

# The Story of Kinship

Warren White and his wife, Mary Sicora are residents of St. Croix Falls and in November of 2007, they began to mentor James, currently a 7th grader at SCF Middle School. James was, at that time, struggling a bit in school, academically and behaviorally; however, it was clear that he was smart, capable and had lots to offer. He needed someone to take a special interest in him, take notice of his abilities, support and encourage him, push him and stand beside him. In the past year and a half, that is exactly what Warren and Mary have done. The three have formed a deep bond and comfortable camaraderie, not by doing anything fancy together but simply, by sharing life with each other.

One of the attributes that Warren and Mary appreciate about James is his willingness to try anything. “He has a ‘can-do’ attitude,” Mary shared. He also is showing a growing sense of humor, something Warren is getting a kick out of. As for James, he has enjoyed the opportunity to try new things during their time together. They have worked together, often out in the community doing service projects; they have created together, building squirrel feeders and car ramps; they have entertained together, James sitting among a group of adults; they have played together, bowling, board games, you name it; they have

learned together, snowshoeing, cross country skiing; they have adventured together, traveling to and sailing in Lake City; they have made mistakes together, almost flipping a fishing boat; and they have done homework together- yes homework. Through all of it, ask them what their most memorable time has been together? Their answer: chilling out at home, enjoying dinner and just being together- maybe playing a game.

People are busy and Warren and Mary are no different. They both work and are extremely active in the community; yet, they have found time to mentor a 12 year old boy. How? “Just take em’ along,” said Warren. He adds, “Being busy is not a good excuse to not get involved.” Whether it’s the grocery store, a Walmart run, or a meeting with a client, take em’ along if you can. Let them experience life with you.

If any of you are wondering how these experiences have impacted James, take a look at his beaming face and you will know! Oh, did I mention he has made the honor roll?

This article and photo was developed by Karalee Tollakson, Kinship Service Coordinator.

