

Emily & Patrick's Story

On Their Way to Stardom

For those of us who are ambulatory and can walk from a first floor to a second floor without a second thought, our living space can be narrow or up a flight of stairs or have certain characteristics that don't give us pause.



But for Emily and Patrick, finding a place that accommodates a wheelchair comfortably is both necessary and difficult, as evidenced by their current housing situation where “everything is compromised.” Housing has been a struggle for Emily and Patrick on every level – they’ve put out feelers everywhere but mobile homes don’t have any land, rents might go up at a moment’s notice in the current environment, and very little housing is truly accessible. And their cycle of hospital stays and rehab for Patrick has curtailed their options in all aspects of their life.

Now, however, Emily and Patrick are on the path to owning a home in Northampton. For this couple who currently reside in the eastern part of the state, there is a strong draw to western Massachusetts. Emily has family in the area and at one time worked for a local health care facility here, so she has some knowledge of the local provider scene that they will access when they move here. One of the few comforts of their current living situation is proximity to a rail trail, navigable for Patrick’s wheelchair. “We can bring our rail trail with us,” Emily notes, excited that their future home is near acres of conservation land, and the couple looks forward to getting out into nature with their black lab/shepherd mix, Sambuka, and tuxedo cat, Ninja.



Emily recalls learning of Habitat for Humanity years ago and thinking what an awesome program the organization provided. Now she and Patrick are right in the thick of it, making trips to western Mass to spend a day on the construction site. Patrick says he struggled at first, but the volunteer site supervisors “make things very doable. They set us up and are great with guidance. And everyone on the construction site is there because they want to be there. Amazing!”

The couple describes how “down in the dumps” they had been feeling and how they are now filled with optimism. “You always have a dream for what your life could be,” Patrick says, “and before now we’ve tried to reach for the stars but have never been able to reach them. Now, stardom is right around the corner! Some of the stars fell from the sky and those are all the volunteers and site supervisors who have made our lives full of smiles and gratitude. I thank all of the great people involved at Habitat for Humanity who enriched our lives and made our dreams come true. Thanks so much.”