

2014 Russell M. Swenson Memorial Scholarship Application

Name _____ Email _____ Date _____

Parent's Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ GPA _____

Area of major interest in high school _____

Extra curricular activities, honors, clubs, scholarship honors, etc. (may attach a resume or list of activities.) _____

Leadership positions held _____

Career you have chosen and why? _____

Church and community activities _____

University/College you will enroll: _____

Will you be receiving another scholarship? Yes _____ No _____

The scholarship is being awarded to help a student who has a career goal of working with students who have special learning needs.

Return TWO applications to counseling office before April 17, 2014 3:00 p.m.

Russell M. Swenson Scholarship

The Russell M. Swenson Scholarship was established in the spring of 1995 to keep alive the memory of the positive affect Russell had on those he came in contact with. Russell was the son of Jack and Deanna M. Swenson of Spanish Fork, Utah. He was born in Provo on December 30, 1961, the third son in a family of four boys. Russell was born with Downs Syndrome.

Russell was always a happy child, easy to work with and always wanting to please. He was accepted by our family and friends making it easy to always take him the places we went. He was treated the same as our other boys, disciplined when he needed discipline. We had to have a lot of patience because things didn't come easy to him. He liked to go to the ballpark with his dad and brothers and he learned to play baseball. He played on his dad's little league team and really enjoyed this. The boys on the team were good to help him and showed an interest in his success.

Russell started school at the BYU Lab School when he was 6 years old. After BYU closed the Lab. Provo School District, Nebo School District built a new school for the handicapped students in that area. Russell graduated from Oakridge when he was 22.

While in school he enjoyed all sports and participated in the Special Olympics. Russell took swimming lessons and became a pretty good swimmer. While he was in school at Oakridge he participated in the Special Olympics. He won many ribbons for swimming, running, soccer and basketball. When he was 22 he was able to go to Baton Rouge, Louisiana to the International Special Olympics and play basketball. This was a great experience for him as well as his family. We were able to go and support him.

Russell was always active in sports. He played little league basketball as he was growing up. After he got older, he played on an adult city recreation basketball team. He was a very good 3 point shooter, this developing from much determination and love for the sport. In the summer he played slow pitch softball with a men's team. All of the ball teams that he played on were not made up of handicapped young men, he was the only one. They accepted him and really helped make him feel that he was an important part of the team.

Russell was active in our church, was given many opportunities and was able to advance in the Priesthood. At the time he passed away, he was an Elder in the LDS Church. Because of the interest of a good scout master and a caring troop of boys he was able to become an Eagle Scout. He was able to pass off many of the merit badges himself, but the boys spent much time and effort in helping him obtain others.

Besides being active and participating in sports, he had a great love for the BYU Cougars, the Spanish Fork Dons, San Francisco 49's and many other professional teams. He has had many great experiences through this love. He had the opportunity to travel with the Spanish Fork High School teams when they went to games. He was asked to sit on the bench with the ball team. He led their cheers and was their greatest supporter. He did not like any show of poor sportsmanship. He has been in the Cougars locker room and knows many of the players by name. Prior to a BYU football game one fall Fred Whittingham gave him his old game Jersey. Each home game Russell wore #33.

After leaving the Oakridge School, Russell worked at various jobs. He worked bagging and stocking shelves in a grocery store. He worked each summer for 20 years for Spanish Fork City in the recreation department on parks maintenance at the ballpark. He was a part time custodian of Nebo School District during the school year, working at Spanish Fork High School. The students loved to see Russell around the school and few walked past him without recognizing and speaking to him. Russell took a lot of pride in his jobs and worked very hard. He really enjoyed going to work each day.

Russell passed away after a valiant, short fight with cancer on December 28, 1994. He is greatly missed by family, friends, ball players, high school students and the community of Spanish Fork.

Things have really changed in the last 31 years. Handicapped people are much more visible and accepted in the community. They have a lot to contribute to society. They are very special people and can add a lot to our lives. The Russell M. Swenson Scholarship was set up to aid an individual or individuals with their college education focusing on a career in Special Education. It is our hope that more "special" kids will have the same opportunities that Russell did. With caring educators, the "special" kids will be productive, happy, and accepted individuals.