



# The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



Volume 11, Issue 09

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**W**elcome to the October, 2018 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to respond to the question, “*What does disability awareness mean to you ?*”

This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on how they have faced disability discrimination. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this October, 2018 edition of *The Noodle!*



### Current Members:

John Baldino  
Shevie Barnes  
Derek Carraway  
Rocky Castro  
Alexander Gonzalez  
Dakota Smoot  
Josh Tapia  
Christina Waldron  
Serena Wetmore  
Brandon White  
Niki Germain - FYC  
Youth Advisor

Don't  
DISmy  
ABILITY



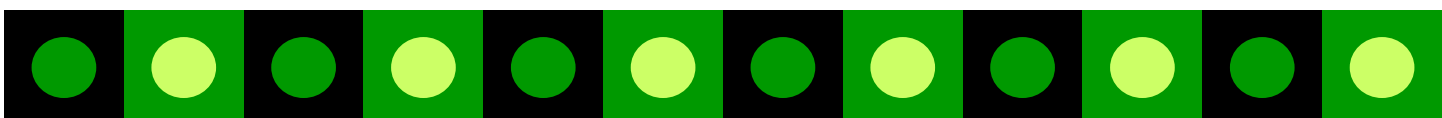
## **Our Ongoing Battle Against Discrimination**

One of the most pivotal events in disability history, at least from my point of view, was the Capitol Crawl. On March 12, 1990, a large group of people with physical disabilities climbed the steps of the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. This event was successful in its display of the lack of disability access in government buildings. This was a big moment for disability advocacy, because it showed non-disabled people the problems we face almost every single day, things that they never even think about. While our problems today may be a bit less obvious, that doesn't mean they no longer exist.

For example, people with physical disabilities, like myself, have trouble socializing with people their own age. It's not because they don't know how to do so, but because people often won't give them a chance. Sometimes I meet people, and they think I don't know how to talk. They think I'm a little kid, and they don't know how to do regular hangout stuff with me, just because of my wheelchair. All of these are discriminatory barriers that we need to overcome.

I face discrimination almost everywhere I go, including with something as simple as doors. Sometimes the automatic doors don't work and need to be repaired. Sometimes I can't reach the button, and sometimes they have neglected to install an accessible door at all. When I go to class and people neglect to open the door, it makes me feel like I'm not welcome, and it reminds me that I am disabled in a non-disabled world. This is why we need to communicate to other people about our needs and our rights, not only as citizens, but as human beings, just like our predecessors did for us at the Capitol Crawl.

*By Serena Wetmore*





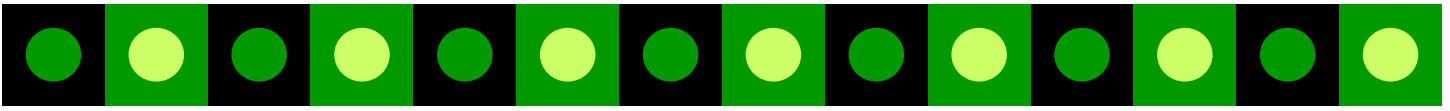
## **My Fun, My Teaching Method, and My Voice: Disability Awareness Taught in a New Way**

Sometimes I play Roblox, but I also use it to teach other kids about Disability Awareness Week.

In Roblox, you can play a variety of games. You can choose to play role play, to sci-fi, and so on. Many different kids, from grade school to college, play Roblox, but not everyone plays just for fun. Some go to conventions and compete against each other. They even have their very own awards show, featuring the best of each year, for example, “Best Creator of the Year,” and other players vote on the nominees. The awards are called “the Bloxxys.” I was nominated in 2014, one year before I joined the Florida Youth Council.

After I joined, I learned a whole lot more than what was rarely taught in middle school in Texas about disability awareness. I strongly believe that kids need to learn about it, either in school, online, or at a conference. It is sad to say it is just not mandatory to teach it, so teachers think very little of it. Any way you look at it, someone has to get the word out. So why don't we step up on the front lines of the injustice and do something about it? But the question is, will we do anything about it? If we want change in our society we must be the ones to push for it!

*By Dakota Smoot*



## **We Can Change the World**

It's October, and I have to say this is my favorite time of year. Growing up it was always my dream to educate those I meet with disabilities. This year I have been given the opportunity to be Ms. Wheelchair Florida. Having this title has given me the courage to go above and beyond to share my story.

This October, my ideas and plans are to directly help people with disabilities change the world's perspective. It's said that a total of 75% of Americans with disabilities are not given a fair opportunity to work.

I currently have created a nonprofit called RADD, which stands for Rising Against Disabilities and Discrimination. RADD has many things that it has to unleash.

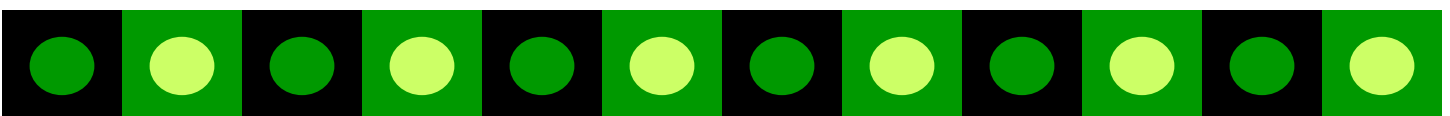
My question to everyone today is, what are you doing to change your world?

