sense of belonging. I don't deserve to be

loved that much because I am just a regular person. Sometimes when I think about the gift God offers me I think that I need to do something to receive it, but I'm learning that all I must do is accept it with full knowledge that it is because of nothing I did but simply a gift.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE: TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARENTING

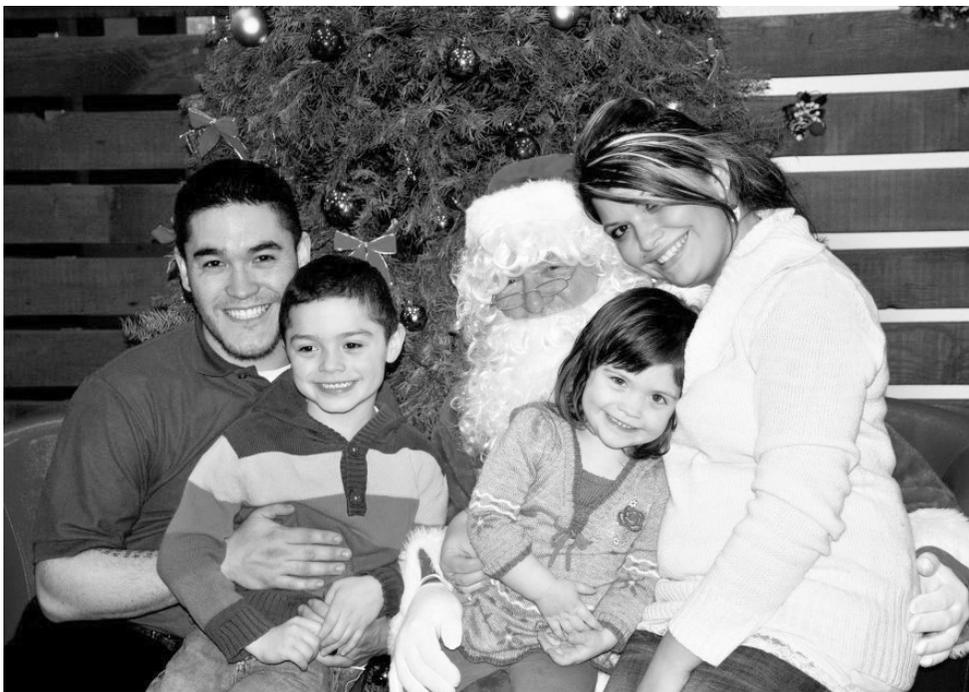
BY JIM SMITH, FAMILY COUNSELOR

Families are all about relationships and relationships are all about commitment. In the context of the home, commitment means the family comes first. It is difficult for a relationship to thrive when there is doubt that one or the other is truly committed. If children see that Mom and Dad are committed to each other and to family in the way they spend their energy, time, money, and other resources, the foundation of trust necessary for positive family relationships will be in place.

and I have been clean for six years. My husband and I have surrendered our entire lives to God and teach our children the values of the Bible.

My life is nowhere near perfect, but it's as perfect as it's ever been. I am living proof that God does not forsake his children. A lot of the girls I got to know at PATCH are still my friends today, and they are doing amazing things with their lives, all because PATCH gave us a set of tools to use in everyday life that we didn't have before.

As a parent, I would absolutely recommend PATCH, though it's not a decision to be taken lightly. It's an intense program but the results are worth it. I got a second chance that a lot of addicts do not get, and I am nothing less than blessed.



▲ Former PATCH resident Shantel Lee used skills she learned at the ranch to pull herself out of an extremely negative situation and restart her life.

No Matter What *Continued from page 8*

to call the police. I remember hiding once behind a Safeway while my dad passed, just so we could get to my Nana's farm safely.

I dropped out of school my sophomore year and started drinking and smoking marijuana, and finally gave in to meth. I passed out for days at a time, only to wake up and do it all again. I became promiscuous and rarely went home at all, sometimes sleeping in parks.

One day when I was 15, my mom took me shopping. We had a great time, and when we got home she took my hand and said, "I love you, no matter what." I didn't think anything of it given the current circumstances of my life, until I walked in the house and found my arms held tightly by two women who put me in a car and started driving. When I arrived at Project PATCH my mom and step-dad were already there waiting for me and I was livid.

Colleen left me alone with my mom in the office and I begged her to take me home. I swore up and down I would change. Mom cried with me... then she left. I had no idea that what she had just done was probably the hardest thing she'd ever had to do, but she did it to

save my life, and I thank God every day that she did.

My refusal to take the PATCH program seriously ended one day in town on a visit to the doctor's office. A motorcyclist hit the front of our van, flipped over the vehicle, and bounced off the pavement a few feet away. His death showed me how precious life really is, and how quickly it can be taken away.

