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-PRESS RELEASE-

Orlando Area Disabilities Advocate Receives Top Award

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) recognized Chris Drummond of Longwood with the Ninth Annual Idelio Valdes Leadership and Advocacy Award. Presented in conjunction with Wednesday's Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol, the award recognizes an individual with a developmental disability who has demonstrated outstanding advocacy efforts and has helped develop partnerships for the facilitation of community integration, employment and inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Drummond was selected to receive the prestigious award because of his exemplary personal and professional achievements, which include advocating for improved transportation and employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and educating doctors and other medical personnel on the specific health needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Throughout his life, Drummond has been active at both the state and local level to advocate for change and share his vision on how all people with disabilities should live meaningful lives. Drummond co-founded the Central Florida Self-Determination group in 1998, served the FDDC as a Council member (appointed by Jeb Bush) and currently serves as an active member on the Central Florida Family Care Council.

One of Drummond's goals each year is to visit Central Florida legislators in Tallahassee during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day (DD Day). He also strives to visit each sitting governor to express the need for greater services for people with developmental disabilities.

"Chris easily understands the crises facing people with disabilities and recognizes there is no quick fix, but he knows that his work as an advocate using his voice and cheerfulness is representative for change," said Samme Ripley, a retired disability consultant and one of four people who nominated Drummond.

Named in honor of Idelio Valdes, a member of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and a self-advocate who passed away in 2009, the award was presented during the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day Dinner Tuesday in Tallahassee. For more information on the FDDC, visit www.fddc.org.

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