



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Robin D. Stauffer, Executive Director
717-293-4487

**United Disabilities Services Honors Three Remarkable Individuals
through Essence of Humanity Award Program**

Lancaster, Pa. (December 21, 2007) – United Disabilities Services recently honored three individuals through the Essence of Humanity Award Program. The award is intended to recognize those individuals who, beyond the requirements of their work, demonstrate remarkable human qualities including courage, love, strength, determination, and persistence when dealing with adversity. The award also honors those who demonstrate the spirit of caring and provide inspiration to such individuals on a daily basis.

Recent recipients:

Carol Sneath of Lancaster, Pa.

Carol Sneath is a staffing coordinator with United Disabilities Services and a caregiver who has had a profound influence on the lives of those she has cared for. One such individual is Jennifer Howell, who nominated Sneath: “In my opinion there is no one person who demonstrates the true meaning and aspects of love better than Carol Sneath,” says Howell. Howell first met Sneath as a junior in college while searching for a power wheel chair so that she could accept an internship at an elementary school. “From the moment I met Carol, she listened to me and encouraged me to go after my dreams and reach very high ... She helped me to find a power chair and then helped me get my own, through my insurance,” says Howell. “From the first moment I met her, she showed me more support than I had ever had my entire life.”

Theresa Simo of Lancaster, Pa.

Theresa Simo currently works as a caregiver with United Disabilities Services. Over many years, Simo has demonstrated a loving nature and a willingness to sacrifice her own needs for those she cares for. Simo provided care for a special needs child while working as an aide at Cumberland Valley High School and later would temporarily leave her own family to travel with him to provide care out of town, so that he could attend college. Valerie Weaver, who nominated Simo for the award, notes, “Theresa exhibited love for her consumer and his family by providing his personal care and assisting him to make a smooth transition to college. This was a huge relief to the parents, to have a familiar friend and caregiver by his side.”

Michael Snook of New Berlin, Pa.

Michael Snook, a law student, was paralyzed from the chest down as the result of an accident in 1991. Since that time, in addition to pursuing a law degree, Snook has served as a counselor to others who live with spinal cord injury at Magee Rehabilitation Hospital in Philadelphia. He also has earned a bachelors degree in pastoral counseling at Valley Forge Christian College. Kelly Peachey, who nominated him for the award, says of Snook, “He is the most positive individual I know, and he has been an inspiration to me as well as everyone around him. He never stops succeeding, and never gives up,” says Peachey.

About Essence of Humanity

There seems to be consensus that, as a culture, we often can’t identify enough role models. The intent of the Essence of Humanity Award is to elevate the stories of the inspirational role models that indeed do exist in our communities. The program began in 2001 when business and community leaders in South-Central Pennsylvania established the Essence of Humanity Award. The award is presented by participating organizations in collaboration with the Essence of Humanity program’s steering committee, which evaluates the nominations. For more information, contact Robin Stauffer, Executive Director, at 717-293-4498, or visit the website at www.essenceofhumanity.org.

About United Disabilities Services

United Disabilities Services of Lancaster provides services to individuals with a wide range of physical disabilities including cerebral palsy, stroke, polio, learning disabilities, epilepsy, spina

bifida, autism, amputation, spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and rheumatoid arthritis. Services are provided generally without a fee and are designed to touch individual lives in a way that supports dignity and independence. United Disabilities Services offers a network of programs that assist individuals with disabilities to become integrated into all aspects of life and areas of our society. As a Certified Medical Assistance Provider, UDS provides direct services that prevent institutionalization and supports individuals to live in their own home. Services are provided wherever the services are needed, in home, on the job site, in training programs, over the telephone and in the community. More information is available at www.udservices.org.

#