I completed the PATCH program when I was 17, after 20 months at the ranch. Unfortunately, it only took two months for me to fall back into old habits, and I dropped out of school again. I moved in with a friend and started dating an abusive meth addict nine years my senior.

It took a drive-by shooting and my boyfriend going to prison to wake me up. I got myself a new apartment and two part-time jobs within walking distance because I still didn't have a car. At work I became instant friends with a coworker named Brendan. He was like no man I had ever been around. He treated me with respect and certainly never hit me. Eventually we were married.

Today we have two sweet children, a 6-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl,

CHANGING PLACES

For over a quarter of a century, Tom Sanford led Project PATCH with humility, integrity, and a deep abiding passion for giving troubled teens a positive future. In 2010, Tom decided to focus more on assuring the continuity of PATCH beyond his lifetime.

"It was very important to me to ensure this happened by turning over the reins of PATCH while I was still alive and relatively healthy," says Tom.

While still involved in development, Tom has stepped into semi-retirement and has handed over directorship to Chuck Hagele, current PATCH executive director, who, for the last two years, has proven his very capable leadership.

Check our next issue of PATCHworks for a report on a special celebration we held this fall for Tom and Bonnie and the legacy they, with the help of dedicated supporters like you, have established in Project PATCH over the last 30 years.



▲ Now semi-retired, Tom and Bonnie Sanford founded Project PATCH in 1984.

New Hope Farms

In September, one of the private groups that utilized the Family Life & Conference Center was New Hope Farms in Goldendale, Wash., an organization that provides care for developmentally disabled adults. Approximately 20 residents plus their caregivers spent a week at Project PATCH for a special retreat. This special event takes place each year to give the residents some time in a new, relaxing environment.

"We were so impressed with the beautiful facility PATCH has to offer. We could not have chosen a more perfect location for our event this year," says Dawn Chadbourne, director of NHF. "We were just delighted with the warm reception and hospitality shown to us by the PATCH staff. Too often a book is still judged by the cover, but we found only acceptance."

The residents from NHF really enjoyed their annual vacation. Daily they went up to the shop to do woodworking and crafts. Crossing the little creek on the way there was a fun treat. The meals were a hit as usual. The meals were a hit as usual; everybody wanted seconds.

Upon arriving at the PATCH lodge, one gentleman began to cry. When asked what was wrong he replied, "Oh nothing is wrong. I am just so overwhelmed with how beautiful this place is, I just can't get over it. These are tears of joy!" Another resident, who is not much for words, gave a big smile with two thumbs up. Another man made it a matter of daily prayer that the Lord would "give NHF a lodge just like this one." At the very least, this man said, he hopes he gets a mansion like the PATCH lodge in heaven.

Several families and friends visited the residents while at the PATCH family center. They had no idea such a wonderful facility was located in the area and they hope to be able to use the



▲ Residents of New Hope Farms, an assisted living home for developmentally disabled adults, enjoy some woodworking during their retreat at the PATCH Family Life & Conference Center.

location for family reunions and other events in the future.

"We enjoyed each morning their delightful smiles and friendly greetings," says Linda Hill, hospitality director for the family center. "By the end of their stay we had grown quite attached to those dear people, and when they left some even cried because they didn't want to leave."

Both the PATCH and NHF staff agree that the new relationship between our organizations will last for years to come.

The PATCH Family Life & Conference Center is available for private bookings by calling Linda at 360-690-8495. For more information on our facilities and available activities and services, visit projectpatch.org/family.

FOR THE PARENTS



Progress Report:
Kristifer

Kristifer is a 16-year-old resident at Project PATCH's youth ranch. He is close to the one-year mark and since his arrival both he and the staff have noticed remarkable shifts in his way of thinking and, as a result, in his attitude. We were happy to get a chance to talk with him about his experience in the PATCH program so far.

In September, parents and guardians of 13 ranch residents attended one of PATCH's regular Parents' Weekend events. On these weekends, the ranch offers classes on topics such as DBT, the effect of trauma, and spirituality and teens. The school holds parent-teacher conferences, and parents and teens are invited to participate together at the ropes course to encourage communication, cooperation, and a reconnection to fun.

"It is sometimes a lonely journey with family not always understanding and friends at times passing judgment on parents whose kids are here," says Colleen Donald, interim ranch administrator. "Parents enjoy time to encourage one another during Parent Weekends."

Parents continually commented that they could see and feel the sincere concern PATCH staff have for their kids. One parent even remarked, "I'd left behind play and fun with my child, and I love this opportunity to simply enjoy being with him."



Tell us a little about yourself when you arrived at PATCH.

At first I was angry because I was here, and then I switched to an "I don't care" mode. I was blaming others for my behavior; everyone was wrong but me. I didn't really have any desire to change and I wasn't willing to let stuff go.

