



Nevaeh to Be Featured in Times Square

[From Love in Action Native American Ministries of First United Methodist Church in Grand Junction, CO]

Nevaeh H, 11, will have her photo displayed in Times Square just before the Buddy Walk in Central Park on September 12. Sponsored by the National Down Syndrome Society, the event celebrates people with Down syndrome and their families and raises awareness of unique strengths

of individuals like Nevaeh.

Her picture, taken by her mother Lourdes Long, was one of 500 selected from tens of thousands sent to NDSS to be shown on the Big Screen in Times Square that day. Photos of people with Down syndrome from all over the world were submitted.

Nevaeh's Story

Nevaeh, Diné/Navajo, was born in Blanding, Utah, the fourth child of Lourdes Long. After Nevaeh's birth at the small rural hospital near the Navajo Nation, the doctor gave Lourdes a pamphlet about Down syndrome and said other health care professionals would follow up.

When that support did not occur, Lourdes began doing her own research, learning about Down syndrome from both medical and cultural perspectives. Over the past 11 years, she has learned a great deal. Lourdes eventually moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, to be near pediatricians with experience with Down syndrome. She earned a university degree and now works as a social worker in Mesa County.

Cultural Perspective

"Navajo culture teaches that people with disabilities are closer to deities. They are celebrated and respected, not viewed as having something wrong with them," Lourdes said in an interview with a member of United Women in Faith at FUMC–Grand Junction, Colorado.



Supporting the Family's Trip

The United Women in Faith unit of FUMC in Grand Junction has donated more than \$500 to help the family with travel and lodging expenses for the trip. "I encourage everyone to donate to this wonderful opportunity for the family to celebrate the Buddy Walk and see Nevaeh's picture displayed on that Big Screen in Times Square," said Pam Bersch, treasurer of the unit. Lourdes added, "Every donation helps us advocate for our Indigenous and Down syndrome community."

To help offset the family's expenses for the Buddy Walk in New York City, donations are accepted, using this QR code.



Lourdes is the daughter, and Nevaeh the granddaughter, of Martha and Pete Long, charter members of Native Grace United Methodist Church in Cortez, Colorado. Martha and Pete live in Teec Nos Pos, Arizona.

