VERLAND

212 Iris Road, Sewickley, PA 15143
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November 9, 2026

Dear Friend,

A few months ago, Lucas Ilie's father, Rob, wasn't sure his son would ever walk again.

Lucas is funny, sociable, and known for his big, boisterous laugh. This summer, as Lucas recovered from spinal surgery, his family searched for a home that could meet all of his needs, including support tailored to his autism. Many providers never responded. Verland called back the very same day.

A little over a month later, Lucas made Verland his new home, and his caregivers his extended family. From the start, his team created an individualized plan around what helps Lucas feel safe and comfortable, from keeping familiar foods on hand to giving him the freedom to choose his own snacks. And after many hours of hard work alongside his physical therapist, Lucas achieved an incredible milestone: he walked from his bedroom to the bathroom with the help of a gait trainer.

Rob shared what that peace of mind means to him: ***"Distance becomes less of a concern when I know Lucas is receiving exceptional, compassionate care at Verland."***

That is Verland at its best: showing up when families need us most, working together, and providing individualized care that honors each person's needs, abilities, and potential. More than 500 dedicated caregivers bring that commitment to life every day.

As the year comes to a close, will you make a gift to Verland? Your generosity helps provide the therapies, personalized support, and compassionate professionals that make milestones like Lucas's possible. It also helps ensure that the individuals and families who turn to Verland can find the care, dignity, and support they deserve.

You can make your gift by scanning the QR code on the enclosed reply card, visiting raisedonors.com/verland/donate, or returning the card with your check.

Thank you for believing in Verland and for being an important part of our family. Together, we can continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of the individuals we serve.

With gratitude,

Leland Sapp
Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Marianne DiMatteo, MSW
Chief Operating Officer

P.S. Lucas's full story is enclosed. We hope it shows what your generosity makes possible.

Verland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Lucas Ilie's Journey Home

Lucas is a people person. He's funny and sociable, with a big, boisterous laugh, and he quickly becomes a favorite of nearly everyone he meets. He's also a hard worker who, once he finds his rhythm, has a way of surprising people and exceeding expectations.

This summer, while Lucas was recovering from spinal surgery at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, his family faced one of their biggest challenges: finding a home that could meet Lucas's unique needs. Because of his autism and complex medical needs, traditional group homes weren't the right fit, and many providers never responded.

In a moment of desperation, they looked further beyond their home than they had before, and came across Verland. They reached out, and were on the phone with our team the same day.

Lucas's family toured Verland's campus. They visited other providers, too, but something about Verland felt different. As soon as they arrived, they knew they had found Lucas's new home.



His father, Rob, saw what he had been hoping to find: "Genuine caring people. They're not just there to punch a clock."

A little over a month later, Lucas made Verland his new home, and his caregivers his extended family. To prevent Lucas from refusing food, the team recognized the importance of routine and familiar "safe foods." They worked to ensure he had weekly groceries stocked with foods he knew and enjoyed. At Rob's request, staff also encouraged Lucas to choose his own snacks, giving him a greater sense of freedom, independence, and control over his daily life.

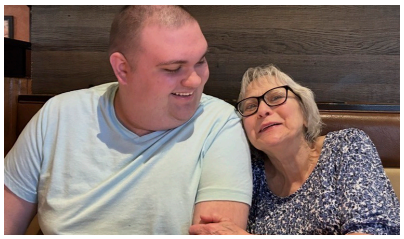
Then came the moment Lucas and his family dreamed about for months: Lucas was walking again. For Rob and everyone supporting Lucas, it was a powerful reminder of what patience, determination, and care can make possible. It is individuals like Lucas that remind us daily of what Verland is all about.

> *"Distance becomes less of a concern when I know Lucas is receiving exceptional, compassionate care at Verland."*
>
> **ROB ILIE, LUCAS'S FATHER**

LUCAS'S STORY CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE →

Every Step, Together

Lucas, with the support of his team, made his progress possible.



PHYSICAL THERAPY

After many hours of hard work, Lucas reached an incredible milestone and walked from his bedroom to the bathroom with the help of a gait trainer. Raj Rengaramanujam, his Physical Therapist, shares: "When Lucas was initially assessed, he demonstrated difficulties with functional mobility and required considerable assistance and encouragement. Through consistent therapy, gait training using the Rifton gait trainer, and collaborative efforts from PT, OT, and direct support staff, he has shown significant improvement in his walking ability, confidence, and functional independence, contributing to a better quality of life."

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Lucas is showering and shaving again. Bryan Rogers, his Occupational Therapist, shares: "Working with Lucas has been incredibly rewarding. Through consistent occupational therapy focused on functional transfers, bathing, toileting, and activity tolerance, we've seen meaningful improvements in his ability to participate in daily activities and become more independent. His progress is a testament to his determination and the collaborative efforts of Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, and the dedicated DSPs who support and encourage him every day."

A FAMILY'S LOVE

"Throughout Lucas's referral and admission, his parents showed their love through compassion, commitment, advocacy, and determination to find a place where he could feel safe and secure and have every opportunity to thrive. Seeing the thought and care they put into this transition left a lasting impression, and their dedication to Lucas is truly admirable."

TODD PONTIOUS, ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR, VERLAND

"He's doing remarkably well; better than I ever expected."

ROB ILIE, LUCAS'S FATHER

Help us write the next story.

Your gift makes progress like Lucas's possible.

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