



The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the August 2022 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 some of their favorite Youth Summit Memories. This topic allowed members to share their thoughts and memories about the Annual Youth Summit and what it means to them. 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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Dance Party!

By far, my favorite event at the Youth Summit is the Saturday night dance. The dance is my thing because I love music, I like to dance, and I enjoy getting together with others.

I've always loved music and I have played the piano for many years. Listening to it relaxes me and I listen to music all the time even when I drive. Whether it is rock and roll or the blues or even classical, I love it! The Beatles, the Bleachers, and Bruce Springsteen are my favorites right now. Their songs are good to dance to.

Dancing is fun and keeps me moving. Exercise is good for you and, as physical therapists say, "Motion is lotion!" The more you move, the more lubricated your joints are and the better your muscles, and bones are. I like the fast dances the best; they really keep me in shape.

The Saturday night dances are a great place to see everyone and meet new people. I see my fellow FYC members and the other attendees. It is fun to hang out with old and new friends. We can dance, sing, and talk about how the summit is going.

The Youth Summit's dance is great, but the whole event gives me opportunities to see people, learn new things, and have fun. I hope all of you come to the summit and enjoy yourselves.

By John Howard Baldino





My Favorite Youth Summit

Considering I've been to so many, this year makes a baker's dozen for me (12 of those on the council and one as an attendee), it was really hard to pick a favorite. Due to that, I'm going to go a different route and pick some of my favorite activities from different Summits over the years.

First, let's talk about the keynotes. I can't remember which year it took place but one that really stood out that was probably more interactive than any other we've ever had was the year that we had a wheelchair basketball team come and speak and show off their moves. It was really fun to watch.

As for movie night at the Summit, there has been a couple that I really enjoyed. The years we viewed *Oz, the Great & Powerful*, *The Greatest Showman*, and *Back to the Future* were probably my favorites, although every year they were enjoyable. Other things that make every year at the Youth Summit great are the sessions.

I think we've done a good job every year picking out good topics and finding good people to lead them for us. Whether it's that, eating lunch together giving us time to better get to know our attendees, the dance or anything else that goes down every year, it's all of it together that makes every year memorable, my favorite and looking forward to the next!

By Derek Carraway



What I love about the Annual Youth Summit

I don't have a specific event that stands out as being my all-time favorite as I have enjoyed every Youth Summit event I have been to. My all-time favorite thing about the youth summit event is that I get to meet a lot of youth with disabilities between the ages are 15-30.

When we are at the event, we get to do multiple break-out sessions and Keynote sessions, the sessions are always informative, and the keynotes are a lot of fun. Then we get to do lunch as a group in between the sessions, I love getting an opportunity to eat with new and old friends and to make new connections with all the youth.

At the end of the first day, we have a movie night, and we get to relax during the movie and be nice to everyone while enjoying lots of fun movie snacks. To finish off the event we have a dance party. This is a great time to have fun with everyone and party. After we are done with the dance, we say goodbye to our new and old friends.



After the dance we say we can't wait to see you again and you can even come to the family cafe and Youth Summit next year. Often as I'm leaving the hotel, I have people coming to me saying they had so much fun, and they can't wait for next year! It is such a fantastic event; We love hosting everyone and hope they all have as much fun as we do!

By Leah Gorman



My First and Favorite Summit

I'm so excited for this year's 15th Annual Youth Summit!! I know it's going to be great because last year's was great! I became a council member in 2020, I have only been to one summit, due to the pandemic, and that was last year's, and it was AWESOMELY, AMAZING!! The movie night and dance were so much fun! The speakers were informative. But the best part was making new friends!

Last year's movie night was Jumanji 2. Great movie and plenty of laughs. But the candy!! There was so much candy to choose from, and the popcorn, yum! I like snacks in case you can't tell! This year's movie is going to be a great one! I'm not sure if I can share the title or not, but it's one of my favorites. I especially love the soundtrack to the movie!! But we can't talk about that right now.

The dance was so much F-U-N!!! We did dances like the Chicken Dance, Cha Cha Slide and even some slow dancing. I had a blast hanging out with Lilibeth, Dawn, and Eric at the dance. I kind of hung out with everyone at some point. It was a lot of fun and I look forward to this year's dance!

I was a hall monitor a lot of the time, but I did get to hear the keynote speaker twice and it was very informative. I can't wait for this year's because it's my good friend, Mickey Rowe!! He is the first autistic actor to professionally play Christopher in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. And thanks to him, I think I might have been the YOUNGEST autistic actor to have professionally played Christopher at age 17, at the Tampa Repertory Theatre. I just finished Mickey Rowe's book, *Fearlessly Different*, and I highly recommend it! I could relate on so many levels. And I know everyone will be able to relate to him as the keynote speaker this year.

Making new friends and networking is one of the big draws of this event. It's so great to see and meet fellow individuals with similar disabilities. You know you're not alone and can relate to each other. It's a great event and a place where you can truly feel equal to everyone.

I can't wait for the 15th Annual Youth Summit! I hope to see you there. And remember, be kind, be you!



By JJ Humphrey



Drumming Up Happiness



My favorite event that I can remember from the Youth Summit was a speaker we had who played the drums. His name was Mike Veny. He was talking about depression and how it affected his life and explained that he used music to combat the depression. Throughout the presentation, he showed us various drumming techniques that conveyed his emotion at that moment in time. He made us all gather in a circle and passed out different kinds of drums and other instruments. He told us to play the emotion that we were feeling in that moment and then later we copied other people's patterns as we went around the circle. I really liked this activity because it helped get the jitters out of everyone (The way I remember it is that it was right before lunchtime, and everyone was hungry.)

I know it may seem like I wouldn't enjoy the drums because of my sensitive hearing. If you know me at all, you probably know that I frequently wear ear protectors especially if I expect loud noises. But for some reason I didn't mind the volume of the drums. Maybe because I just knew it was going to be loud and didn't wait in anticipation. Maybe because I just got desensitized once we got going with the music. Maybe because it was just so much fun. I guess it doesn't really matter, but perhaps this is something you might enjoy even if it seems scary. Or perhaps the lesson is that it's a good idea to try new things and see what you like! I hope we have another fantastic Youth Summit this year!



By Serena Wetmore



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. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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