

'burg Blogs »

DisABLED

Posted February 8, 2013 at 1:48 pm by [Anthony Patterson '14](#)

America is run on the principle that everyone has a fair shot at making it to the top. The “Land of Opportunity”. The same goes for aspirations of higher education. In college you are granted the wonderful opportunity to learn like you have never learned before, read what you’ve never heard of, eat what you have never seen and talk to people you have never encountered before.

But what if you didn’t have the same opportunity others had?

Life would be different right? Imagine a day when you could not get up and just walk to class. Take a second to consider what it might be like to rely on others for your every move. Consider what it would be like to be ostracized based on uncontrollable factors. Many people around you deal with these issues.

Take a step outside your comfort zone with me.

Welcome to the world of [Disability Services](#) at USFSP.

Did you know that many prominent faces in American History dealt with disabilities for most of their lives? Thomas Edison was a brilliant inventor that dealt with a learning disability and was nearly deaf his entire adult life. [Harriet Tubman](#), celebrated abolitionist and icon, was struck by a two pound weight after refusing to hold down a slave and dealt with narcolepsy the rest of her life. Take some time to research the less known lives of people you may have already heard of.

In January, Student Disability Services moved into the newly renovated Student Life Center (SLC) on the corner of 6th Avenue South and 2nd Street. I work in this department and I have learned from many of the people who come through our doors. These people inspire me time after time. As do friends who have siblings with different needs.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ([check out this quick video of Dr. King making a joke](#)) spoke often about equal opportunities and in the wonderful country we live in there are many opportunities. He once said,

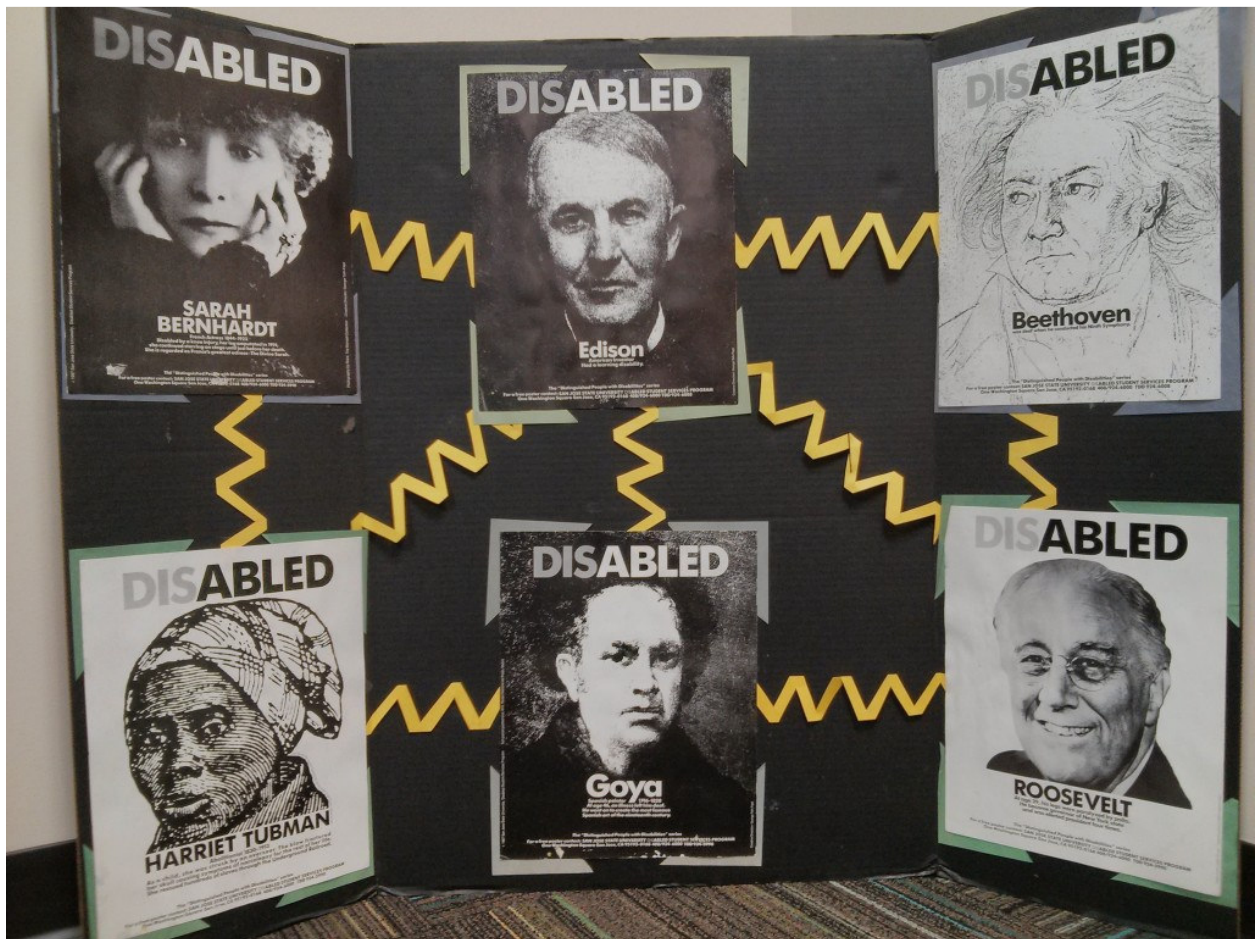
“You may be 38 years old, as I happen to be. And one day, some great opportunity stands before you and calls you to stand up for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause. And you refuse to do it because you are afraid... You refuse to do it because you want to live longer... You’re afraid that you will lose your job, or you are afraid that you will be criticized or that you will lose your popularity, or you’re afraid that somebody will stab you, or shoot at you or bomb your house; so you refuse to take the stand.”

He finished by saying that you could live to be 90 and that you could have been considered dead at 38 because you refused to take a stand. He died for taking a stand just a year after making that statement.

You and I can also make statements and a stand here at USFSP

- Lend an hour of your week with **Project 10 Stingray** (learn more about what they do [here](#)).
- Stop by for a tour of **Student Disability Services**.
- Advocate for those who may not have a voice as strong as yours.

Take a stand.



Several pictures of famous people in history noting different disabilities they dealt with.

About the blogger



I'm an undergrad Mass Communications student passionate about the Tampa Bay Rays, poetry, serving the community and changing out of phone booths.