

### THE LIGHT IS COMING - Alumni Spotlight

Lukas craved freedom. He didn't want rules or consequences to get in the way of what he wanted to do. He thought he was "living the life" – no school, no authority, just partying and drugs . . . but the reality was his life was falling apart, and his family was in a constant state of worry.

Anneke and Brett, his parents, were trying to help not only by praying but spending hours each week taking him to therapy, hoping to stop his drug use, academic issues, and out-of-control behavior. They were exhausted and running out of ways to keep him safe. They made one of the hardest decisions any parent has to make when they decided to place Lukas in out-of-home treatment. Anneke says, "God affirmed our choice every step of the way."

On the shortest and darkest day of the year, December 12, 2018, Lukas arrived at Patch. He was an angry, disrespectful, and explosive 16-year-old with no real relationship with his parents. He was committed to *not* changing. Yet over the next eight months, he struggled and learned to take personal responsibility rather than taking the path of least resistance. His struggles at Patch were a "positive sign" to his parents, showing that he was working through his issues and feelings – which in turn would bring awareness and ultimately would develop life tools. During phone calls and visits, they saw "the progress of God's work in Lukas' life." They credited the progress to the "positive relationships with the boys' dorm staff, his therapists, teachers, and all who provided and enforced the firm boundaries that Lukas needed."

A big lesson Lukas learned is that "you do not get to pick who you are around, most of the time." He didn't choose the staff and other boys. He says, "You could either fight it and not succeed in the program or understand life is full of things we have no control over and make the best of it." He also discovered that he has the chance to "inspire change in others." Being one of the older boys in the program, he took that opportunity to heart and did "the right thing" because the younger boys looked up to him and followed his lead.



Lukas then . . .



. . . Lukas now.

Lukas means "bearer of light." In the years before Patch, his mom says, "Lukas' light had been extinguished . . . he was no longer the joyful, extroverted, energetic kid." So, it seems fitting that they brought him to Patch at the darkest time of the year. Daylight increased each season he was at Patch and his family saw signs of change and would cling to the signs that "the light is coming."

*You could either fight it and not succeed in the program or understand life is full of things we have no control over and make the best of it. - Lukas*

On August 16, 2019, Lukas graduated, and he and his parents were beaming with joy and excitement. It was the end of one chapter and the beginning of another. This new chapter has had ups and downs. The first year was rough, and while his relationship with his parents was "miles better," he still struggled. His parents worried about how he would "navigate the real world" and feared him leaving the house. But with the help of a recovery high school with structure and support, an Al-Anon parent support group, better boundaries, and more open communication with the family, he graduated from high school.

He's been sober since his intake day nearly four years ago. He's working as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for AMR ambulance service and is training as a fire cadet with his local fire department. To this day, he still goes back to that big lesson he

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## YOUTH PROGRAM HAPPENINGS

### Stickball & Kitchen Duty with the Boys



### Boise Zoo & Swimming with the Girls



## SCHOOL AT PATCH

Teens don't come to Project Patch unless they are going through significant emotional or behavioral challenges. Additionally, nearly every client also has school problems, including failing classes, disruptive behavior, or skipping classes. Many of them are capable students but are disorganized and not turning in work. Increasingly, parents are seeking help because their kids are refusing to even go to school.



Students presenting a poster in school.

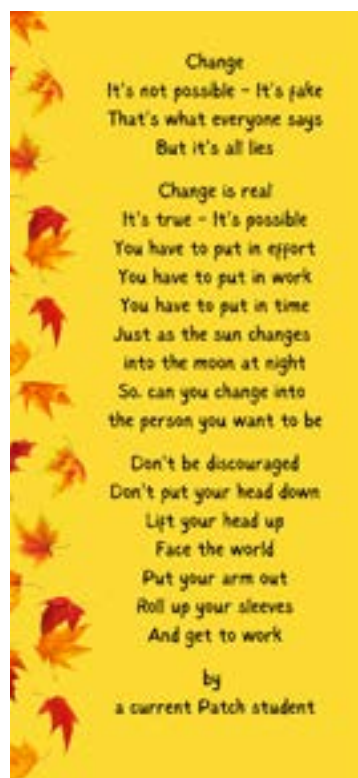
So, while they are at Patch to work on themselves first and foremost, their schooling remains important. In addition to individual, family, and group therapy, students attend our on-site school, which is recognized by the State of Idaho Department of Education and accredited by Cognia, the largest accreditation system for educational institutions in the world.

