



Rob Richards

My career of working with individuals with disabilities began in 1997 while serving as a Rehabilitation Instructor for Cardinal Center Inc., which provides basic level group homes for adults with significant cognitive and/or physical impairments. After completing my bachelor's degree in education at Indiana University South Bend in 2000, I began my career as a mild disabilities teacher at

LaVille Elementary (Union-North United School Corporation) in Lakeville, Indiana, where I spent the next 15 years. During that time, I earned my master's degree from Indiana University in 2005, with a focus on Seriously-Emotionally Handicaps. I am currently completing my final semester (internship) at Ball State University for my Director of Exceptional Needs license. I am in my second year serving as the Outreach Director for the J.E.S.S.E. cooperative in Plymouth, Indiana, which partners with nine school corporations. I am a certified instructor for the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). A fun fact about myself is that I'm a member of the 501st Legion, which is the largest international Star Wars costuming organization, recognized and approved by the Walt Disney World Corporation and Lucas Films Limited. I serve as a Stormtrooper, and we do charity and volunteer work for several organizations including the Children's Miracle Network, Make-A-Wish Foundation, and many organizations that support individuals with disabilities. All of our costumes are movie screen accurate and represent the world of Star Wars, bringing joy and smiles to thousands of kids and adults per year.

I was recommended for the ICASE Presidential Scholarship by the J.E.S.S.E. Executive Director, Linda Holland and Dr. Michael Harvey from Ball State University.