

# Differently-Abled Digest

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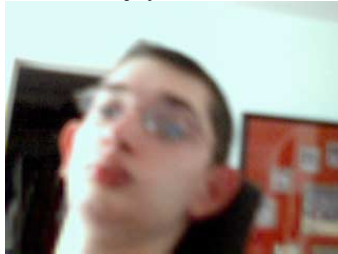
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## Positive Institution

In order for the DAD to remain a positive institution, I need to hear from parents and/or students. Please feel free to contact me by email with any questions, comments or concerns. I am here for you at all times.

## Ridin' With Poney

Greg Campone is an eighteen year old senior at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire. I got the chance to sit down with him and learn a little bit about what he enjoys.



Greg Campone

Greg says that he really doesn't allow other opinions to get to him. "I just remain strong and if someone stares at me, I stare back at them." He plays wheelchair floor hockey and also likes to watch his favorite team, the Cubs. He enjoys playing video games, going on the internet and going out with his friends. He specifically recalls a time when he and I went to Wendy's three weeks after a snowstorm and the ramps and handicapped spots were still covered with snow. Greg hopes that state and local governments will see that the problem is becoming increasingly large and he hopes that they will move swiftly to correct it.

I hope that interviews like this will become a regular occurrence; if you would like to be interviewed, please contact me.

## Updated Progress

In July, 2001, I lobbied Stevenson High School to install an automatic door-opening button for the lower entrance to the older building. "Since there is already a ramp there, why don't we finish the job," I asked interim head of buildings and grounds Chris Peters. I expressed my belief that Stevenson is used as a community center as well as an educational facility. As of November, 2001, the old building of Stevenson is now accessible to all.

## Federal Help

Contrary to popular belief, there are quite a few federal and state legislators that do want to know how you feel; not to mention the fact that they are willing to help. The differently-abled community is represented on the federal level by two fine men. Senator Max Cleland (D-GA) lost both legs and his right arm in the Vietnam War. Representative Jim Langevin (D-RI) was paralyzed from the chest down at age sixteen when a gun accidentally discharged while Langevin was a boy scout. I got the chance, thanks to Congressman Kirk, to correspond with both of these men, Langevin by phone and Cleland by letter. "I always wanted to enforce the laws, I never thought that I would be enacting them," says Langevin, who wanted to be a police officer.



Langevin (right) and Cleland (center) at FDR Memorial dedication

One of the main points in my letter to Senator Cleland was that Congress has never lived up to a promise it made. Twenty-six years ago, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act said that Congress has to cover forty percent of all special education costs. To this day, they have only covered fifteen percent. Both Langevin and Cleland continue to work hard to push Congress on the issue.

## Feel Good Story

Courtesy, The Week Magazine

Doctors told nineteen year old Steve Tyson, who has cystic fibrosis, that he couldn't go to his senior prom. He snuck out of his hospital room and met his date at an Italian restaurant in San Antonio. By chance, L.A. Lakers guard Kobe Bryant was also there; unaware of Tyson's condition, Bryant chatted amiably and posed for a picture.

Digest This!

"Life is a near-death experience."

-George Carlin