Why did your mom decide to put you in the PATCH program?

I had anger issues. I was stealing and lying and I was very manipulative. Once I got to PATCH I recognized these issues as problems, but before that I was simply having fun and doing what I wanted to do. That was all I cared about.

What have the ranch staff helped you work on the most?

Definitely my entitlement issues. I haven't lied while I've been here, but I stole stuff. The staff has been working with me on identifying for myself when I'm going down the wrong path, because I'm used to making excuses for myself. They've helped me move away from denial and are teaching me to admit when I'm wrong so I can make the right choice the next time.

Tell us about the changes you've seen in yourself since you arrived.

In the past I was typically angry when things didn't go my way, and I'd easily give up whatever I was trying to do and find some other way to make myself

happy, destructive or not. But now I accept that in life I can't always have what I want, and that change happens, whether I like it or not.

How do you feel PATCH has helped you the most so far?

PATCH has given me a different perspective on life. I used to be emotionally minded, but I'm thinking much more clearly now, and I can definitely see how the things PATCH has taught me will be very helpful for dealing with life in general.

What's been the best part of your experience at PATCH so far?

I've had a lot of time to talk with God here and He has really helped me overcome the problems I had in the past. Interacting with other people with similar problems to mine has also been good. Now I don't feel like I'm the only one who struggles.

Do you have any goals for when you finish the PATCH program and head home?

I really want to improve my relationships with my mom and my uncle. We all have problems, and I want to help them by teaching them what I've learned here at PATCH. The stuff I used to do – lying and stealing and everything – that's behind me now. There are better things I can do and still have fun. I see a better life for myself now, and I can't wait to get home to live it.

WISH LIST

Below is the current wish list for Project PATCH. If you are interested in helping us fulfill these needs, please call us at 360-690-8495, or email info@projectpatch.org.

YOUTH RANCH

- Girls' bicycles, (3) – \$210
- Hockey sticks, (20) – \$300
- Orchard fruit trees (10) – \$400
- Laptop – \$400
- Hay baler feeder conversion – \$500
- Cheese grinder/shredder for mixer – \$500
- Fixed air leak in girls dorm fire suppression system – \$800
- Network Wiring - \$7,500.

FAMILY CENTER

- Frisbee golf sets (2) – \$40
- Rock polisher (1) – \$40
- Lapel microphone (1) – \$300
- Queen sheets in beige (14) – \$500
- Copy machine/printer (1) – \$600
- TVs for use with projector (2) – \$2,400
- Playground Equipment (1) – \$2,500
- Pool table (1) – \$2,500
- Dining room chairs (56) – \$2,800
- Lumber for picnic tables (15) – \$3,000
- Pavement for RV spaces (5) – \$5,000
- AV equipment for conference room – \$5,000
- Water softener system – \$8,500

A New Song to Sing

“When my mom told us we were going to some family bonding thing any excitement I had for a weekend trip completely vanished,” says 14-year-old Ashley* about when she learned her family was attending a Family Experience Weekend at Project PATCH’s Family Life & Conference Center in Goldendale, Wash. “The last thing I wanted to do was attend a boring conference and talk with some random stranger about how my family wasn’t working.”

Though Ashley’s initial reaction was resistance, her outlook changed as soon as she arrived on the PATCH property.

“My first impression was amazement,” she says. “The place was beautiful, had a wonderful view of the glorious mountains, and was surrounded by the smell of fresh pines. The staff was friendly and made me feel right at home.”

Anna* brought her son, Chris* (16), and daughter, Ashley, to the Family Experience this summer, in the hopes that it would reunite them as a family and refocus them on maintaining positive relationships together.

“We learned so much and came home understanding ourselves and our family dynamics so much better,” she

says. “The road ahead of us has more clarity, as well, and we now have tools we can use to become stronger and more resilient.”

While at the Family Experience, the family enjoyed creating wooden artwork with Robbi Cress, PATCH staff member, and working together on personality inventories and the ropes course with Jim Smith, center director and Family Experience facilitator. They were able to hike together and play pool in the lodge, and spend plenty of time talking.

“I learned a lot about myself and my family,” says Ashley. “We as a family were able to find the root of our conflict, dig it out, and examine it.”

They now have their family covenant posted on the fridge, along with the communication wheel sequence they created during the Family Experience.

“As a parent, I have hope again,” says Anna. “Jim had a deeply intuitive way of understanding and moving with the rhythms of our family, all the while pulling us toward a new way of being together. Thank you for creating with us a new song for our family to sing.”

