

Name of Polk Resident: Michael Charles Ibanez (Mikey)
Guardian: Melissa Ibanez (ph #(814) 270-9170)
Age: 58 (DOB 08/18/1961)
Disability: Profoundly mentally retarded,

Michael was born August 18, 1961. At 14 months of age, Michael experienced a sudden onset of unconsciousness and complete paralysis of the right side of his body. He was first hospitalized November 1, 1962 at Memorial Hospital in Niagara Fall, NY. His full diagnosis was encephalitis with minimal right hemiparesis, severe brain damage, and speech disturbance. Michael resided at home with his family until age 9 when he was placed in Polk Center on February 2, 1970. Michael has lived in Woodside since 2001. I have been Michael's guardian since March 12, 2002. Michael's diagnosis through Polk Center is profound mental retardation. He also has a diagnosis of osteoporosis, chronic seizure activity, balance inconsistencies, GERG (gastroesophageal reflux disease), macrocytic anemia and chronic ischemia chronic swelling of his legs and feet. Additionally, he suffers with constipation, mild oral and pharyngeal dysphagia, scalp seborrhea and dry lips and skin. He has only one functioning lung which often results in upper respiratory infections.

Mikey's life at Polk is wonderful. He has been with most of the men he lives with for many, many years. I have known and worked with the RSA's that take care of his for many, many years and many of them are like family. Since 2014 my Dad has been unable to make the trip to Polk to see Mikey every other weekend so Trevor Hensel (Mikey's main RSA) and another RSA (Usually Jamison Daniels) started bringing Mikey up to see our Dad once a month. Our Dad passed away in 2017 but it brought him much happiness to see Mikey on a regular basis. Additionally, Polk does many wonderful things in terms of programming. Mikey gets out regularly into the community – attending Pirate Games and going out to breakfast and lunch and other activities. We attend the Family Picnics and the Annual Dinner Dance with Mikey. Mikey gets to enjoy the pool twice a week and I have been down to take him to the pool and enjoy it too. Back in the day, our family even went on trips with Polk to places such as Niagara Falls, the Niagara Parks Butterfly Conservatory and Marineland and Game Farm. We have such wonderful memories. In 2010 and 2016 he was very sick and I was so thankful that Polk provided someone at the UPMC Hospital around the clock for him as he is non-verbal and would not have been able to communicate or make his needs known to the nurses, doctors and staff at UPMC. The RSA's "know" Mikey – they understand his needs and how he is able to communicate. The folks from Polk brought Mikey to my wedding as well as to our Dad's funeral – like I said, the folks at Polk make it possible for Mikey to attend family events as well as social outings with other residents of Polk Center. For 2017-18 he participated in 20 off grounds trips that included various restaurants, local parks, movies, and concerts.

I am very afraid and concerned about what will happen if Mikey is moved. He knows no other place. I remember when we took Mikey to Polk for the first time. He would not eat and my

Dad had to drive the 2 hours to Polk every day to feed him until he finally acclimated. I worry that other places will not provide the holistic approach that Polk does – programming, health care, and physical therapy all within a loving family centered environment. I am concerned how long it would take for new staff to “know” Mikey and how he expresses himself. I also fear how far away this move might take him from me as I am very active in his life and as I age, it is harder for me to travel as well. Mikey has lived at Polk Center for just under 50 years. THIS is his home and all he knows.