



**FAMILY  
ACHIEVEMENT  
FOUNDATION**

*We can do this together*

# Family Achievement Foundation

December 2023

## Second Annual Gala Features Inspiration & Generous Giving

BY DOUG KILLIAN  
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The second annual Family Achievement Foundation Gala on Thursday, October 26th was filled with inspiring stories by parents, a special performance by UpDown Funk, and generous giving by over 100 guests at the Lake Elmo Event Center.

Emcee Miss Shannan Paul - a multi-talented comedian, speaker and radio and television host - set a caring and supportive tone while sharing her personal experiences as a single parent raising an autistic teenage son. Family Achievement Foundation founders Sarah Mason and Tom Hoel also highlighted their journeys raising children with physical and mental health challenges as did parent council volunteer and previous Journey Award winner, Kristy Kargel.



Emcee Miss Shannan



UpDown Funk Dance Troupe

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## FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION GALA CONTINUED FROM PG 1

The program included presentation of the foundation’s Journey Award to Tom Harper and his late wife Phyllis, whose son Matt was born with cerebral palsy. The presentation was made by Phyllis’ sisters and brother who have also provided care and support for Matt over 35 years. The Journey Award includes a framed certificate highlighting the nomination, a hand-crafted glass heart and \$500 check.

The evening was capped by an energizing performance by UpDown Funk, a talented group of dancers with special needs including Down syndrome and related intellectual disabilities. The group’s exciting dance numbers brought the audience to their feet and many guests joined the performers on stage for the final number.

Over 40 attractive Silent Auction gifts, Live Auction packages, Fund-A-Mission pledges, sponsorships and guest registrations raised over \$35,000 which will help fund the foundation’s 2024 initiatives. Activities will include education workshops, networking opportunities, recognition programs and the first parent retreat next spring. Visit [familyachievementfoundation.org/events/](http://familyachievementfoundation.org/events/) for a listing of upcoming programs.

**Mark your calendar for the third annual Family Achievement Foundation Gala on October 24, 2024 at Lake Elmo Event Center!**



Journey Award Winner, Tom Harper & Nominators



Foundation Board Members

Follow Family Achievement Foundation on  
Facebook & Instagram to stay updated!





Support Family Achievement Foundation by  
making a year-end donation at  
[familyachievementfoundation.org/donate/](http://familyachievementfoundation.org/donate/)

# Journey Award Recipients- Stan & Jill Tead

Congratulations to Stan and Jill Tead, parents of Max, who were recently awarded Family Achievement Foundation's Journey Award. Their nomination was submitted by friend, Susan Burger who wrote "Jill and Stan have worked tirelessly to provide Max with activities, love, and care that help him to thrive amidst a challenging situation. Max is a sweet young man, and they enjoy many fun times together as a family. Jill and Stan go above and beyond to provide entertaining activities for Max. The Teads deserve this award as a reminder of the love that they have for their son."



Jill & Stan Tead with son Max



Tead Family with Nominator Sue Burger

## The Journey Award

The Journey Award was created with the hope of touching a parent on a challenging journey. While they may not see what they are doing as special because they love their children, those around them see their caretaking, tireless advocacy, and unconditional love for their children. The individuals selected will receive a \$500 check, a custom-made heart stone, and an award certificate explaining why they were nominated.



The Journey Award is in honor of Jack and Nancy McCue (one of our founding board members). Nancy lost Jack at the age of 15 by suicide. Jack was a person who cared more for other people than he did for himself. Our goal is to honor families like Jack and Nancy who may not realize how special they are!

Nominating a deserving parent or caregiver is EASY! Just visit  
<https://familyachievementfoundation.org/journey-award/>  
Nominations due by December 31st.





# Join our 2024 Parent Council

The Parent Council was formed in 2023 to help guide the Family Achievement Foundation on offering effective programs and resources to support parents on a challenging journey.

In-person, 90-minute bi-monthly meetings are held in Woodbury with council members to seek their input on the types of activities the foundation develops to help parents who often face daily struggles. The parents have offered valuable recommendations on programs and resources to help them with physical and mental health, respite care, networking opportunities and related support. All council members have a child who has a physical or mental disability and have first-hand experience with the foundation's mission to provide love, support and resources for parents on a challenging journey.

Members are asked to commit for a year to the Parent Council with an option to renew and we welcome new members at any time.

If you are interested in serving on the Parent Council, please contact Jana Smith at [jsmith@familyachievement.com](mailto:jsmith@familyachievement.com).



Pictured are Parent Council Members with Foundation Founders, Tom Hoel & Sarah Mason, & Foundation Acting Executive Director, Doug Killian.





# Upcoming FREE Parent Workshops

## Navigating Your Child's IEP

Tuesday, December 5th  
6:30-7:30 PM  
Zoom

## Planning For The Future Series

Special Needs Trusts, ABLE Accounts & Supplemental Trusts

Tuesday, January 16th  
6:30 PM  
Zoom

## Emotional Regulation Strategies

with Family Achievement Center Occupational Therapists

Tuesday, February 13th  
6:30 PM  
FAC- Woodbury

**-OR-**

Tuesday, February 20th  
6:30 PM  
FAC- Bloomington

## Planning For The Future Series

Does My Child Need Guardianship?

