



Press Release 10/7/12- Metta means love, compassion, kindness, empathy, and caring and now the Metta Students Foundation will honor high school students who share metta by giving them one thousand dollars. Founder Norm Kelly decided to create the Metta Students Foundation after learning of the inspiring story of Stephen and Tayler.

Stephen Carroll of Johnston, RI has lived his life in a wheelchair, born with Cerebral Palsy. His family raised him to be independent and through the years Stephen has overcome many obstacles. Come senior year he wanted to go to his prom but it looked like that would be one obstacle to get in his way.

But when 16 year old Tayler Boardman-Kelly a junior from North Providence, RI heard that Stephen had no one to go with she wanted to be his prom date. "I worked at Stephen's school and asked some of girls to see if they would include Stephen in their group," says Kaolin Boardman, "but no one came forward, disappointed I shared that with my family and without hesitation my daughter said she wanted to go with Stephen."

"I thought about how I had just gone to my prom," says Tayler, "and how much fun it was and how I would have absolutely hated it if I didn't go."

If you ask Tayler she will say her gesture is not a big deal, but this act of metta went viral. When students at Stephen's school found out he was going to prom, they became inspired and spread even more metta. Unbeknownst to Stephen they created the Stephen Nation Twitter account urging fellow students to nominate Stephen Prom King. Nearly everyone voted for Stephen.

"Prom night was the best night of my life," says Stephen, "the whole senior class was chanting my name, it was a moment I will never forget."

The spirit of that 2012 prom night moved many others to pass on Stephen and Tayler's story. Norm Kelly from Lincoln heard what happened while taking a Raffa Yoga class in Cranston.

"Jane Viscolosi is one of our most popular instructors here," says owner Christine Raffa, "and she had stopped me in the hallway and told me about this amazing happening between her young niece and another boy at the Johnston High School and after hearing the story that Jane told very articulately we both walked away with a tear in our eye"

That night Christine Raffa told the story to her yoga class. While laying on his yoga mat Norm realized he needed to keep the acts of metta moving. "I believe there is a lot of good our kids do that we do not hear about. We definitely hear about what kids do wrong," says Kelly.

October 7th the Metta Student Foundation will honor Tayler and Stephen by presenting them each with \$1,000. Kelly wanted the first presentation done at the birthplace of the Metta Student's Foundation, at the Raffa Yoga Studio. Kelly is CEO of Software Quality Associates in Providence and says his company has always wanted to give back to the community.

"I love the uniqueness of Metta Students," says Kelly, "we are honoring high school kids for their acts of loving-kindness. You do not have to be the smartest or most athletic to be honored with a Metta Student Foundation Scholarship."

Media members are welcome to come to the ceremony October 7th at 2 pm, at the Raffa Yoga Center located at 19 Sharpe Drive in Cranston, RI. If you are interested in doing a story or want broadcast hi definition video with split audio of the story please contact Laura Clarizio at 617 852-7784 or lauraclarizio@aol.com. To see the video of Stephen and Tayler's story or for more information about the Metta Students Foundation log onto www.mettastudentsfoundation.org.