



Disability Rights and  
Social Justice T-shirts,  
Buttons, and More

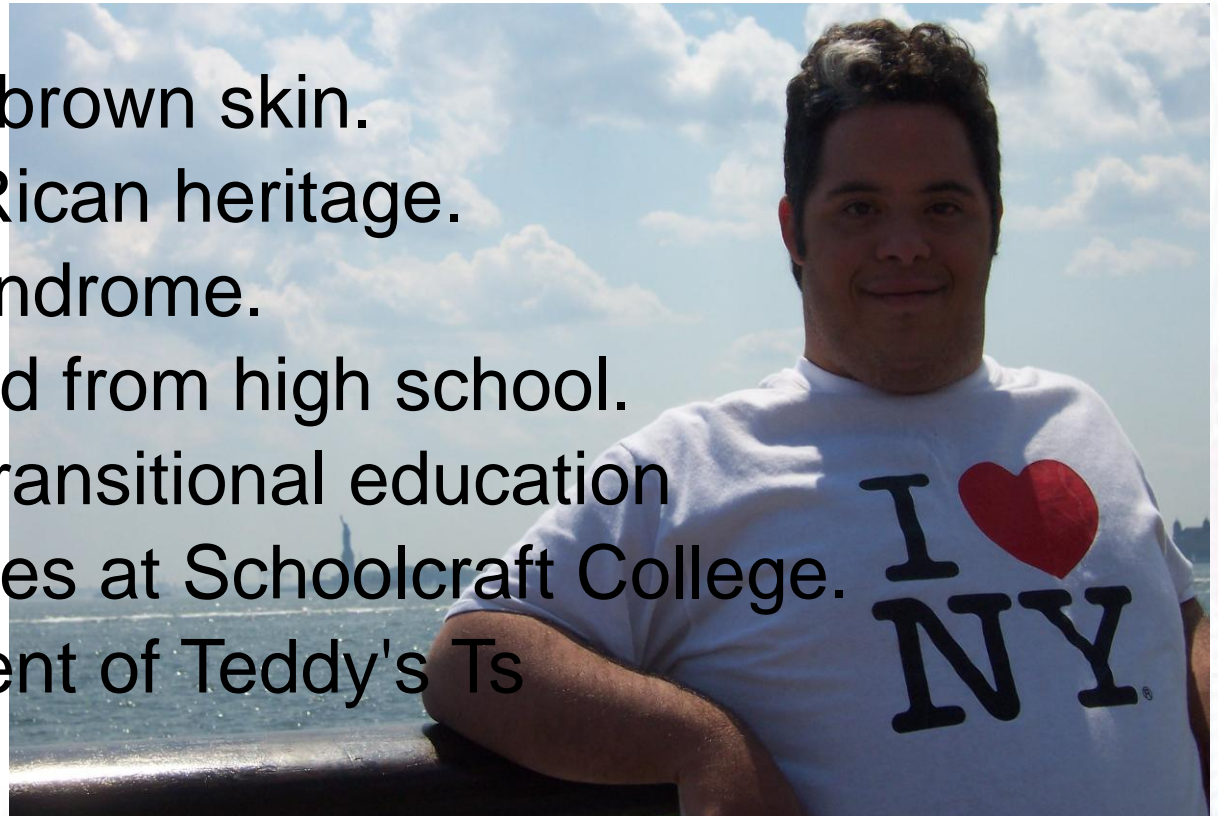


## Advocacy in Action

Teddy Fitzmaurice  
Susan Fitzmaurice

# Teddy wants you to know:

- He is 30 years old.
- He was born in New York City.
- He is adopted.
- He is Black with brown skin.
- He is of Puerto Rican heritage.
- He has Down syndrome.
- He has graduated from high school.
- He retired from transitional education
- He attends classes at Schoolcraft College.
- He is the President of Teddy's Ts





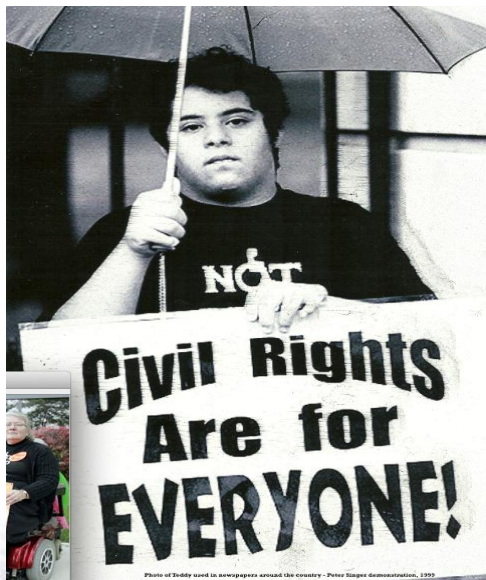
# Teddy -

- Has 2 bunnies, Michelle & Snowball.
- He is named after Teddy Kennedy.
- Never wants to live in a group home.
- Lives in his own apartment next to his mom.
- Helps take care of his Grandma.
- He loves holiday & birthdays.
- Wants everybody to have freedom and love their life like he does.





# Teddy has grown up as a disability activist.





**But  
Teddy  
wanted  
to be  
more  
than a  
disability  
activist,**



**He had  
a dream:  
he wanted  
to be  
president.**

**And so he  
is –  
President  
of  
Teddy's  
Ts.**

**In the beginning,** Teddy's Ts was a tiny microenterprise. He sold just a few shirts from the Nth Degree. His friend Dan Wilkins helped him get started. Dan lent him shirts to sell on consignment and Mom used her credit card.





