

Family turns Life into Art

Independent Filmmaker Educates and Inspires: Special Needs, the Film

Over the years, Scott and Sharon Sowers have become used to working as a team. Not only as filmmakers, but as the parents of two daughters, Kelly and Gloria. Gloria is 23 and diagnosed with autism. Their experiences as the parents of a "special needs" child inspire their work not only creatively, but also as activists, working on behalf of adults with disabilities to give them a voice.

What (or who) was the inspiration for this film?

Scott is a coach for the Grayson Athletic Association for Special Populations. Gloria is a player of both softball and basketball. Sharon sits in the stands and cheers for both competing teams and listens to the stories of the other Moms and Dads and family members who have come to support the players. The games and the stories are the breeze of inspiration surrounding the film. The players and their families are the inspiration.



Special Needs, the Film. [Watch the trailer.](#)

Your husband is a movie maker and you are a songwriter. Is this the first movie you have worked together on?

We write movies and songs instead of watching TV. It's part of our lives. This is the first movie we have made together. Scott has written dozens of movies with and without me. I keep writing songs. Sometimes with him and sometimes on my own. No rules, no routine. It's just something we do.

What have you learned about parenting a child with disabilities in the process of making this film?

No matter what your job is, family comes first. Don't ever go "Hollywood" and no matter what ability or disability your child has, listen, love and learn. **We always learn so much more about everything, when we see it through the eyes of our daughter.** If you ask Gloria what the best part of making the movie was, she will say, "the snacks".

How can people see this film?

They can go to www.specialneedsthefilm.com, watch the trailer and order the movie. Or, request that their church group or organization use it for a fund raiser. They can [email us \(Glowormproductions@comcast.net\)](mailto:Glowormproductions@comcast.net) to set that up. We raised over \$1,500.00 for the [GAASP \(Grayson Athletic Association for Special Population\)](#). We will also be donating part of our income to the Special Olympics.

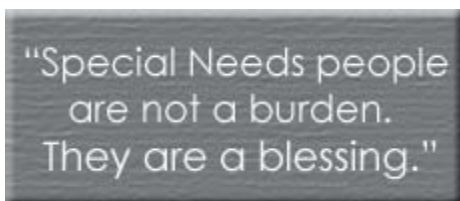
What do you hope will come from this project?

There are a few things we are hoping for. One is that the word “retard” is no longer used. Another is that the world will start realizing that Special Needs people are not a burden, they are a blessing. We laid a few other wishes between the lines. You will have to find them for yourself.



What advice would you give families that you wish you had?

Never think that because your child has disabilities, you don't have to teach them as much. Don't ever settle for thinking, that you have to “baby” your child. Your child just has to learn with you how to do things differently.

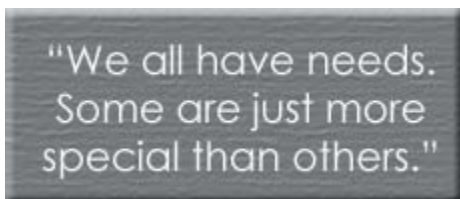


Even if your child is just staring off into space, teach. Never talk down or even allow a thought about him/her not learning. **Never give up.** Always try. Then try again and again. I'm like a snapping turtle when it comes to teaching, learning and loving. Not even thunder can make me let go.

My advice would be: Just love. Be kind, be patient. This is your sister, your brother, uncle, aunt, cousin, etc. Be real. All you need is love. The more you give, the more there is. The biggest gift is time. Even if it just means sitting next to their wheel chair and patting a hand. You don't always have to be doing something to show love. Just love.

That's it for now. As for Gloworm, this site is geared towards families and educators, although I want to be careful about making our children into poster kids, please share about your wonderful daughter, and your unique experiences as artists and the Montessori school you ran.

Gloria is a 23 year old mentally delayed, autistic adult. She is charming, pretty, sweet and very brave. She is always willing and wanting to help. She loves helping me with my class of toddlers and also the older children. She loves to sing and dance and more than anything, she loves going to Tony's Camp every year. She wants to marry either Santa Claus or the chef Curtis Stone later in life. I would be just fine with either choice.



Montessori teaching is very in tune to the needs of both the mentally challenged and autistic child, helping them help themselves is one of the greatest gifts you can give. Much better than doing it for them or giving it to them. I was told that Gloria probably would never walk or talk.

They were very wrong. It just has taken Gloria a little longer than the average child. She's happy today. She doesn't know or care about tomorrow. No one can tell me there's anything wrong with that. Help me spread the word.

YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE DOING SOMETHING TO SHOW LOVE. JUST LOVE