

Successful People with Disabilities

Information Sheet for Worksheet #3

Christopher Reeve

Christopher Reeve was an actor, director, producer, and screenwriter. Some of the films he acted in were: *Superman I through IV*, *Deathtrap*, *Noises Off*, *The Remains of the Day*, and *Village of the Damned*. Christopher Reeve was married and had two children. In 1995, Reeve was thrown from a horse during an equestrian competition and became a quadriplegic. After his accident, he established the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, which raised funds to support spinal cord research and to improve the quality of life for people with spinal cord injuries. He also fought for these issues as a spokesperson for people with spinal cord injuries, speaking at government hearings and public events.

Information about Christopher Reeve was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.notablebiographies.com/Pu-Ro/Reeve-Christopher.html>

<http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ddJFKRNoFiG/b.4431483/>

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Franklin D. Roosevelt was born in 1882 in Hyde Park, New York. He attended Harvard University and Columbia Law School. He was elected to the New York state senate in 1910. He resigned during his second term to become Secretary of the Navy in 1913. In 1921 Roosevelt contracted polio, which caused paralysis in his legs. He regained some use of his legs using warm water therapy. He could stand and walk with the help of full leg braces and canes but it was very tiring so he used a wheelchair most of the time. He founded the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation in Georgia to promote hydrotherapy. In 1928 he was elected Governor of New York. In 1932 Roosevelt was elected president. He was reelected as president for three more terms. He died while serving his fourth term. In 1938 he founded The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis to defeat the epidemic of polio. This foundation became known as “The March of Dimes”, which eventually funded research leading to an effective vaccine against polio.

Information about Franklin D. Roosevelt was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.americanpresidents.org/presidents/president.asp?PresidentNumber=31>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/franklindroosevelt>

http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/education/resources/bio_fdr.html



UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES

Marla Runyan

Marla Runyan is a national competitive runner. She ran in the 2000 Olympics, finishing eighth in the 1500 meters event. She is the first legally blind person to compete in the Olympics. At nine years of age she was diagnosed with Stargardt's disease, which is a form of macular degeneration which causes vision to deteriorate. She competed in track and field in high school and in college. She has a Masters degree from San Diego State University in special education. She has written an autobiography *No Finish Line: My Life As I See It*. She is married and has a daughter. She also is a motivational speaker



Information about Marla Runyan was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.bostontrials2008.com/index.cfm?pk=bio&bioID=7>

http://www.nwhm.org/Education/biography_mrnyan.html

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

<http://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/marla-runyan/>

Heather Whitestone

In 1994, Heather Whitestone was crowned Miss Alabama and in 1995 she became Miss America. After an illness, Heather became deaf at the age of 18 months. She was the first person with a disability to become Miss America. During her year traveling and speaking as Miss America she shared her belief in the STARS program (Success Through Action and Realization of your dreamS), with a message to show others how to achieve success. She has continued to be a motivational speaker. Heather married and has three children. She has written four books: *Listening with My Heart*, *Believing the Promise*, *Let God Surprise You*, and *Heavenly Crowns*. She has had two cochlear implants and has become the spokesperson for the Starkey Hearing Aid Foundation and for Cochlear America's.

Information about Heather Whitestone was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.missamerica.org/our-miss-americas/1990/1995.aspx>

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

Mike Utley

Mike Utley was a great football player. He played for John F. Kennedy High School in Seattle, Washington, for Washington State University in Pullman WA, and for the Detroit Lions. In 1991, during a Rams game, he became paralyzed when he fractured his 6th and 7th cervical vertebrae. In 1991, Utley established the Mike Utley Foundation, which is dedicated to providing financial support for research and rehabilitation and for education about spinal cord related injuries. He continues to do motivational speaking and fund raising for the Foundation.



Information about Mike Utley was taken from the following sources:

<http://www.mikeutley.org/default.aspx?skinid=7>

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