

## NDC/ASC Alum “Cinderella Story”

David Petrovic '15 has an interesting past. And thanks to Notre Dame College and their Academic Support Center (ASC), he now also has an exciting future. I should know...I am his mother.

I was so impressed with the successful strategies of the ASC that I am now employed as one of their instructional advisors. Thankful for the support and mentorship that honed David's skills, I combine my own two passions of professional nursing and student coaching in order to help others achieve their potentials and dreams.

David has autism and Tourette's. He fought a long uphill battle of communication, social, personal, and academic challenges, and it culminated in his acceptance to NDC. Admitted on his own merit with the universal standard of fulfilling all requirements without modifications, Dave immediately partnered with the ASC to obtain needed support and services. In fact, their unique program was the leading reason that we chose NDC.

We have NOT been disappointed!

David was an active and appreciative participant in the Academic Support Center for his entire NDC tenure. He attributes much of his collegiate success to their tutoring and guidance, which augmented his effort and drive. It is important to realize that students' motivation and utilization of services are KEY to their outcomes. Per David, “The ASC was like my ‘home away from home.’ These people wore different types of hats; they were tutors and coaches. They helped me keep on track with my school work by weekly checks and drilling into me the ideals of organization, planning, thinking ahead, and scheduling. The ASC provided alternative testing strategies that compensated for my challenges. I obtained tutoring at least weekly in almost every course, and I received this assistance from professionals. And last but not least, we students in the ASC gave each other support and friendship.”

Fast forward, Dave graduated cum laude in December of 2015 with a B.A. in Middle Childhood Education. He aspires to teach junior high and is also contemplating teaching orders of the Catholic priesthood.

David and I co-authored a book entitled *Expect a Miracle: A Mother/Son Asperger Journey of Determination and Triumph* (see [www.aspergermiracles.com](http://www.aspergermiracles.com) for more). Dave is a seasoned public speaker on many platforms in and beyond Ohio. He strives to enlighten the world, and especially teens, about the realities and potentials of those with differences. Proudly, he delivered this message as a TEDxPittsburgh 2016 speaker in May.

David's future holds endless possibilities and is now sealed by the training and education provided by Notre Dame College. NDC was the perfect match for David...for both his strengths and his challenges. The size was ideal for learning, and it provided opportunities for unique relationships with his professors. In addition, the fine arts and campus ministry departments fired his passions and fueled his personal growth. These extracurricular activities enabled the balance to offset Dave's intense academic efforts.

NDC was a life-changing choice: first, for David, and now, for me. We are both so proud and thankful to be part of the falcon family!

Sandy Petrovic