

PRESS RELEASE

Governor's Committee Awards Gardendale Resident "Supported Employee of the Year"

BIRMINGHAM, AL— The [Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities](#) has awarded Joshua Echols, of Gardendale, Alabama with the "Supported Employee of the Year" award. This award recognizes a local Birmingham employee for contributing to their community by rising above their "disAbility."

Echols, who cerebral palsy and uses a power wheelchair, is employed with the works at the Birmingham Veteran's Administration Hospital and has worked there for over a year. He received his award at a recent ceremony hosted at The Club in Birmingham.

"Josh consistently goes above and beyond to proactively ensure that any customer service issues are addressed promptly and effectively and is complimented daily by both patients and staff," said Echol's manager George Harding. "We are proud to have Josh as part of our team."

Echol's desire for employment was first realized through the efforts of the [Full Life Ahead Foundation](#) (FLAF), an organization honored by the same Governor's Committee with the Birmingham "Community Partnership Award" for their assistance in placing individuals like Echols in successful employment positions.

"If not for the opportunity from the Birmingham Veteran's Administration Hospital and the work of FLAF, Echols would not be enjoying satisfying employment and, more importantly, living out his dream for an independent adult life," said Ron and Suzanne Echols, Josh's parents.

In addition to helping individuals with disAbilities gain employment, FLAF also partners with service providers who have a heart for individuals with disabilities, coordinates family weekend retreats and workshops throughout the year, provides training sessions and services to individuals with disabilities and their families, and encourages them to become self-directed in the attainment of their personal goals and dreams.

For more information about the Full Life Ahead Foundation of Hope, visit their website at: <http://www.fulllifeahead.org>.

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