**It was really hard work at first.  
Teddy had to learn a lot of new things.**

- Make good eye contact.
- Sit up straight.
- Recognize size labels.
- Keep piles of shirts straight
- Make change
- Fold shirts
- Don't fall asleep
- Give everyone a business card
- Remember how much shirts and buttons cost.
- Be nice to people who don't buy anything
- Don't give anything away for free.





Teddy hard at work - painting  
a shirt  
and making buttons.





# Mom had to learn lots of new things, too.

- Push Teddy to stay focused.
- Break things down into very small steps.
- Not do things Teddy could do.
- If Teddy couldn't do it, figure out what he could do.
- Be more patient
- Accept that there were some limitations.
- Remember this is his dream and his business.





## **But Mom also learned to -**

- Keep books
- Price shirts competitively
- Learn about sales tax and business expenses
- Ask for reduced conference fees
- Better understand marketing, social media, & e-commerce
- Be judicious about credit

**And -** Expand the original concept of Teddy's Ts to better match Teddy's growing sense of himself and a changing economy.



# Mistakes were made along the way...

- Depending too much on the good will of others
- Pricing shirts at \$18.00
- Expanding too quickly into too many designs.
- Delaying our move to make buttons
- Trying to silkscreen shirts ourselves.
- Trying out a retail space





# **But the successes have been worth it!**

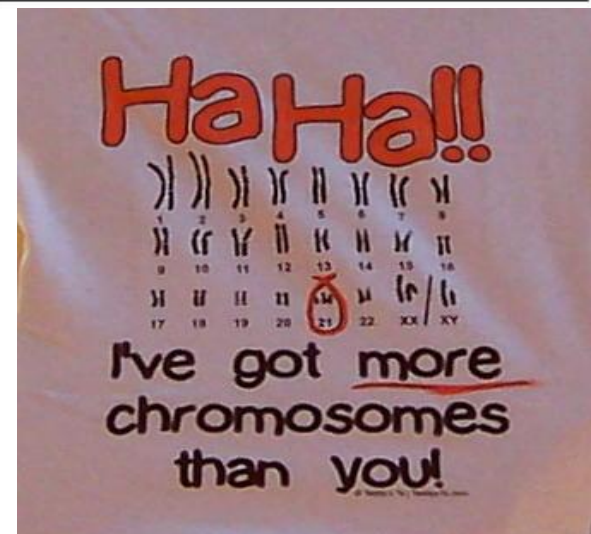
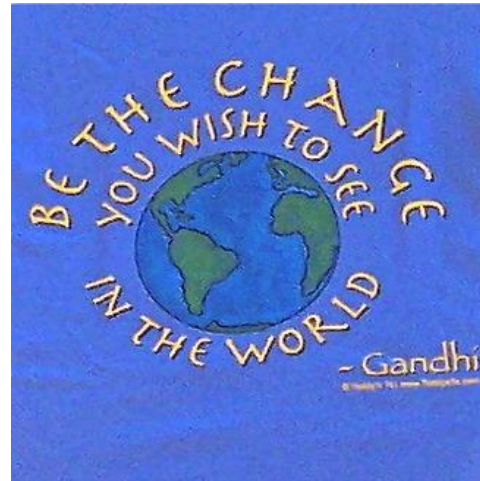
- Teddy has learned the value of money.
- He is finally beginning to read – via name tags.
- His attention span has expanded.
- He has a place in the community -  
as a business owner and a disability activist.
- He is a sought-after public speaker.



- Has traveled to Chicago, New York City, St Louis, Oklahoma City, Denver, San Juan, Washington DC, Columbus, Indianapolis, National Harbor, & more.
- Has met people like President Clinton, Senator Tom Harkin, and many of the Kennedy clan.
- Learned to silkscreen t-shirts, hand paint designs, and to design and manufacture buttons.
- At his last big event he sold \$300 in shirts and \$500 in buttons.



# Some of Teddy's Tshirts





# Some of Teddy's Buttons





# **What is the key to Teddy's Ts success?**

Teddy is a natural born salesman and an artist.

Teddy was given the opportunity to follow his dream and it took him where no one imagined he could go.

No boundary has stood in the way of Teddy's Ts success, because no boundary was believed to be insurmountable.

The success of Teddy's Ts lies in his desire to make the world a better place.

Teddy gets a lot of help from people who care about him.

Teddy is living his American dream.



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## Shred



There is no word Teddy hates more than the one depicted in this shirt. I don't think he fully understands what it is intended to mean – he just knows it is ugly.

[Buy the Shirt](#)

[Buy the Button](#)

**Shred**

Adult small -  
3XL & 5XL

**Sexy**

Adult small -  
3XL & 5XL

**Gandhi**

Adult small -  
3XL & 5XL

**Peace**

Adult sizes &  
child 2-4, 6-8,

**HaHa!**

Adult, child,  
and infant

**I Love  
My Life**

Adult & Child

**Scars**

Adult small -  
3XL & 5XL

**Label  
Jars**

Adult & Child

Teddy's Ts website – designed by Mom and Rich.

[Http://www.TeddysTs.com](http://www.TeddysTs.com)

Teddy@TeddysTs.com