

Justus A. Phillips
My Hero

I am about to offer my heartfelt beliefs why my grandchild Justus Phillips should be able to attend C.H.A.'s holiday benefit. Justus is a ten-year old, 5th grader, who attends Williams Multiplex school at 27th and Dearborn. He is an exceptional student as evidenced by all of his teachers since he started as a kindergartner. He has not missed a day since June of 2008 (including 08' and 09' summer sessions) to present. This also includes only 7 tardies (my fault). My grandson is well loved by every student from 3rd grade through the 7th grade, with also a few 8th graders. He has never been in any fights, arguments or confrontations of any kind. His classmate since 1st grade thinks so fondly of Justus, that he has sent Macy Christmas letters for two years for him. Oh, you wonder why he didn't send it himself, I guess I forgot to add, my grandson is autistic. But, because he is so kind, loyal and enthusiastic about life no one even thinks about him being special need.

Justus is in a regular 5th grade class, but also has a special education class for his Math and English. He works feverishly on his speech disorder and tries very hard not to be repetitive. He has Special Ed classed since 1st grade and Williams school has helped him far more than a specialized autistic school could. They have helped him with the social skills to relate to other classmates. He is in the top of his Special Ed class and I can see my grandson being able to graduate elementary, high school and possibly a technical school to be able to function on his own as an adult.

Now for a little personal-life background, Justus is the oldest of five siblings. I have had guardianship of him since he was three months old and a younger sister of his for 3 years. He sees his other two brothers and sister at least twice a month. He also has two younger cousins that he sees practically every day. With that being said, Justus is very protective of his family. He understands he is the oldest and literally takes that to heart. He sees that his younger sister goes to where she belongs at school in the mornings and checks on her at lunchtime. Don't get me wrong; even though he's autistic, he's still a typical ten year old. There are times he gets chastised just like the rest. But, I do thank the Lord that I see light at the end of the tunnel for him. He is a fantastic kid and even if he doesn't get the opportunity to attend, he will be okay, but it's everyone else that will be shortchanged, because they would have missed meeting and knowing Justus.

Thank you so much
Verna G. Phillips

extremely proud grandmother