

CEHS Celebrates Film Premiere in Park City: "Follow the Sound of My Voice" | CEHS

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The Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services hosted a film premiere event at the Santy Auditorium in Park City on October 22, 2016. Follow the Sound of My Voice documents the inspirational journey of Troy Shumway, a USU graduate who has autism, as he climbs Mt. Kilimanjaro. "Many of our audience members have personal experience with autism," said Shane Johnson, who is the associate director of development for the Center for Persons with Disabilities at USU. "You could sense they had a strong emotional reaction to the film."

In a Q&A session following the screening, filmmaker Ben Stamper, who documented Shumway's climb, reflected on some of the misconceptions we have about people with autism and how important and rewarding it is to overcome those. Stamper intends to submit the documentary to several film festivals, including Sundance. "We were so moved to see such an outpouring of interest in Troy's story and in the experience of young adults with autism," said Johnson.



Shumway's courage and perseverance were moving to many of the audience members, as well as his charisma and candor while answering their questions. During the Q&A session, Johnson asked Troy if the climb up Kilimanjaro helped prepare him for the difficult final year before his graduation from USU in the Aggies Elevated program. "Troy said that when he began to doubt if he could finish school, he remembered that he had overcome altitude sickness and extreme exhaustion on Kilimanjaro, and it gave him confidence that he could persevere through to graduation as well."

This stirring film helps to raise awareness of both autism and the Aggies Elevated program, which supports students with disabilities at USU. The College of Education and Human Services has a number of programs that support young adults with disabilities as they transition to a life of independence and opportunity. "Troy is a graduate of our Aggies Elevated program," said Johnson. "He is an example of the kind of difference these programs can make in the lives of young adults."

For more about the film, visit: <http://www.parkrecord.com/entertainment/documentary-follows-usu-grad-with-autism-on-kilimanjaro-climb/>