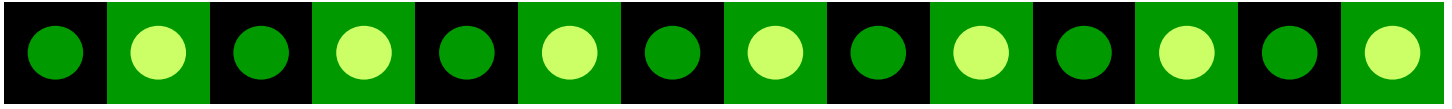
*By Shevie Barnes*

## **Disability Discrimination**

I have faced disability discrimination when I have applied for jobs, and when I have gone out to eat at restaurants with my family. Most of the places where I have applied to work would not hire me because of my hearing loss and the sores on my arms. When I was growing up, my family would go out to eat every weekend. I would have to talk loud to the waitress or waiter, and they would tell me to lower my voice because I was making other people stare at us. People would also stare at my uncle who has a disability. I would hear people say that we do not belong in public settings, and I would be so mad about it. I would tell people that we are people who need help with things.

*By Christina Waldron*





## What Disability Discrimination Means to Me

To me, disability discrimination means treating employees less than kindly because they have a disability. Luckily, in my life I have not faced any discrimination because of my disability. If I had I would feel uncomfortable, because I would know they were treating me differently. I believe that disability discrimination is wrong and negative for the community. I believe people who have a disability are the same or equal to those who do not have a disability. If I was working at Cavallo Farms and I was making less money than my coworker, and we were doing the same job, I would feel uncomfortable and unhappy. I would go to the employer and talk about increasing my pay so that it would be equal and fair.

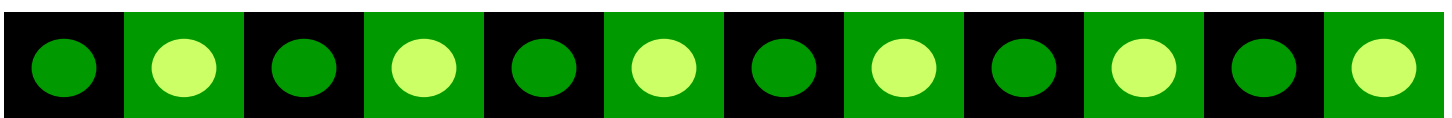
One way that we can stop disability discrimination and improve the working environment for people who have a disability is to have reasonable accommodations. We can stop this cycle of discrimination by making pay and benefits equal to those without a disability. Employers can use reasonable accommodations to make the work environment easily accessible to perform the duties of the job. Even though I have not faced disability discrimination, I still know that it is unfair and that change needs to be made for those who experienced disability discrimination.

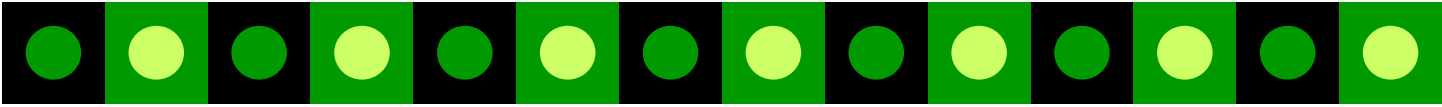
*By John Howard Baldino*

## Opicular Degeneration

My name is Brandon White, I'm almost 17 years old and have opicular degeneration in my left eye. I know you probably are thinking that's not a disability. Well it is. It impacts a lot of my daily activities or goals for my future. My dream is be a pilot in the Air Force; however, with my disability in my eye, this may not happen. But, like those will disabilities of all aspects, we keep pushing forward to strive for greatness with determination and set new goals.

Disability Awareness is very crucial for everyone to be aware of. Disabilities come in all forms, and the more knowledge that is spread out to the communities and schools the more people will understand about it. The more awareness there is, the less emotional turmoil others will cause, as they will have an understanding and not just think it's weird or laugh. The biggest downfall within today's society is people don't take time to explain why a child may walk, talk, or even





act like a child without a disability. We need to all come together as a community to educate and spread awareness about the spectrum of disabilities out there. I believe everyone should be treated with respect and as an equal, as we all have our own unique personalities, but at the end of the day that's what makes us great.

*By Brandon White*

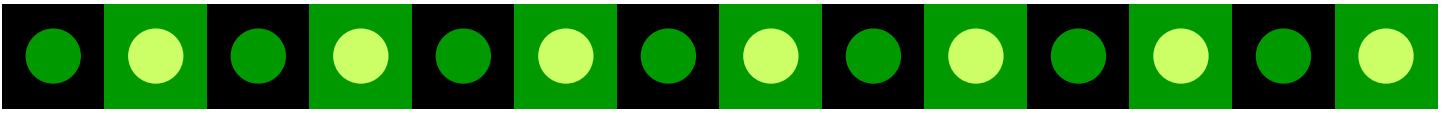


## **How I Have Faced Disability Discrimination**

As you probably already know, the first two weeks of October are Disability History & Awareness Weeks. Every October, we dedicate this edition of the FYC newsletter to writing something related to it. This go-around we are focusing on a time when we felt we have faced disability discrimination. I had to think about this for a moment, and then it hit me. Looking back, I feel I might have been up against this back when I was job hunting. I say this because although I did finally land a full-time job a few months back, it took me over three years to find and land it. During that time, I went on countless interviews, and never got a call back. I did all the right things, so it made me wonder if my disability had something to do with it. I just felt like it shouldn't have taken that long. All of the job ads I found and applied for during that span always had that disclaimer statement "We do not discriminate based on race, age, disability..." but sometimes it truly made me wonder. What do you think? I try not to worry about it, but now I hope the same thing doesn't become an issue if any advancement or promotion opportunities come my way in my current job. Again, it shouldn't, but I'll leave you with this question. What do you think?

*By Derek Carraway*





## **How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?**

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at [www.floridayouthcouncil.com](http://www.floridayouthcouncil.com). The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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