



FAVARH - THE ARC OF THE FARMINGTON VALLEY

# Spotlight on Staff

CRAIG GERMAIN

SKILL TRAINER, BOARD OF ED

Craig Germain started with Favarh in October 2020 as a Skill Trainer for Project SEARCH under the Board of Education Program. Prior to working at Favarh, Craig worked for a similar nonprofit in Massachusetts as a job coach for the Day Program. He has an extensive background supporting individuals with IDD. And he's held numerous jobs of varying types from Assistant Food and Nutritionist for a hospital to Karaoke DJ. He is a man who never stops learning.

Craig moved to Connecticut from Massachusetts to be with his wife Lauren, the love of his life. They recently settled in together in their Coventry home with Craig's long-time companion, a Corgi-Chihuahua named Lily. Then, Craig says, he was lucky to be hired by Favarh to support Project SEARCH interns at UConn Health in Farmington. "It's been a blessing for me and I've learned a lot."

Craig spends his days assisting a group of Favarh interns ages 18-21 who are learning new skills as part of Project SEARCH. The interns progress through three different rotations within the hospital over the course of the school year. It's Craig's job to follow them throughout the day and mentor them as they complete their responsibilities. Right now, interns are ending their third "internship" and getting prepared to search for jobs in the community beyond the walls of Project SEARCH.

Craig's says his biggest accomplishment in life is being a father to his daughter Jilly. A former dental assistant, she now resides in Norfolk, Massachusetts with her husband and their two

children, Avery (7) and Tanner (4). "It's the cutest thing to watch them learn and grow," he says. Among their favorite activities are horseback riding, gymnastics and playing with unicorns. "I just love being their grandfather."

Another important aspect of Craig's life is his faith. "I'm a born-again Christian." He believes that the work he is doing with Favarh is God's work. "I look at my faith as helping me to be a better person, knowing right from wrong, treating people the way they want to be treated." Craig says he works at his faith every day, studying the faith to learn as much about it as he possibly can. "It's almost like studying to be a doctor. I try to read about it and practice it every day."

What Craig likes most about working at Favarh is watching his interns succeed and grow. "We've had people grow so much as individuals. It's a good feeling to know that you're helping this person move forward in life and to know you've had a part in it." He feels good about helping to mold young people's minds and says, "It's a very big responsibility and I don't take it lightly. I always say to my interns, no matter what you do, do it to the best of your ability."

Craig offers this advice to anyone joining the Favarh Team. "Working at Favarh can be a life-changing experience, especially if you're younger. My motto is, 'Nothing ventured, nothing gained.' It's basically what we make of it. It's very rewarding work but it's not for everyone. When you see the impact on people, that's the reward!"