

For those that know Tom and Jane McCall, you know the legacy of their first-born son, Bud. Bud was born with an extensive list of disabilities and the initial projections for his life were less than 12 days.

Through the love of Tom and Jane, Bud's siblings (Al and Katie), extended family and community, Bud blessed all that knew him for 15 years. The impact he made lives on today in many ways. One major example is the Friends helping Friends Club (FHF) dedicated to the memory of Bud McCall which Bud's sister Katie Archer served as Founding FHF Student Officer in 2010. Another major example is the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) which Tom McCall, Georgia Farm Bureau President & Former State Representative who drafted House Bill 1146 establishing GVRA in 2012. Bud's mother, Jane currently serves on the Friends Helping Friends Club, Inc. board *and* on the GVR Services (GVRs) Board.

While keeping it a secret from Tom and Jane, the GVRs board was honored to recognize Bud's impact on his family and community and extend it beyond Elbert County as a part of the 50-year celebration of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as the GVRs board had their board meeting at the Georgia National Fair in Perry, GA on October 11th. The board proudly made the exciting announcement as the top secret proclamation was read to the McCall family and attendees that the GVRA post secondary education scholarship would be named the *Bud McCall Vocational Rehabilitation Scholarship*. This scholarship will continue to empower and support individuals with disabilities in their pursuit of education, training, and career development, ensuring that the McCall family's vision of providing inclusive and equal opportunities for Georgians with disabilities endures for generations to come.

Beginning January 2024, all financial needs assessments will be removed as a barrier for those seeking post-secondary education. The amount of the previous Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency scholarship will be increased to match funding offered through the Pell Grant. This amount covers \$7,395 for tuition, \$900 for books, and \$9,140 for maintenance (room, board and meals) and equates to a maximum amount of \$17,435 annually, or \$8,718 per semester.

This scholarship serves as a testament to the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency's commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment where all Georgians can achieve their full potential, regardless of

disability, and where the love that the McCall family represents *and* the legacy of Bud's inspiration will live on.

Sandy Adams (GVRS Board Secretary & FHF, Inc. Pres.) commented, "We would not have the Friends Helping Friends Club (ECCHS & ECMS FHF school clubs), or Friends Helping Friends Club, Inc. (FHF, Inc. - 501(c)3 organization providing inclusive educational opportunities to EC Schools and Advantage adults who have special needs), or GVRA if it were not for Bud and Katie. Bud continues, and will continue to inspire others for decades to come through this wonderful scholarship."

Pictured are Tom Wilson (GVRS Board Chair), Sandy Adams (GVRS Board Secretary/FHF, Inc. Pres.), Bristol Archer (FHF, Inc. Board Member), McCall Kate Archer held by Jane McCall (GVRS Board Member/FHF, Inc. Board of Directors), Tom McCall (Georgia Farm Bureau President), Katie Archer (FHF, Inc. Board Member), Craig Camuso (GVRS Board Member), State Rep. Rob Leverett

Special guests recognized who were presented an appreciation plaque from GVRA:

- Superintendent Richard Woods, Georgia Department of Education
- Dan Regenstein, Chief of Staff, Georgia Department of Administrative Services
- Ron Wakefield, Director of the Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Charlotte Densmore, Public Policy Director, Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Caitlyn Hyatt, Chief Operations Officer of Association Services Group and GATES member, Georgia Association of Training, Employment & Supports
- Chief of Staff, Louis DeBroux, and Commissioner Bruce Thompson, Georgia Department of Labor
- State Property Officer Marty Smith, Georgia Building Authority
- Commissioner Jason Shaw, Public Service Commission
- Deputy Commissioner Rusty Rodgers, Department of Juvenile Justice
- Emily Hatchett, Deputy Director of Governmental Affairs, Department of Human Services
- Tina Herring, Assistant Director of Existing Industry and Regional Recruitment, Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Stephen Shimp, Executive Director of the Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agriculture Center
- Mason Dean, AgrAbility (housed at UGA) Field Coordinator for South Georgia
- Kyle Haney, UGA Rural Health Manager

Farm Monitor's Post:



10-11-23

Heartwarming Surprise at the Georgia National Fair Grounds!

Today at the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency - GVRA board meeting, something truly special unfolded that brought tears to the eyes of many. Georgia Farm Bureau President Tom McCall and his wife Jane, who is also a board member, thought the other was being recognized for their contributions to GVRA. Little did they know, they were in for a heartwarming surprise! In a beautifully orchestrated top-secret proclamation, the agency unveiled a scholarship named in honor of their late son, Bud, who passed away in 2000 from Spina Bifida. The "Bud McCall" scholarship is a touching tribute to Bud's memory and a testament to the love and dedication of the McCall family.

The 'Bud McCall' scholarship will be awarded to any VR client interested in pursuing their dreams at a post-secondary institution. It's an inspiring opportunity for those who face unique challenges, and it embodies the spirit of hope, perseverance, and love that the McCall family represents. The moment this surprise was revealed, both Tom and Jane were left speechless and emotional. It's a reminder that sometimes, the most extraordinary gifts are the unexpected ones, and the impact they have on our lives is immeasurable.

Join us in celebrating this wonderful gesture of love, remembrance, and support. The 'Bud McCall' scholarship will undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy, and we can't wait to see the

incredible journeys it will help launch.
#GVRA #InspiringGenerosity



#BudMcCallScholarship