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HSC Foundation announces winner of 2011 Advocates in Disability Award

Young advocate, Trenton Gilstrap will use the award for H.I.P. Kids outings

WASHINGTON – June 1, 2010 – The HSC Foundation (HSCF) is pleased to recognize the outstanding leadership of a young disability advocate and recipient of the 2011 HSCF Advocates in Disability Award (ADA), Trenton Gilstrap of Brandywine, MD. A young entrepreneur, Gilstrap is the co-founder of Mind Expansion Community Services, Inc.'s Hidden Inspirations Project (H.I.P Kids), a nonprofit project committed to fostering relationships among young adults with and without disabilities.

“As someone living with epilepsy, I felt sharing my story helped those without disabilities understand my perspective – thereby bridging a gap most people choose to ignore,” said Trenton Gilstrap. “Far too often, individuals with disabilities can be unfairly isolated and even hide their disability from others. My hope is to continue to expand and strengthen peer relationships through community service, social events and disability awareness.”

In its fifth year, the ADA program honors an individual between the ages of 14 and 26, who has been dedicated to positively affecting the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The winner is awarded \$3,000 as a result of their advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities and receives up to an additional \$7,000 to be used towards a project that will benefit the disability community. Gilstrap will use the \$7,000 in funding to provide three outings for H.I.P. Kids members, all designed to promote socialization and life skills. The group will be traveling to the Baltimore Aquarium, Six Flags and Great Wolf Indoor Water Park.

“Trenton is truly an exceptional individual and has made such an impact within the Washington, DC area,” said Thomas W. Chapman, EdD, MPH, president and CEO of The HSC Foundation. “He is the ideal role model for disability advocates and we thank him for what he’s done to empower and engage the disability community.”

Gilstrap’s award is made possible by the Sarah Beth Coyote Foundation and The HSC Foundation. Past winners have achieved a variety of noteworthy accomplishments, from establishing a new contest that commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, to eliminating outdated and stigmatizing language from Virginia State code. Ari Ne’eman, a winner from 2008 who founded a nonprofit organization which advances the principles of the disability rights movement with regard to autism, was recently appointed by President Barack Obama to the National Council on Disability.

HSCF will present Gilstrap with his award on June 9, 2011 at a reception from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on the rooftop terrace of the Nixon Peabody building located at 401 9th Street NW. Press interested in attending should contact Korena Cline by email at korena@epicprgroup.com or by phone at (703) 299 – 3404.

About HSC Foundation

The HSC Foundation (HSCF) is dedicated to improving access to services for individuals who face social and health care barriers due to disability and chronic illness. It puts a particular emphasis on youth, especially those who are transitioning to adulthood. . Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc., The HSC Pediatric Center, HSC Home Care, LLC and Special Needs Consulting Services are subsidiary organizations of the Foundation. To learn more about The HSC Foundation, visit <http://www.hscfoundation.org>.

About The HSC Foundation's Youth Transitions Initiative

The Advocates in Disability Award Program is part of HSCF's Youth Transitions Initiative. As a component of the initiative, this year the HSCF will open the first National Youth Transitions Center in Washington, DC. The facility will offer programs and services to help young people and veterans with disabilities build paths to independence and to the world of work. The center will also be a hub for regional and national disability organizations, policymakers, government agencies, and disability advocates.

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