School at Patch is a self-paced mastery program with individualized plans for each student. This student-centered curriculum allows them to learn at their own pace, make up lost credits, and fill in educational gaps or missed learning benchmarks. We prepare students, academically and socially, to return home prepared to re-enter school and continue their education.

Some other interesting facts about school at Patch:

- It is a year-round school with 10-week quarters and 3-week breaks. Grades are issued each quarter, and because students often enter Patch or graduate mid-quarter, we are able to issue partial credit.
- We have a 1:9 teacher-student ratio. Our teachers can focus on teaching while direct care staff assists with tutoring and classroom management.
- Our teaching staff includes Dana, who teaches Math and Science; Stephanie, who teaches English, History, and Speech & Interpersonal Communication; and Angelo, our chaplain, who teaches Bible & Religious Studies.
- Our 4-day school week allows us to spend Fridays doing extended work and play projects.
- Students participate in PE with their dorms, which includes traditional sports like basketball, soccer, or volleyball or unique activities like hiking, swimming, or kayaking.

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A poem written at school.

**TO DONATE GO TO**  
[www.projectpatch.org/donate](http://www.projectpatch.org/donate)



Project Patch has been partnering with parents since 1984 to help teens with behavior problems. Parents trust our licensed and accredited Youth Program in the mountains of Idaho as a therapeutic place for their teen to gain the insight, skills, and motivation to live a positive life.

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- Life skills are also a key part of the program and include household skills, such as working in the kitchen and dorm/room tasks, outside skills, such as chopping firewood and mowing the lawn, and useful skills, such as working in the wood shop and mechanic shop.
- The Idaho Digital Learning Alliance (IDLA) is an online option for making up credits, working ahead, or taking courses not available at Patch.
- We offer, when appropriate, GED preparation and testing for a high school diploma, as well as dual credit through CLEP prep and testing for college credits.
- During the quarterly 3-week school breaks, students may go on home leave or dorm outings such as camping, backpacking, or day trips.

Another special part of our school is our mascot, Artemis (Arty), Dana's great big golden retriever/Pyrenees with bright blue eyes. She greets students as they arrive at school each day and seems to know which students need an encouraging visit during class. She will happily sit next to them as they do their work in hopes of a scratch behind the ear or a pat on the head and is happy to take a walk with them between classes to clear their heads. She serves not only as a temporary replacement for all the dogs (or other pets) left behind when our students come to Patch but also as a good motivator to work hard to earn playtime with her as a reward.



School Mascot Arty at school.

Learn more about our school and see a video of Arty by going to [www.projectpatch.org/education](http://www.projectpatch.org/education).

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learned at Patch, but now it is coworkers and patients he doesn't get to choose. Even if it is hard, he can do the right thing – in this case, it is his duty to be the best he can be while on shift and provide quality medical care to those in need.

*The light is coming. - Anneke (Lukas' mom)*

We believe Lukas' light is brighter than ever. He has the freedom to do what he wants when he wants, and we are so proud that what he wants to do is serve others with honesty and integrity, which he says "go miles in the world."

**\*\*Note to Patch supporters from Lukas:** For those who are investing time and/or money into Project Patch, thank you. I would not be who and where I am today without your support. For us kids living through Patch . . . it can be life-changing for those who want it to be.

