

MAGAZINE
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2015 Issue
FREE

Supporting
Women
Who
Do it All



Kindness Girl,
Patience Salgado, Pays it Forward
in a **BIG** Way

Games
that Ignite your
RELATIONSHIP

3 Families' Journey Towards
gratitude

3 Families' Spirit of *Gratefulness* through the *Challenges*

By Pam Mines, President-JP Jumpers Foundation | www.JPJumpersFoundation.org

So many times, people see families affected by special needs and immediately get empathetic for what they are going through or what they have gone through. Oftentimes the next thought is, "There is always someone worse off than you," or "I don't know what I would do," or "I feel so bad for them." Well, we are here to tell you that we appreciate your concern but our families, just like many others, are happy, grateful and blessed. We want people to realize that having a loved one in our lives who is affected by special needs is not an accident, a punishment or a curse. It is a gift from God, and we take it seriously. If you really sit down and think about it, tell me when was the last time that you met someone with special needs and they were not SUPER HAPPY about their life and who they were. I doubt you ever have. We have three families who want to take this time to tell you a little about the challenges we face and what makes us happy, provide advice for other families and share why we are so grateful. We hope you are enlightened and encouraged as we take you through our journey of gratitude.

Our



Parent Names: Perry and Pam Mines

Child's Name: James P. Mines

Child's Age: 11

Child's Diagnosis(s): Autism and ADHD

Sibling Names and Ages: Michelle Mines (13)(L) & Sydnee Baker (13)(R)

Sibling Diagnosis (if any): Sydnee Baker (Neurofibromatosis and ADHD)



1 What is the biggest challenge you face having a child with special needs?

Communication and understanding. It's hard to know exactly how he feels and what he wants because of the communication barrier. He can tell us he hurts but can't articulate what hurts.

2 What is your child or your family's biggest accomplishment/celebration in relation to your child's special needs?

It's continuous like any other family, except what may seem small to others is HUGE for us. Him saying his first word at the age of 3, him being completely potty trained at the age of 6, him being able to brush his teeth by himself at the age of 10, and now at 11, he is able to get out of the shower by himself. There are constant goals that are being met, but the age appropriate milestones are the biggest accomplishments.

3 What makes your family laugh and happy?

Spending time together laughing and playing games. Some of the things JP does are hilarious, and he has a sense of humor so he laughs too. We make every effort to laugh and spend as much time together as a family as we can. That makes us happy.

4 What advice do you have for other families affected by special needs?

Our advice is to find a support system and don't be embarrassed by your situation. Embrace what God chose you to be to the family member affected by special needs. Understand that ALL people are different and have unique abilities, find your loved one's strength and encourage growth in that area.

5 As a parent of a child with special needs, what are you most grateful for?

As parents of a child with special needs, we are most grateful that God chose us for such a serious task. We are grateful to have created the platform we have in the JP Jumpers Foundation and "JP's Law." We are grateful for all of the people God has chosen to be in our lives and have a positive impact on our children.

journey

Meet the Mines



Parent Names: Casey and Courtney Laing
Child's Name: Charlotte Laing
Child's Age: Due to be born October 2015
Child's Diagnosis(s): Down Syndrome
Sibling Names and Ages: Noah and Liam (2-year-old twin boys)
Sibling Diagnosis (if any): N/A

Meet the Laings

1 What is the biggest challenge you face having a child with special needs?

To us, the biggest challenge is the unknown. Since Charlotte has not been born yet, there is a lot of unknown territory. Charlotte was diagnosed with having Down Syndrome by a test which is called the MaterniT21 Plus, which is 99% accurate. It does not tell us anything else, such as the severity. She may have a mild case, or she may have a severe case, only time will tell. We are not sure what is going to be needed as far as therapy for her, so it is hard to plan for what is unknown. The excitement to meet her, to love her, to raise her is still there, but there is still a fear of the unknown.

2 What is your child or your family's biggest accomplishment/celebration in relation to your child's special needs?

The celebration(s) we have are finding out about her when we found out we are pregnant, and every checkup we go to where we find out she is still healthy and perfect!

3 What makes your family laugh and happy?

There is not much that doesn't make us laugh. We laugh with each other, the boys (we have twin 2-year-olds) being silly, my parents who are over a lot and assist with child care, Courtney's family who comes from out of town to visit a lot...really anything.

4 What advice do you have for other families affected by special needs?

We can really only speak to parents who have been given a diagnosis that their unborn child could have a disability. Each child is a gift from God. That child is going to be perfect in His eyes. Raising them may be a little more challenging, but God has trusted you with them. He makes zero mistakes. Trust Him, do your best, and when you struggle, rely on Him. That is what we are planning to do.

5 As a parent of a child with special needs, what are you most grateful for?

We are going to be grateful that we get to hold and love on her, to raise her, to get to see her enjoy life.



to



Parent Names: Jamilya Q. Brown

Child's Name: Jayla G. Brown

Child's Age: 12

Child's Diagnosis(s): Intellectual Disability and Type I Diabetes

Sibling Names and Ages: None

Sibling Diagnosis (if any): N/A



1 What is the biggest challenge you face having a child with special needs?
The biggest challenge I face with Jayla is understanding when she is hurting, sad or just not having a good day due to her being 90% non-verbal.

2 What is your child or your family's biggest accomplishment/celebration in relation to your child's special needs?
The biggest accomplishment for Jayla has been during the 2014-2015 school year when she became more independent with following short commands and staying on task for 5-10 minutes at both home and school.

Gratefulness

3 What makes your family laugh and happy?
We love music which helps keep our spirits lifted and Jayla loves to dance and jump.

4 What advice do you have for other families affected by special needs?
The advice I have for other families affected by special needs is to stay close to God in prayer. Learn and read up on your child's condition. Ask questions about resources available for your child. Get connected with a case manager and any available resources to help you better deal with the needs of your child. Stay involved with the IEP process and goals of your child for the school year and plan visits to the school to see what your child works on throughout the day. Stay involved!

5 As a parent of a child with special needs, what are you most grateful for?
As a parent of a child with special needs, I am most grateful for the love of my child. When she smiles and laughs, it lets me know that everything is well. Even though Jayla is not able to speak to me word for word, we have our own system of communicating.

Meet the Browns

