



**For Immediate Release**

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**Delaware Resident to Receive National Advocacy Award**

*Rick Kosmalski will receive the National Down Syndrome Society's NDSS DS-Ambassador of the Year Award at the annual Buddy Walk® on Washington.*

**New York, NY (February 14, 2013).** The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) is pleased to recognize Rick Kosmalski of Delaware with the NDSS DS-Ambassador of the Year Champion of Change Award. NDSS DS-Ambassadors are volunteer advocates committed to taking part in the democratic process and serve as liaisons between NDSS and their Congressional Delegations to continually raise awareness, educate and advocate for public policy solutions that benefit the Down syndrome community at the federal level. Mr. Kosmalski will receive the award at the Buddy Walk® on Washington, the annual NDSS advocacy event in Washington, DC. Over 175 people from across the country will gather together to advocate for legislative priorities that positively impact that lives of people with Down syndrome and their families. The event also includes an award ceremony, at which Mr. Kosmalski will receive his award.

Mr. Kosmalski has attended many national and regional Down syndrome conventions, including the Buddy Walk® on Washington for the past three years. Mr. Kosmalski is motivated by his daughter, Kayla, age 6, who has Down syndrome. In addition to being the NDSS DS-Ambassador for Delaware, he is also the Policy Lead for Delaware Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome and the Down Syndrome Association of Delaware, an NDSS affiliate.

"Most people with Down syndrome and other disabilities have limited opportunity to save money because of Medicaid asset restrictions. This award recognizes the efforts of many to give people with disabilities the right to save money by passing the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act in Congress. This legislation will greatly improve my daughter's quality of life by allowing her to have better employment, housing, and education opportunities," said Mr. Kosmalski.

Mr. Kosmalski will be recognized along with several other honorees at the Buddy Walk® on Washington, including Jawanda Barnett Mast, who will also receive the NDSS DS-Ambassador of the Year Award; Daniel Goodrow and Connor Long, Self-Advocate of the Year Award; Nikki Davis and Richard Peck, Advocate of the Year Award; Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health & Human Development (NICHD), Organization of the Year Award and the Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville (DSAJ), Buddy Walk® of the Year Award.

Award presenters include Congressman Ander Crenshaw (R-FL), Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Congressman Pete Sessions (R-TX), Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), NDSS Board members and staff.

**About NDSS**

The National Down Syndrome Society is a nonprofit organization representing the more than 400,000 Americans with Down syndrome. The mission of NDSS is to be the national advocate for the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with Down syndrome. NDSS envisions a world in which all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity enhance their quality of life, realize their life aspirations, and become valued members of welcoming community. NDSS has over 375 affiliates worldwide. To learn more, visit [www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org).