**Bonus Material from Lukas and Anneke can be found at [www.projectpatch.org/Lukas](http://www.projectpatch.org/Lukas)**

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**GIVING  
TUESDAY**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH**

Help us raise \$2,500 at [www.projectpatch.org/GivingTuesday](http://www.projectpatch.org/GivingTuesday)

Falling right after *Black Friday* and *Cyber Monday*, **GivingTuesday** is all about encouraging people to do good. It is a worldwide event that "unleashes the power of radical generosity"!

**Everyone has something to give and every act of generosity counts!**



## WISH LIST

For those who prefer to give toward a specific project, the following list contains items that are needed, yet are not part of the operating budget.

40 Mattresses - \$300 each

2 Washers for Boys' Dorm - \$975 each

5 Cast Iron Dutch Oven - \$27 each \*\*

Pond Improvement Project - \$8,000

15 Shoe Chains - \$22 each \*\*

10 Mountain Bikes - \$1,200 each

Classroom Smartboard - \$3,000

10 Class Adaptive Seating - \$50 each

Chapel Music Rights - \$150

\*\* These items can also be purchased directly from Amazon at [www.projectpatch.org/AmazonWishList](http://www.projectpatch.org/AmazonWishList)

Please note on your gift if you would like it designated for a *specific* Wish List item or the *highest need* Wish List item. If the item has already been purchased, we will contact you for further instructions.

To donate via credit card:  
call 360-690-8495

OR

donate online at  
[www.projectpatch.org/wishlist](http://www.projectpatch.org/wishlist)

OR

mail a check to the address below

## CONTACT US

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[www.projectpatch.org](http://www.projectpatch.org)  
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Has your address, email or phone number changed?

Please, let us know!

## PIECING IT TOGETHER by Chuck Hagele

People get confused about Project Patch because it's similar to some familiar things, yet very different. It's easy for people to think it is a camp - because our campus is in the mountains with a pond, river, and a wealth of outdoor activities. While we try to have fun with our teens and do plenty of recreational things, our teens come to us because they have emotional and behavioral challenges and are not there to play. Our teens are also with us for six to fourteen months, much longer than a traditional camp.



Others assume we are a boarding school - because we have a school and dorms. While we do have many things in common with a boarding school, like a cafeteria, dorm staff, and roommates, and schooling is an integral part of what we do, it is not like a traditional boarding school. This newsletter has a whole article about our school and how it's different from a typical school.

### Is Project Patch a camp, a boarding school, juvenile detention?

We've had people imagine that Patch is like juvenile detention - where kids are sent when they aren't safe for their communities. One visit to our campus will assure you that we aren't a detention facility. We don't have fences, searchlights, guards, or cells. Most importantly, our teens are great kids who are struggling and need support. They aren't hopeless or dangerous and definitely aren't incorrigible. They are regular teens who, if they had their choice, wouldn't choose to be at Patch yet are still treated with respect and care as they learn to live purposeful and productive lives.

This newsletter and our website are put together to help you better understand our unique work at Project Patch. Yet we even struggle to describe the incredible teens we serve and the devoted team of staff who help them find hope and healing. The best way to understand us is to step onto our campus and see firsthand for yourself. We are not easy to get to, but I know it will be worth your time and you will leave inspired and encouraged. We'd love to give you a tour; call us at 360-690-8495 or email us at [info@projectpatch.org](mailto:info@projectpatch.org) to schedule your visit.

## EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT PATCH

**Fred Meyer**

### FRED MEYER COMMUNITY REWARDS

- Create or log in to your account at [fredmeyer.com](http://fredmeyer.com)
- Go to "My Account"
- Select "Community Rewards" on the left
- Search for Project Patch and click "Enroll"



### AMAZONSMILE IMPACT

- Log in to your Amazon account at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)
- Under "Accounts & Lists" select AmazonSmile
- Click "Change Charity" under Your Current Charity
- Search for Project Patch and click "Select"



### OFFICE DEPOT/OFFICE MAX GIVE BACK TO SCHOOLS

- At checkout in-store or online give School ID: 70237103