

Trustee member given award for lifetime of public service

Fehribach strives to improve economy, access to buildings

By: Jill Blocker

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Ball State University trustee Greg Fehribach's lifetime of work facilitating access to buildings for the disabled was recognized with the Unbreakable Spirit Award, given by the Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation.

The award is given to recognize contributions of groups or individuals that work to improve the lives of people with Osteogenesis Imperfecta and other disabilities through awareness, legislation, education, philanthropy and other forms of service.

OI is a genetic disorder that causes bones to break easily from little or no cause, according to the OIF. An estimated 20,000 to 50,000 people in the United States have OI.

Fehribach, who has OI, was honored by the OIF with the award for his outstanding accomplishments and constant contribution to improving the lives of people with disabilities.

Fehribach said that receiving the award was gratifying because the OIF recognizes people with disabilities as being productive in society.

A lawyer for 20 years, Fehribach said he works to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are taken into consideration when creating public spaces and formulating emergency plans.

Some of the projects Fehribach has consulted on include Lucas Oil Stadium, the Indianapolis Zoo and the Indianapolis International airport, according to The Fehribach Group.

Fehribach also works with building planning at Ball State.

Tom Morrison, the associate vice president for human resources and state relations, said he has known Fehribach since he began working at Ball State, during the construction of Worthen Arena.

Fehribach said he worked with the construction to create full accessibility before the American Disability Act was in place.

"The construction was really ahead of its time," Morrison said. "Because of Greg's life experiences in working with disability design, he brings diversity of thought. I'm very proud of what he brings to the university."

Fehribach said the most difficult thing about his work is making people realize that these accessible designs create business and help society.

"Before, society might not have recognized the contributions people with disabilities can have in the community as a whole," Fehribach said. "Accessibility increases business. I hope people with disabilities realize this and I hope they are aware that they can become business people, and be included in society."

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