



**Kayla McKeon**

NDSS SAAB member  
NDSS DS-Ambassador

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I am currently a student taking classes at Onondaga Community College and LeMoyne College. I have successfully completed several courses toward my Associates degree in General Studies.

I am the Assistant Site Coordinator at Gigi's Playhouse in Cicero, NY a Down Syndrome Achievement Center, work at Paparazzi Salon and Day Spa and have an Internship at Congressman Katko of the 24<sup>th</sup> District of New York's Syracuse office.

I am a member of the National Down Syndrome Society's Self-Advocate Advisory Board as well as a NDSS Ambassador. Today am being honored with the Self-Advocate of the Year award. I am a Motivational speaker, drawing on my experience as an individual that is differently-abled whose positive attitude inspires others to reach their highest potential.

I am a Special Olympic athlete and a Special Olympics Congress member. In 2011, I competed in the Special Olympic World games in Athens, Greece winning a silver and bronze medal in International competition.

I am active in my Church as a Eucharistic Minister; I am an avid reader and this past year have obtained my New York State driver license.

**I am here today at the National Down Syndrome Society Buddy Walk on Washington to advocate for all of us that are differently abled. I would like to ask you to please support policies like the new ABLE to Work Act that would allow me to take a paid job and save up to the Federal Poverty Level. I would also ask you to please join the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome.**