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Partners in policymaking

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EXPANDING BOUNDARIES

Featured Graduate



Harold Tisdale

We would like to introduce you to one of our Partners in Policymaking® graduates, Mr. Harold Tisdale. Harold is a graduate of Class 5. He lives in the Williamsburg County area where he resides with his father Paul Tisdale, who is 99 years old. He and his dad look after each other, and his four brothers visit often. He graduated from Williamsburg High School in June 1980. He moved to Midlands Regional Center in Columbia to develop living, learning, and work skills. He moved into an apartment with three other males, living independently and enjoying life, and worked as a janitor for four years before moving back home with family. He connected with the Williamsburg County DSN Board and continued to upgrade his work skills, being employed as a janitor at Hardee's, Williamsburg County Enterprise, Williamsburg County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina Development Resource Center, and the First Assembly Church of Christ until he retired in 2009.

Through the grapevine, Harold heard that a group was looking for people to be part of a new self-advocacy council; he accepted the invitation to attend the first meeting and became a partner. This group was I.M.P.A.C.T. S.C. Individuals Motivating People to Achieve Change Together in South Carolina. He attended the Partners in Policymaking® Training Program in 2003 under the direction of Mrs. Reddick Loring. The information he learned helped him to create the first self-advocacy group and became the first President of Williamsburg County DSN Board Independent Voices Self-Advocacy

Club. He actively volunteered for community functions such as parades, helping at the annual Pig-Pic-N event, walk-a-thons, overnight cancer fundraiser events, church holiday dinner serving events, and attending various workshops and conferences in South and North Carolina, just to name a few. Over the years, he has learned skills that helped him be a better advocate for others, while advocating for himself. Harold loves doing for others as well as being lead usher for the young adults at Great Pleasant AME Church. He loves to travel, go to the movies, go out to eat, spend time with friends/family, talk on the phone and watch sports on television. In his young adult years, he participated in Special Olympic games (basketball, track/field and softball) showing others that he would not let anything stop him from being the best he could be. He continues to be an active participant in the I.M.P.A.C.T. S.C. group.

March Spotlight



In the Upstate of South Carolina, Amy Hibbs and Allison Huffstutler, both parents of children with disabilities and graduates of Partners in Policymaking®, identified three needs in elementary schools as their children transitioned into the public school system: (1) transition and inclusion services for students with disabilities, (2) awareness, education and experience about disability for staff and students without disabilities, and (3) a gap in social studies curriculum about disability history and the Disability Rights Movement. Through collaboration and input of community volunteers and professionals, Amy and Allison created a program called WINGS to address those needs.

The mission of WINGS is to foster a culture of inclusion for all students by developing relationships between students with disabilities and students without disabilities through education, buddy classes, leadership development and community partnerships.

WINGS is a schoolwide inclusion program that includes professional development training for educators and an original, yearlong SEL supplemental curriculum for both special education and general education students. WINGS also includes a leadership development program for 4th and 5th grade students and a buddy class program for students in self-contained, special education classrooms. WINGS provides education for all stakeholders at an elementary school, opportunities for application of learning and opportunities for shared experiences of people with and without disabilities.

Since the start of the WINGS program in 2020, Monarch Elementary has experienced noticeable change. One special education teacher described the change like this, “Our classrooms were separate from the other classrooms in the school. We weren’t included or invited. The general education students were scared of special education students. No one in the school knew the names of my students. Today, one of my students walked in the hall with his physical therapist. He was cheered on by his special education teacher, buddy class teacher, school counselor, and his entire kindergarten buddy class. He was called by his name and he walked the farthest he ever has in his entire life.”

Kate Young, a fifth-grade student, experienced personal change. Last year during WINGS’ annual Disability Awareness Week, Kate shared this with her class, “I have dyslexia, and now I feel brave enough to share it.” Kate also participated in the WINGS Leadership Development Program and developed a passion for interacting with students with disabilities. Kate now spends time every day at lunch and recess with students in special education.

Administrators also describe the impact of the WINGS program. “I have never been at a school where this type of inclusion is so evident. It is all because of the GREAT mission of the program.”

Amy and Allison’s vision is to connect with more schools to expand the WINGS schoolwide inclusion program at other schools across the state.



The Bi-Monthly Update

Become A Leader in Your Community.

Applications for YLF located here: <https://www.scylf.org/apply>

The South Carolina Youth Leadership Forum is an opportunity for young adults with disabilities living in South Carolina to cultivate leadership skills and learn how to become an advocate in their community. Selected delegates typically stay on a college campus for three nights to learn about independent living and advocacy in a safe and supportive setting while building relationships with other young adults from around the state.

Applications for Partners located here:
<https://scddc.sc.gov/resources.html>



**APPLY NOW FOR THE SC
YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM!**
apply online: [SCYLF.ORG](https://www.scylf.org)

Presbyterian
College
7/10-13, 2022

This summer, have fun
learning how to be a
disability rights advocate!

We are in the planning stages of Partners in Policymaking®. Once we have a clear plan, we will inform everyone via email, social media, and other platforms. For more information about Partners or the Council, please check out our website at <https://scddc.sc.gov>

Partners in Policymaking® outlines the foundation for making systemic change by utilizing a shared vision through education, training, and a unified voice. The positive peer interaction strengthens individuals as well as collaborations and partnerships.

Sessions Include:

- **GETTING THE FACTS**
- **USING THE BEST TOOLS**
- **EQUIPPING YOURSELF**
- **MAKING AN IMPACT AND INCREASING AWARENESS**
- **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**



[SC DD Council Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/South-Carolina-Developmental-Disabilities-Council-111833051267667)

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A note from the Program Coordinator

William "Will" Farrior,

I want you to always remember that every setback and obstacle that we face together is an opportunity to learn and grow from both the negative and positive feedback we receive from society.

"I don't know the way, but I'll be there soon".

- Unknown

SOUTH CAROLINA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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