



# The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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**W**elcome to the October 2020 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to write about a significant individual with a disability from history or public life that has influenced them. This topic allowed members to share their thoughts on people with disabilities that have made an impact on their lives. 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 edition of *The Noodle*!

#### Current Members:

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**"INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT  
TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE."**  
*Martin Luther King, Jr.*



**"You Have the Power  
You Have the Responsibility  
To Make the Dream Live for All"**

-- Justin Dart, Jr



## Remembering FDR, Our Disabled President

This year for our annual October Disability History and Awareness edition of *The Noodle*, I thought I'd look back on one of our former presidents who had a disability. That would be Franklin Delano Roosevelt, or as he was commonly referred to, simply FDR. After having a successful run as a state senator in New York and a stint as the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, he fell ill while vacationing with his family. He would be diagnosed with polio, which would eventually leave him as a wheelchair user. He did not let that stop him though. He successfully ran for Governor of New York and went on to become our country's only three-term elected President. During his time, he started two things in particular that still help the disabled today: the Social Security Act, and what is known today as the March of Dimes. He serves as inspiration to all disabled people today, showing that you should never give up because of your disabilities. You can fight through them and possibly attain the nation's highest office, just as FDR did. So as we celebrate this year's Disability History and Awareness Weeks, remember to educate everyone you know about the importance of disability history and awareness, and show them that having a disability doesn't hold you back, and you can achieve whatever you want just as your non-disabled peers do.

*By Derek Carraway*



## Astronomical Odds

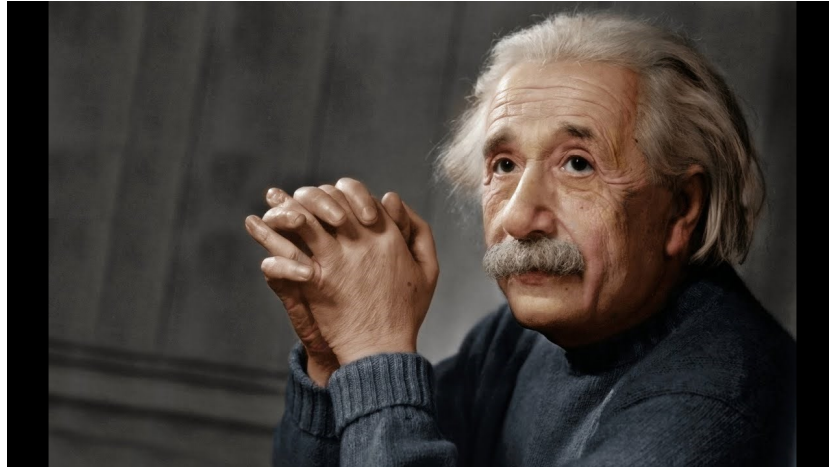
Stephen Hawking is known for being a brilliant physicist, but the reason I chose to write about him today is because of his ability to adapt in the face of adversity. Unlike some people I write about, Stephen Hawking developed his disability later in life. He was diagnosed with a motor neuron disease, ALS, more commonly called Lou Gehrig's Disease, while he was in college. Doctors thought he would only live about two more years with this disease and this caused Hawking to fall into depression. He saw no point in continuing his studies but was eventually persuaded to continue. This alone is reason enough for me to admire him, but the things he accomplished were amazing.

At first, he had trouble walking and his speech was difficult to understand. He was notorious for his crazy driving of his own wheelchair. Later, he learned to drive his own powerchair and used a voice synthesizer when he became unable to speak. His ability to adapt to these changing situations allowed him to continue his work in physics. He received dozens of awards for his research in physics and astronomy, including The Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Albert Einstein Award. He also had a family of three children with his first wife, and later married a second time.

He inspires me because he went from being physically capable to severely disabled and did not surrender to his disability. Not only did he achieve scientific marvels, but he was able to cultivate personal relationships and have a family of his own. One of the most important lessons I learned from Stephen Hawking is no matter the astronomical odds, you have to persevere through the challenges you face.

*By Serena Wetmore*





## Albert Einstein

I picked Albert Einstein because like him, my brain is different from most people. Many researchers think he was on the autism spectrum, some think he may have had epilepsy, and many think he had dyslexia.

As a child, he didn't speak until sometime around age 3, depending what resource you read. It's also reported that he repeated sentences, and he talked slowly. There are also accounts of him being socially awkward. He didn't wear socks or comb his hair. While not officially diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, many believe he was on the spectrum.

Interesting fact, they removed his brain eight hours after his death so that it could be studied.

As for epilepsy, he may or may not have had it. His brain, which has been examined numerous times since his death, definitely showed differences from "normal" brains. He had extra glial cells in his left parietal, but glial cells do not send out a signal like neurons do.

Most people know that Albert Einstein was brilliant. He's known for many of his scientific achievements and Nobel Prize. But not everyone knows that he had difficulty with school. Many researchers think he had dyslexia. But there was never an official diagnosis back in those days.

There is belief that communication between the right and left hemispheres at the corpus collosum of his brain was increased by his violin playing. Or he could have been born with a more developed corpus collosum. They don't know for sure. At any rate he had thick connections at the corpus collosum and three regions of his brain. Which could possibly explain his brilliance!

*By JJ Humphrey*

## The March to Disability Freedom

President George H.W. Bush changed my life for the better when he signed the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990. He gave other people with disabilities a chance to go places and have normal lives just like the non-disabled community. People don't always realize, and still don't, that just because you're disabled does not mean you can't do certain things, such as school, sports, driving, working, and having relationships.

Justin Dart and a community of disabled individuals gathered on the south lawn of the White House in Washington DC where President Bush signed the ADA into law. Decades later we still run into problems that can be better, but it made living easier in enormous ways. We have the copious disabled leaders of the past to thank for our rights we enjoy to this day, like hanging out with friends without fear of judgment from our counterpart community or working and not being judged for our disabilities, which is a blessing in itself, as well as attending sports event if we want. That one act in 1990 activated the start of disability communities around the nation in cities. Because of President George H.W. Bush's decision to sign the ADA law we can be a great change for the world and our communities. It starts with us and then it multiplies. If we do this today, in the future generation change will happen and impact the lives of others in a positive way. We can be change if we just believe in ourselves, and it starts by using our voice to be heard.

*By Emma Massey*





## **Rights for a Community at the Perfect Time**

In 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed on the south lawn of the White House. It was a day of unity for this nation. President George H.W. Bush's administration were the ones who got the act passed, and Justin Dart and his family worked hard to get this amazing bill signed and passed into law to ensure public rights for the American disability community, as well as good living conditions for their community and future members of the disability community. That one act in 1990 led to the beginning of disability advocate councils in the disability community around the nation in copious cities. An example of one is the Florida Youth Council. Today we have the right to go to the college of our choice without fear of being told we cannot attend just because of our disability and we also get to go to sports events if we choose to. We as a community can thank the people who bravely started 30 something years ago at the crawl on Washington in 1990 and got Republicans and Democrats to band together to get the bill passed and signed by President Bush. Never before has an act of kindness of this magnitude been shown for one community. Now we have buildings that people who cannot walk can access with no issue. Look, we can be a great change if we allow ourselves to be the change we need. It starts with you and it starts with me. We Are the change in this world. We can make a difference.

*By Dakota Smoot*



## **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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