

ABLE Residents Get Out the Vote!

For the second time ever, two of our residents—Yolanda and Mike—made their voice heard in the November Election.

The first time was in 2016, when both residents said they would like to vote if given the opportunity.



Figure 1

This year, to prepare for the big decision, long-time Direct Support Professional Dave Kato helped to facilitate unbiased current events and political education conversations. Mike and Yolanda watched the PBS Frontline production “The Decision” as well as regular news programming to gather relevant information. The ABLE staff team was transparent about and committed to supporting Yolanda and Mike without influencing their decisions, while emphasizing that it was *their* choice to make.

To be safe, both used mail-in ballots. It was very exciting when the ballots first came to the house!



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Figure 1: Mike and Yolanda vote for the first time in 2016

Figure 2: Yolanda receives her mail-in ballot

Figure 3: Yolanda and Mike sharing excitement about getting their ballots

Figure 4: Mike with his mail-in ballot

Then came the moment when they actually placed the ballots in the drop-box at the Civic Center...



Figure 5



Figure 6

Since then, we have received notification that both ballots have been received and will be counted.

Yolanda shared that it was important for her to vote because she wanted for people to “...listen to me, and understand me.” When asked how she decided, Yolanda said, “I listened to them on the news, and to what they were talking about—Joe Biden and Donald Trump.” She said she made her choice for the candidate who will “...do more for us and protect social security.” She listened to “...the way [the candidates would] speak and present themselves,” and chose the one who “...spoke more intelligently and was more open.” She said she chose the person she would want to hang out with.

Mike was adamant about his choice for President this year. He has been closely following developments around the Coronavirus and has asked for consistent updates on any vaccine progress. When asked why voting was important for him, Mike said, “I’d like to see this pandemic end. I feel—why should we have to stay at home this long?” When asked how he made his decision, he shared, “Yolanda and I talked it over. We felt we shouldn’t have to stay home. It’s not the same.”

Many thanks to Dave Kato for supporting these two in sharing resources and facilitating meaningful conversations, while conscientiously keeping his own political views off the table!



Figure 5: Mike and Dave Kato after placing Mike's ballot in the official drop box

Figure 6: Mike, Sam and Yolanda celebrating the moment of casting the ballots