



Out for a record

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Bucks Author Writes Book on His Work with Youth with Disabilities

Over the last fifteen years, New Hope resident Mike Kelly has worked with hundreds of young adults with a wide range of disabilities on both sides of the Delaware River. During that time he has served as an employment specialist, job coach, event organizer and promoter, fundraiser, grant writer, teacher, mentor, business owner, and award-winning transition educator.

His recently-published work “SPECIAL STORIES: Short Stories On Youth With Disabilities And My Adventures Working In The Disabilities Field” is a heartfelt account of what he describes as his “life’s work.” These thought-provoking and heartwarming stories showcase the many abilities kids with disabilities have—regardless of their challenges— while also entertaining, educating, and dispelling societal stereotypes. The book also features accounts on Kelly working with famous professional athletes headlining fundraisers, ordinary folk generosity, celebrity greed, and social musings—all part of Kelly’s encounters in his line of work.

Before he became the director of a Newtown-based company that serves young adults with disabilities living in Bucks County, Mr. Kelly previously worked at a large nonprofit company where he won a New Jersey Transition Educator of the Year award.

“I’ve come across some incredible young people with disabilities who have achieved measurable success in their lives, yet whose efforts were largely unnoticed. I wrote this book because I felt it was time for their untold stories to finally be shared to help inspire others to think outside the box and reach for the stars,” Kelly said. “The book provides a blue print to help parents who are raising children with various challenges.”

When asked what types of disabilities his book features, Kelly responded, “ADD/ADHD, Anxiety Disorder, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, Intellectual Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Visual Impairment, Williams syndrome, to name just a few.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are nearly seventy million people living with a disability in the United States—nearly 1 in 5 people. One would think that there would be a broad audience for this subject matter and that many books would prominently feature people with disabilities. Though individuals with disabilities constitute a large segment of our population, according to Kelly there’s a lack of stories about them in the literary world.

“While there are books written by parents or teachers about how to raise or teach a child with autism, or books featuring a single character with a disability, there are no books featuring kids with all different kinds of disabilities, highlighting their successes and challenges. When I tried to get my book published the traditional way—through literary agents and publishing houses—I was repeatedly told the same thing: ‘We don’t publish books like that.’ My reply: ‘That’s a shame.’ So, I did it myself. Now there’s a book.”

Kelly hopes *SPECIAL STORIES...* becomes this generation’s *Chicken Soup For The Soul*. If not, he’ll remain satisfied. “I’m already doing my life’s work empowering young people. Any book sales would be considered icing on that cake.”

SPECIAL STORIES... has already gained some positive reviews from local and regional sources, as well as from one NBA Hall of Fame legend.

The book is available through online booksellers Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Apple iBooks, and KOBO.

For information on how to purchase your copy of *SPECIAL STORIES...*, visit www.specialstoriesbook.com.