



UTAH DD COUNCIL ADVOCACY AWARDS 2011: BIOGRAPHIES OF AWARD RECIPIENTS

JAMES O'NEILL: Self Advocate of the Year



James O'Neill was born in Maryland on June 28, 1968, the 6th child to Henry and Catherine O'Neill. The doctors told our parents that James would never be able to read or use the left side of his body, but my parents helped James to overcome this prediction and he went on to graduate from Mayfield High School in Las Cruces, New Mexico in 1987. James moved to Park City in 2005 where he continues his lifelong participation in Special Olympics as well as activities with the National Ability Center in Park City. He has learned how to snowboard and ski, water ski, rock climb and has an ongoing passion for horseback riding. He also volunteers at the NAC.

James currently has a job at The Fresh Market in Park City and is active in our community. Family is a priority for James and he enjoys visiting relatives all over the world, including New York City, New Mexico and Scotland.

In addition to being a great self-advocate, James is always looking after the best interest of those he loves. Whenever Chris needs help or just someone to boost his morale, James is always his first call.

REP. PAUL RAY: Legislator of the Year



Representative Paul Ray is a member of the Utah House of Representatives for the Clearfield area. He introduced and was the driving force behind the passage of HB230 along with Sen. Lyle Hillyard. HB230 made possible the removal of the "R" word from all Utah State code. Utah is one of an estimated 35 **states** which have enacted or introduced legislation to **remove** the word. Representative Ray is the Chair of the House Health and Human Services Committee and a member of the House Judiciary Committee, Judiciary, Law Enforcement, and Criminal Justice Interim Committee, among others, and has been a member of the House of Representatives for

over nine years.

BRENDON HANSEN: Child Sibling of the Year



Brendon was born in November of 1997, blessing his parents after 10 years without children. Two years later, his brother was born, and immediately the medical issues came. Brendon took it all in stride, and welcomed his brother home. On his first day home, even before Jacob came out of the car seat, Brendon was sharing his toys.

Throughout elementary school, Brendon helped his brother, helping him to find great friends, and teaching him to play card games and video games. Brendon's friends gather at his house, and often welcome Jacob in to play. Brendon has been a great example at church, where Jacob gets to see him every week, passing the sacrament and serving in his quorum presidency.

Brendon also loves to cook, and earned his food handler's permit entirely on his own. With his entrepreneurial spirit, he plans to open restaurants and card shops. He also loves music, and plays the violin and the drums.

We all have tough days, but Brendon's kindness, patience, and sacrifices show his strong love for Jacob, and for his family.

MARK KOELBEL: Media Representative of the Year



Mark Koelbel is the KUTV2 news anchor in Salt Lake City and has been with the station for almost 15 years.. He has been recognized for his professional approach to journalism in covering news stories and displaying a heartfelt interest in his community.

Mark teamed up with Mountain America Credit Union to feature the Pay It Forward program that is shown every week on KUTV2 News at 10. This feature has highlighted South Valley School and programs such as Angel Hands and Kindred Spirits. Showcasing programs such as these not only increase awareness, but educate the general population as well about people

with developmental disabilities.

Mark is very active in the community speaking to special interest groups of all kinds. He is KUTV'S "School 2 Careers" spokesperson and loves to speak to students regarding work based learning opportunities. Mark is married to Pamela Wilkie Koelbel and enjoys tennis, basketball and playing the drums.

RITA BOUILLON: Educator of the Year



Rita has been an educator for 28 years. She has worked as a Speech and Language Pathologist, the Health Services Administrator and as a Principal of both the Jordan Valley School and currently the Kauri Sue Hamilton School. Rita opened the Kauri Sue Hamilton School with a great vision for the students and staff. She truly strives to improve the quality of life for each and every student and their families.

Rita is an exemplary leader. A school theme that is always in the back of Rita's mind is "Every Child, Every Day, Whatever It Takes". Rita takes this to heart and is the first one at a child's home to ride the bus to and from school when it's needed. She is the first to arrive at a group home if a student is having a problem. She attends meetings with students and their families whenever asked and is always doing what is best for students. She has spent many hours working on getting curriculum together for staff and for students with severe disabilities and knows each and every student by name and truly cares about each one.

PATRICK DIAL: Adult Sibling of the Year



Patrick Dial is the younger brother of Jennifer "JJ" Dial, a young woman with Down syndrome. From the time Patrick was a small child he has been a support and caregiver for his big sister. As children they played together and conspired together and even took a karate class together where JJ was able to earn her black belt with help from her brother.

Patrick is now in college and each morning he takes his sister to a class where she works on many skills. Some days he stays and participates in the learning activities with her. He is an amazing brother who challenges his sister to increase her abilities and provides support for her to

participate in events.

JAMES MCFADDEN: Parent of the Year



James McFadden moved to St. George Utah several years ago with his family, which includes a son, Jonny, with Down syndrome. James noticed a need for a parent driven support group, so organized the Southern Utah Down Syndrome Association. This is a group where parents of people with Down syndrome can discuss local needs and help determine what services or programs would benefit people with developmental disabilities in the area.

James has coordinated several Buddy Walks for Down syndrome awareness, annual Christmas parties, swimming parties, monthly teen activities, a Harley Davidson Easter Ride fundraiser and some educational meetings.

He is a dedicated father who is working to support his son as well as creating new resources for people with disabilities.