

As a single parent and caregiver of a child diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Autism, IDD, and a host of other medical challenges, I have searched and prayed for a way to help others who face the same daily challenges that I face. Establishing this organization, Jeremiah's Voice, grew out of that vision and search.

Part of my search has meant looking for and embracing the meaning and purpose in my child's life. What I have learned along the way is that loving my child has also meant learning to embrace my child's disabilities in such a way that I am still able to refuse to allow him to be defined by his disabilities. Children diagnosed with disabling conditions can and do live and thrive beyond their disabilities and find significant meaning in life.

Since we, in large part, drive the direction and continuity of our children's care and even their right to live with purpose and dignity, it is key that we always have the right resources, support, and encouragement at our disposal.

Let me tell you a little about my handsome little boy named Jeremiah, for whom I named this organization. I've already shared with you the medical diagnoses my son received after his birth. Now, let me share with you how this little boy has changed my life for the better.

Any mother or primary caregiver can relate to the tremendous sacrifice required to raise a child, but when raising that child includes coping with the major life disabilities which hamper their ability to run, laugh, speak, or even eat, the feeling of not being able to fix what is wrong with them can be overwhelming. This was what I faced when my 1 pound, 15 ounce Jeremiah was born and given only 24-hours to live. I learned, at that very moment, that I needed to lean on something or someone greater than myself. When I asked God to let my son live, I had no idea what was in store for him or how life was going to proceed for me as his mother.

Doctors gave me the early childhood prognosis that Jeremiah would likely not walk or talk and that he would have significant developmental delays. I found out some key things about myself in the process of having to steel myself against the dire medical reports that have been on-going. As I have steadfastly – and as a woman of faith – stood on my belief in God's ability to do the impossible, and without losing hope, my Jeremiah is currently reading at an age-appropriate level,

his ability to speak grows stronger with each new day, and his smile positively changes everyone's day.

I am glad that, in your search for hope, faith, and grace to navigate the challenging journey of loving and raising a special needs child, you have found Jeremiah's Voice! It is important to connect to a community and fellowship of other people who are like-minded and who believe that all things are possible if you have hope.

As a community of parents and caregivers, we invite you to join us in our fight for advocacy and equal access and opportunity for our children. We believe that it is imperative that each person has a voice, so their needs are met and so people see their value and worth for who they are as people. We believe that children with special needs should not - and need not - be defined by their disabilities; instead, they should be given every opportunity to live life to its fullest! This is what invokes the motto for the organization — "Living Beyond Disability."