

TSA Youth Ambassador Update

The spring and summer of 2010 were very active seasons for the TSA Youth Ambassadors. Zach Pezzillo was mentioned by Senator Inouye on the floor of the U.S. Senate; Josh Ertter made a presentation to future special education teachers; and many Youth Ambassadors made presentations at schools. Here are a few of the recent TSA YA events.

Senator Inouye of Hawaii, the powerful Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, discussed his young constituent, Zach Pezzillo, on the floor of the Senate on April 15, 2010. He discussed Zach's tics and described him as, "...a well-spoken young man, a gifted photographer, and a wonderful youth ambassador for the national Tourette Syndrome Association."

When Josh Ertter spoke to a 3rd grade class last year, his presentation made a big difference to a student with TS. The boy's mother is now attending Edison State College with the goal of becoming a Special Education Teacher. She asked Josh to visit her college and speak about TS to a group of future Special Ed teachers in Cape Coral, Florida. His presentation may help students with TS years from now when these student teachers are at the front of a classroom.

Ariel Small made a presentation to 7th and 8th graders at O'Neill Middle School in Downers Grove, Illinois. 150 students attended Ariel's talk along with teachers, school staff and the principal. This was Ariel's second visit to the school. He also made a presentation to 8th graders at Caruso Middle School in Deerfield, Illinois.

New Youth Ambassadors were especially active, spreading awareness across the country and using the presentation skills they practiced during their recent YA training.



Nathaniel Ray (*on left*) was interviewed by a reporter from *The Orlando Sentinel*; the article, entitled 'Teen Speaks Out Boldly to Dispel Myths about Tourette Syndrome' was circulated throughout Nathaniel's school district by his teacher. Nathaniel also made a presentation to a 5th grade class at Stone Lakes Elementary School in Orlando, Florida.

Carolyn Eitzen (*on right*) made three presentations at the Leland Public School to an audience of 3rd and 4th graders in Leland, Michigan, inspiring good classroom discussions.



Megan Romeo (*on left*) spoke at a gathering of High School and Middle School Youth Group Members and Leaders at the Northwest Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Megan's presentation caught the attention of the local press in an article in River Oaks.



Cassandra Nikac made two classroom presentations to Junior and Senior High School students attending psychology classes in Ardsley, New York.

Ethan Kempner of New Jersey received a standing ovation when he spoke with Orange County legislators in honor of TS Awareness Month. 