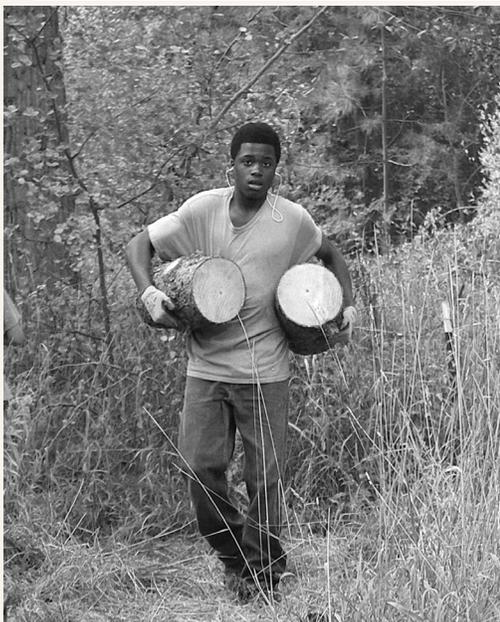
** Not their real names*



PATCH Snaps



▲ A PATCH resident proudly displays his catch while on a boys' fishing trip this fall.



▲ PATCH residents help haul firewood cut from a tree felled during a windstorm on the ranch property.



▲ Families enjoy quality time together during one of several Parents Weekends at the ranch.



▲ Two teens take a break from raking duty at the ranch. Residents are expected to help take care of the grounds they are enjoying during their stay at PATCH.

PIECING IT TOGETHER



CHUCK HAGELE,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fall is a time when true colors shine. Ordinary leaves suddenly glow in bright reds and yellows. Typically the phrase, "I finally saw his/her true colors" has a negative tone, but based on my experience at Project PATCH, I see it as a positive thing – a thing of great beauty, and something I'm honored to see.

Steven came to the ranch and was venting all his anger and rage. He was spitting out the worst words and insults he could come up with, and he had his belt off and was considering using it as a weapon. As he began his attempt to run away, two men stood in his way.

In contrast, the body language of men's dorm staff Jason and Nate as they protected Steven from stepping onto the busy highway was so different. They were making sure he didn't do anything stupid but they also encouraged him to do the smart thing: Turn around and head back to the ranch for the help he needed. When Steven's counselor pulled into the driveway and saw what was happening, she rolled down her window and told him, "Meet me at the ranch and we can talk," before continuing her way to the office. After a moment's thought, Steven walked back to safety and help.

It has been a month since I watched Steven make the choice to return to campus, and on my recent visit to the ranch I saw his true colors. He was smiling, interacting with staff and peers, and his true colors were shining. It was great to see. He actually seemed to be enjoying himself and the high five I gave him after he made a shot over me in basketball was more for his smile than his shot.

Steven has his bad days, we all do, but his "true color" days are happening more than the days filled with depression and a longing for death.

I'm so grateful for what I get to experience at Project PATCH. I hope you also feel the blessing, encouragement, and hope as you reflect on the impact that your support and participation makes.



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SUPPORT PATCH: BUY A TIME SHARE

Thanks to generous donations, PATCH owns two time shares; one in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, and another in Lahaina, Hawai'i. Though we had hoped to use these properties to generate income for PATCH, we are now looking to sell these properties and use the proceeds to support and further the Lord's work through PATCH. If you are interested in the details of either of these properties, please call us at 360-690-8495.

HELP US SAVE MONEY!

We are now able to offer this newsletter in electronic form! If you are interested in receiving this newsletter via email instead of in hard copy (which costs us a stamp), please let us know by emailing info@projectpatch.org. Thank you for your help!

PATCH PRAYER WARRIORS

Sign up to become a Prayer Warrior for PATCH and receive monthly emails with updated requests and praises from all three PATCH locations (Garden Valley, Goldendale, Vancouver). Then, join us in prayer for these special requests throughout the next month. Sign up today by emailing info@projectpatch.org.

INVITE US TO SPEAK

Interested in having a PATCH staff member speak for your group? Visit projectpatch.org/seminars to request a speaker today!

No Matter What

I remember the first time I realized I had the power to say 'no' to my parents and really, really mean it. I was thirteen and my mom told me I absolutely could not leave with my adolescent boyfriend one evening. Instead of

throwing my typical tantrum, I suddenly thought, I don't HAVE to listen to what she says... So I got up, walked out the door, and didn't look back.

My decision-making gradually got worse and eventually I wasn't living at home anymore. I stayed with friends or my 13-year-old boyfriend who beat me on a regular basis.

From an early age, I built up a lot of bitterness. My father was a meth addict and alcoholic who heard voices, sometimes from inside the walls, which led him to tear out entire sections of the walls or ceilings in our home. Mom often scooped me out of bed and ran to the neighbor's



▲ Shantel was pulled into the PATCH program from a life of drug experimentation, defiance, and promiscuity. Today she has a family, a career, and the best life she's ever had.

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