

Ruben C. Success Story

After Ruben suffered a serious brain injury, he spent two years in inpatient rehabilitation. But he still was not fully aware of his surroundings, did not understand that he had a disability, had to hold someone's hand any time he went anywhere, and required someone to look after him at all times. Believing he could improve further with the right support, Ruben's sister did some research and learned about ICD's brain injury rehabilitation program.

Since Ruben has been at ICD his improvement has been remarkable. He has worked with specialists in speech/language therapy, physical and occupational therapy, cognitive rehabilitation, addiction recovery specifically for people with brain injuries, as well as with psychologists, counselors and peers. He has learned to be aware of his deficits, develop strategies to improve memory and word retrieval, relearn appropriate social behaviors, and rebuild self-confidence. He is thrilled about his progress. "I have my own apartment now. I can ride public transit by myself. I can read a map. I could never have done that before ICD." He is taking GED classes and is confident that he will be able to pass the test.

ICD has also found part-time employment for Ruben with the Stein Senior Center's Meals on Wheels program. "But for me it's meals on heels because I can't drive," he laughs. "The smiles on those people's faces when you hand them over their meal -- that's the paycheck right there. It's so satisfying. Despite our disabilities, people are getting jobs due to ICD. We are doing something worthwhile. The rehabilitation here is intense, and the support is amazing. Coming to ICD was the right choice. ICD is the place to be...it doesn't just stand for the International Center for the Disabled, ICD stands for I Can Do It!"

Due to his illness, Ruben will have to deal with seizures that leave him disoriented and exhausted for the rest of his life. "I have to accept that. I used to drive trucks. I can't do that now. But I have a lot to offer. That's the reason I'm trying to obtain my GED. I want to pursue further education so I can counsel people who are in the same situation that I was." Everyone who knows Ruben believes he will achieve his goal.