

The Full Life Ahead Foundation

H.O.P.E. — Helping Other People Envision

NEWS RELEASE



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Governor's Committee Awards The Full Life Ahead Foundation the Annual Birmingham "Community Partnership Award"

Local Employees with disAbilities Recognized as Employees of the Year

BIRMINGHAM, AL — The Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities awarded a prominent Birmingham charity, the [Full Life Ahead Foundation of Hope](#) — a group dedicated to assisting students and individuals with "disAbilities" and their families live an independent and *full life* — adult life — Birmingham's "Community Partnership Award" for their efforts during 2008.

The award is given annually by the Governor's Committee to one Birmingham-based community service provider, state agency, business, or organization that has exhibited a strong commitment to activities resulting in greater alliances which benefit individuals with disabilities in employment-related activities.

The Full Life Ahead Foundation (FLAF) was spotlighted for its tireless and successful efforts, including partnering with service providers who have a heart for individuals with disabilities, coordinating family weekend retreats and workshops throughout the year, providing training sessions and services to individuals with disabilities and their families, and encouraging them to become self-directed in the attainment of their personal goals and dreams.

The award was presented at a recent award ceremony hosted at The Club in Birmingham.

"We are honored to be recognized for our hard work to empower the disAbility community – and their families – to have a fulfilling adult life, both at home and in the work place" said Lisa Manly, Executive Director of The Full Life Ahead Foundation.

Two individuals associated with FLAF also received honors at the award ceremony from the Governor's Committee. Joshua Echols, of Gardendale, AL and Jurdy Warnock of Leeds, AL were awarded "Supported Employee of the Year".

"If not for the work of FLAF, our children would not be enjoying satisfying employment and, more importantly, living out their dreams," said the parents of Echols and Warnock.

FLAF encouraged and assisted both Echols and Warnock to pursue their passions, which included advancing their employment goals. Now both are employed in full-time, real wage-paying jobs. Echols, who has cerebral palsy and uses a power wheelchair, works for the Birmingham Veteran's Administration Hospital. Warnock, who has cerebral palsy and visual impairments, works with the Greater Birmingham Humane Society.

"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 Echols' manager George Harding. "We are proud to have Josh as part of our team."

“Through the unique concept of the Full Life Ahead Foundation, our daughter Jurdy formed a board of directors and worked through a self realization process to imagine what her dream job would be,” said Prince and Aleicia Warnock. “It was through this process that she came to be employed by the Humane Society.”

These are just two of many success stories from individuals helped by FLAF and its signature [Full Life Ahead Planning Process](#). “We want the local community in Birmingham and beyond to take advantage of the services we provide to assist with planning and achieving a future worth looking forward to,” said Judy Barclay, Chairman of the Board for FLAF and co-author of the foundation’s self published book [“Full Life Ahead: A Workbook and Guide to Adult Life for Students with disAbilities and Their Families.”](#) which has a global distribution and has been vetted by the Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs.

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

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