

Media Release

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Ten-year-old boy initiates fundraisers for charities, nominated for award

Kirklyn Powell, 10, of Green Forest in Carroll County, has been nominated for a Youth Humanitarian Award from the Department of Human Services Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS) for his volunteerism. The award is part of the annual Arkansas Community Service Awards program.

“Kirklyn has been organizing his own fundraisers for a year now. When I asked him why he does it, he said, because he likes helping people,” said his mother Lacey Powell. This year he held a fundraiser to benefit the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB), part of the Department of Human Services. “This makes his third fundraiser,” she said. “He also has volunteered at our local food bank helping with our school’s backpack program. He’s organized and has a heart of gold. I get tons of compliments from the teachers on how he is always helping them or other kids.”

Last fall he did his first fundraiser for Grandma’s House, which is a Children’s Advocacy Center for children who are victims of abuse. In December 2013 he made a Christmas basket for each classroom at his school and he said, “The teacher got to pick one child to give it to.”



Kirklyn Powell of Green Forest has been nominated for a Youth Humanitarian Award. Powell, age 10, initiates fundraisers for various causes. Most recently he selected the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind for his grassroots philanthropy efforts. Pictured is Powell at his exhibit booth at the Agriculture Appreciation Days event in Green Forest.

Powell usually raises funds by holding raffles for items he gets donated by local merchants. He also he receives donations by word of mouth about his efforts.

How did a ten-year-old boy decide to do a fundraiser to benefit a small division of a state agency? Ms. Powell told DSB, “He said he chose your service, because you help other people so he wants to help you in return. And because you helped his grandpa with his eye procedures. That's huge to help people who would have a hard time coming up with money to pay for their health.”

DSB had repaired the detached retinas of his maternal grandfather Larry Allred of Berryville, who continues to receive vocational rehabilitation services from DSB. Allred said he is very appreciative of DSB services and is very proud of his grandson.

When DSB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Carla Hiebsch, Ed.S., of Harrison heard about Powell choosing DSB for his grassroots philanthropy efforts, she said, “This just brought a smile to my face and a tear to my eye.”

Hiebsch said Powell raised a total of \$2,770, which was presented in three checks as his fundraising continued over the summer. His paternal grandmother Coleen Powell matched part of the money. The funds will be used to assist one or more students who are blind or visually impaired and live in the DSB service area where Powell lives with college expenses. Counties in that area include Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, and Marion.

Hiebsch and her co-workers were so moved by Powell’s initiative and volunteer work that they nominated him for the Youth Humanitarian Award.

“When I was little and growing up, I started helping people,” the young Powell said. “Not everyone has a great life like some people do.” He encourages people to help others less fortunate.

For 37 years the Arkansas Community Service Awards have recognized individuals and businesses for their dedication and commitment to supporting volunteerism throughout Arkansas. The awards are sponsored by DCSNS, KARK Channel 4, The Governor’s Office, and Duncan Law Firm. Award winners will be announced next summer.

DSB provides vocational rehabilitation services to adults who are blind or severely visually impaired and whose goal is successful employment. The division also serves youth and older blind individuals. For information about DSB’s programs and services, visit the DSB website at <http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dsb/Pages/default.aspx> or call 1-800-960-9270, 501-682-5463, or TDD 501-682-0093.