



the NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the August 2026 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by members of The Florida Youth Council! For this issue of *The Noodle*, the members share their perspectives and some of what they enjoy doing for fun. We hope you enjoy learning about our experiences and our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

Current Members:

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Miles Stewart
Josue Tapia
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August brings a new school year and a new season of work for the Council. In this issue, members write about disability representation on screen, finding the balance between games and books, and a summer spent advocating across Florida. Thank you for reading, and if you would like to join us, the last page tells you how.



Representation Matters: *Skeleton Crew* Brings Disability to the Star Wars Galaxy

JJ Humphrey



The *Star Wars: Skeleton Crew* series has introduced audiences to a new generation of heroes, including the character KB, a young adventurer who uses a visual augmentation device. While the device is an important part of her life, it is not what defines her character. Instead, KB is portrayed as brave, intelligent, loyal, and determined, reminding viewers that disability is only one aspect of a person's identity.

This kind of representation is especially meaningful because KB is a young character. Seeing youth with disabilities take on leading roles in one of the world's most recognizable franchises sends a powerful message to children and teenagers who may not often see themselves reflected on screen. It shows that they, too, can be

heroes, leaders, and adventurers.

What makes KB's portrayal stand out is that her disability is treated naturally. It is acknowledged and incorporated into her story without becoming the focus of every scene or every challenge she faces. Like many people with disabilities in real life, her disability is simply one part of who she is. Her friendships, courage, curiosity, and determination are what truly define her.

As entertainment continues to evolve, authentic representation remains important. Characters like KB help audiences better understand disability while allowing young viewers to see themselves represented in positive, empowering ways. *Skeleton Crew* demonstrates that heroes come from all backgrounds and experiences, making the Star Wars galaxy feel more welcoming and inclusive for everyone.



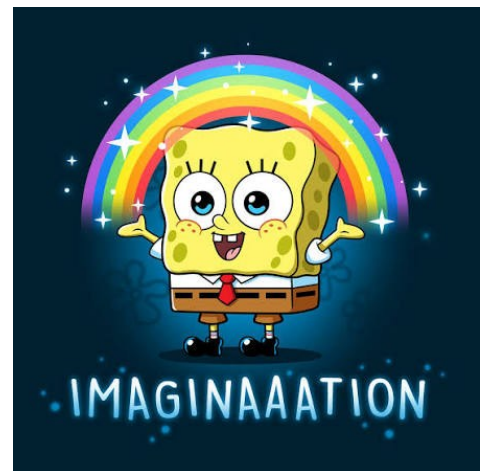
Beyond the Screen

Miles Stewart

Video games have always been something I enjoy, but they are not my only way of escaping into another world. I also enjoy reading books from time to time. Both books and video games can transport us away from everyday life and into places filled with adventure, mystery, and imagination. However, I have learned that it can be easy to become attached to a screen and lose track of how much time I spend playing. That is one reason I have started to appreciate what reading has to offer.

Books create a different experience. Instead of showing me exactly what a fantasy world looks like, a book gives me words and allows my imagination to do the rest. I get to decide what the characters look like, picture the setting, and imagine the action taking place. As the story develops, I can make predictions about what might happen next. Sometimes the world I create in my mind can feel just as real as the world I see on a screen. Another reason I am trying to read more is because I spend a lot of time looking at screens. Spending long periods on a computer, phone, television, or gaming system can cause eye strain and tired eyes. Reading a printed book gives me an opportunity to step away from digital screens while still enjoying a good story.

I do not believe I have to completely choose between books and video games. Both can inspire creativity and allow me to experience worlds that would otherwise be impossible. Video games let me interact with those worlds, while books challenge me to create them inside my own imagination. As much as I enjoy playing video games, I know there should be a balance. Sometimes I can pick up a controller, and other times I can pick up a book. Either way, I can escape into a new world, experience a great story, and allow my imagination to take me somewhere new.



A Summer of Advocacy

Josue Tapia

Advocacy for the disability community is something very dear to me. Being a disabled, visually impaired male in Florida has its ups and downs. From experiencing discrimination to being looked at strangely for wearing sunglasses indoors, I have faced challenges that have made advocacy even more important to me.

Florida offers several summer events for individuals with disabilities and their families, including Make 'm Smile, The Annual Family Café, and The FYC's Annual Youth Summit. These events give people opportunities to connect, have fun, learn, and advocate. Make 'm Smile is geared toward children with disabilities and their families. It includes games, music, food, talent shows, and activities that allow children to interact with others who may share similar experiences. It is always one of my favorite events!

The Annual Family Café and The Florida Youth Summit are highlights of my summer. The Annual Family Café offers educational sessions, resources, and an exhibit hall filled with organizations serving the disability community. The Annual Youth Summit focuses on teens and young adults, helping them build independence, friendships, leadership skills, and self-advocacy.

Advocating for my community means a lot to me. I hope to help create a future where people with disabilities can freely express themselves and be who they are. My goal is to see Florida continue becoming a strong example of disability advocacy and inclusion.





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.org. The program is open to application year-round.

We hope to hear from you soon!



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