Tuesday, March 19th  
6:30 PM  
FAC Woodbury In-Person & Zoom

**EMAIL [INFO@FAMILYACHIEVE.ORG](mailto:INFO@FAMILYACHIEVE.ORG) TO REGISTER  
FOR OUR FREE PARENT WORKSHOPS**



SAVE THE  
DATE

# Upcoming Parent Retreat

APRIL 12TH-14TH, 2024

Family Achievement Foundation will offer its first Parent Retreat from Friday evening April 12, through Sunday late morning April 14, 2024. The vision for our retreat is to offer respite, connection, and resources for our families. The retreat is open to parents (and caregivers) either single or married who would benefit from time with others on a challenging journey. The retreat will be hosted by foundation founders Sarah Mason and Tom Hoel at their home on the bluffs of the St. Croix River in Hudson, Wisconsin surrounded by natural beauty, walking paths, and peaceful views of the St. Croix River. Tom and Sarah know firsthand the oftentimes chronic stress in caring for children, and are hopeful of creating an informational, fun, and restful weekend away for our parents.

The retreat will offer multiple different experiences (agenda to follow in the coming months):

- Connection with others
- Educational tools and resources for both your parenting, as well as self-care
- Breakout sessions with either group time and/or individual time
- Social activities
- Meals with good food and good laughter!



Space is limited for the Parent Retreat and a modest advance registration fee will be required. Contact Sarah at [smason@familyachievement.com](mailto:smason@familyachievement.com) for more details. A block of rooms will be reserved at a nearby Hudson hotel for accommodations on Friday and Saturday nights.





## Miss Shannan Paul Provides Hope, Inspiration, and Humor at Parent Presentation

Miss Shannan Paul gave a message of inspiration, hope and humor at a Foundation parent presentation on Thursday, November 16th.

The Twin Cities-based comedian, radio and television host, and social instigator described her daily journey as a single parent balancing a busy work life with her 15-year-old autistic son. “The more you can find humorous moments as a parent with your children, the more you can find light-hearted relief in our often stressful days,” she said. “What is sometimes not funny in the moment often puts a smile on my face later on. This can be good for our recovery from a new diagnosis or other parenting struggles we face. We experience many happy and sad cycles.”

Miss Shannan described how we can strengthen our mental outlook through laughter. We need to develop safe places for conversation about our children and find pockets of humor to get through these interactions with others. “How do we negotiate something we were not expecting and weren’t ready for,” she said. “We need to define our moments of laughter and relief which do not diminish the challenges we face every day.”

Miss Shannan was also emcee for the Foundation’s Gala on Oct. 26 and energized the audience with her dynamic personality, humor and skill as a professional auctioneer. Visit <https://missshannan.com> for a listing of her programs and upcoming events.





# LEGAL IDENTIFICATION FOR YOUR TEEN

BY ELENA MACDONALD,  
FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER

Recently I applied for a passport for my 14 year old son, and I decided to pay the extra fee and get the passport card. Since my son will likely not be driving, he will not have a driver's license to use as a legal ID. I'm hoping that the passport card will come in handy for identification purposes in the future.

A Day In Our Shoes website author, Lisa Lightner, describes how an ID card can be a wonderful resource and can help avoid hassles, in addition to being a great teaching and training tool. If your child is non-verbal or has limited verbal ability, placing the ID card in their backpack or using a wallet will help identify your family member in an emergency and you are not present. If they are independent but unable to remember their address, having an ID on them will allow them to access this information easily. Managing an important document can also be an executive functioning skill to practice. Lastly, when your child turns 18, they will need a legal ID for airline travel.

I decided to do a deep dive into ID types, fees, and other important details for Minnesota. If you live in Wisconsin, the information is likely similar but check online with your local DMV for accurate information.

## 1. Decide what type of ID is needed

- If your child does not require a legal ID, you can create a free ID using Shutterfly or Canva and laminate it.
- To obtain a legal state ID, make an appointment at your local DMV. Save time by pre-applying online. Multiple forms of identity are required. Please check with your local office to determine which forms are accepted. A photo will be taken and included on the identification card. If the applicant is under 21 the card is marked "Under-21" and is valid until their 21st birthday.
- If you are applying for a passport for your child, decide if you would like to add a passport card. A passport card can be used as a legal ID and is acceptable for use as identification for domestic flights. However, if the child is under the age of 16, the passport card will only be valid for 5 years.

## 2. What is the cost of a legal ID?

- The initial application/renewal fee for a state ID is \$35.50.
- **The fee for the Reduced Fee ID Card is \$0.50.** Your family member is eligible for the reduced fee if they have a developmental disability, physical disability, or serious and persistent mental disability. The MN Department of Safety has a form that must be completed by your child's case manager or licensed medical professional.