

Successful People with Disabilities Information Sheet for Worksheet #1

Jim Abbot

Jim Abbot played baseball at the University of Michigan, receiving many awards while there. After college he was drafted into the major leagues by the California Angels in 1988. In 1992 he was traded to the New York Yankees where he pitched a no-hitter in 1993. He became a free agent in 1996 and played for the White Sox, the Angels, and the Milwaukee Brewers over the next three years. Jim Abbott won Olympic gold in 1988. Jim was born with only one hand. He is the only player in major league baseball to ever play with only one hand. In 2000 he began his second career as a professional motivational speaker. Jim's speeches focus on overcoming adversity. He has developed the acronym ADAPT to highlight his message. ADAPT stands for: Adjustability, Determination, Accountability, Perseverance, and Trust.



Information about Jim Abbot was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.jimabbott.net/index.html>

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir/kidsweb/fpwdinfo.html#pd>

Chris Burke

Chris Burke started his acting career in an ABC TV movie *Desperate*. Then he was cast in what became his most famous role as Corky on the television series *Life Goes On*, which ran for four years. Chris Burke has Down's syndrome and was the first person with Down's syndrome to star in a weekly television series. He also made several appearances in *Touched by an Angel*. Currently, he serves as the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) Ambassador traveling all around the country delivering inspirational speeches to various groups of children, students, parents, and professionals. Chris also sings and performs with Joe and John DeMasi in the *Chris Burke Band*. They have put out four CDs: *A World of Kindness*, *Forever Friends*, *Singer With The Band*, and *Lollipops and Love Songs*.

Information about Chris Burke was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.chrisburke.org/index.php>

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir/kidsweb/fpwdinfo.html#pd>

Tom Cruise

Tom Cruise is a movie actor and producer who made many films. Among them are *War of the Worlds*, *Minority Report*, *Top Gun*, *Days of Thunder*, *Rain Man*, *Mission Impossible*, *Jerry McGuire*, *Risky Business*, *A Few Good Men* and *The Last Samurai*. Tom was having difficulty in school at about age seven when he was diagnosed as having a learning disability called dyslexia. Academics remained difficult for him throughout high school but he became involved in sports and did well. In his last couple of years in high school he became involved in the theater program, which spurred his interest in acting. As an adult he continued to get help with his dyslexia and his reading skills improved.



Information about Tom Cruise was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.tomcruise.com/>,

<http://www.childrenslearningcenters.org/news/tomcruise.pdf>

<http://www.goodlearners.net/TomCruise.html>

UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES

Patty Duke

Patty Duke started acting at the age of eight. She has won an Academy Award and three Emmy Awards. She acted on Broadway, in the movies and on TV. She played the role of Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker* on Broadway and in the movie. She starred in the *Patty Duke Show* on TV for four years. She was in the movie *My Sweet Charlie and Me, Natalie*. She also wrote an autobiography where she discussed how having a bipolar disorder affects her life and how treatment has helped. She is still acting and is also speaking and advocating for treatment of depression and other mental illnesses.

Information about Patty Duke was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.officialpattyduke.com/>

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir/kidsweb/fpwdinfo.html#pd>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patty_Duke

Stephen Hawking

Stephen Hawking is a professor and Director of Research in the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the University of Cambridge in England. He attended Oxford University in England as an undergraduate student studying physics and the universe. He received his PhD in 1966 from Cambridge University. He published many papers and books. The first book was called *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. This book explains many of Hawking's physical and mathematical ideas and calculations without using math. When Stephen Hawking was 21-years-old, he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. This disease attacks the nerves that control the body's movements. It affects walking, speaking, breathing, swallowing, etc. In 2009 U.S. President Barack Obama presented Stephen Hawking the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Today Stephen Hawking cannot move much at all and uses an electric wheelchair to get around. Today he cannot speak so he now uses a special computer that displays the text he types and speaks what he types with an electronic voice.



Information about Stephen Hawking was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.psyclops.com/hawking/>

<http://www.hawking.org.uk/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Hawking

Henry Holden

Henry Holden contracted polio in 1952 at the age of four, which left him with paralysis in his legs. He uses leg braces and uses crutches to walk. He always wanted to be an actor and his paralysis did not stop him. He has become a successful stand-up comedian, an actor, an athlete and a disability advocate. He also speaks around the country on college campuses and in K-12 schools. He founded *Performers with Disabilities for the Screen Actors Guild*, which advocates for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the entertainment industry. His motto is: "Attitudes are the Real Disability".

Information about Henry Holden was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.henryholden.com/>

<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cedir/kidsweb/fpwdinfo.html#hh>