



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

3.21.19 - Senator Fred Akshar Celebrates World Down Syndrome Day in Albany with Special Guest from Binghamton

FRED AKSHAR March 21, 2019

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(ALBANY, NY) On Wednesday, a special guest from Binghamton joined Senator Fred Akshar to help proclaim March 21st “Down Syndrome Awareness Day” on the floor of the New York State Senate.

Julianne "Juice" Horton and her mother traveled to Albany and were invited onto the floor of the Senate Chamber to help celebrate World Down Syndrome Day. The 20-year-old

graduate from Binghamton High School spent the day touring the Capitol, meeting with Senators from across the state and even got a chance to use the gavel before Senate Session commenced.

“Julianne is an incredible person who's brought so much happiness and joy to families across our community in the 52nd Senate District,” said Senator Fred Akshar. “I've come to know so many beautiful and inspiring people that live everyday with Down Syndrome like Julianne, Super Cooper Busch and many others. These individuals and every single person living with Down Syndrome deserve to be included, they deserve to be celebrated, to be loved, to be hugged, showered with blessings and they deserve the same opportunities to succeed that we all enjoy, and that's this day is about.”

For the past week, Horton made friendship bracelets for every single Senator, Republican and Democrat alike and presented them in the Chamber as a symbol of unity and acceptance for those with Down Syndrome. During and after Akshar's remarks on the Resolution, Horton received a standing ovation from the Senate Chamber.

“I had a great day and so much fun,” said Julianne Horton. “I received a beautiful plaque of the Senate Resolution with a gold and blue ribbon from my best friend, Fred Akshar. I was proud to be there and show people that I'm the same as everyone else.”

“We had such an amazing day filled with love,” said Julianne's mother, Maryann Horton. “Everyone in Albany was so welcoming and treated Juice like gold. Juice had such light and such happy smiles for everyone. I see such a difference in people's attitudes today than when Juice was born. I just wish people could see the world through Juice's eyes and the eyes of others like her born with Down Syndrome.”

Juice is an active member in the local Binghamton community, belonging to the Best Buddies organization at Binghamton University, participating in the Broome-Tioga Special Olympics and the Southern Tier Buddy Walk each year, along with countless other community events. She's also a big fan of WWE, and raised enough money selling friendship bracelets to pay for a weekend trip to see Wrestlemania this year in Brooklyn with her mom.

“Juice is a shining example of living life to the fullest,” Akshar said. “We must allow this day to serve as a reminder that we should cherish every life and that we are all God's children regardless of ability. Every single life matters, and I thank you, Juice for opening my eyes and allowing me to see a side of our community that is so incredibly beautiful.”