

Former teacher who employs adults with special needs receives annual S.J. Dilenschneider Community Award

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CINCINNATI – A former Arizona special education teacher is being honored for creating a business to employ her students.

The Scripps Howard Fund presented Karin York with the S.J. Dilenschneider Community Award. The annual award honors the late S.J. Dilenschneider, a longtime executive with Scripps-Howard newspapers. A panel of judges selected York from nominees recommended by Scripps' local television stations across the country.

The award, including a \$10,000 cash prize, is given to an individual or group of individuals in Scripps' local markets who exemplify the spirit of Dilenschneider and The E.W. Scripps Company (NASDAQ: SSP). Civility, leadership, community spirit and mentorship were among the criteria used to select the winner.

York created [Spencer's Place](#), a coffee shop named after her son with Down syndrome, in 2019 after realizing many of her former students weren't given opportunities to live up to their full potential.

"This was a dream that was breathed out of just my frustration," York said in an interview with ABC15 Arizona, the Scripps-owned television station in Phoenix, shortly after the coffee shop opened. "I prepared these students for amazing jobs. I knew they would be able to conquer simple tasks and jobs. They had money skills. We did mock interviews all the time and really homed in on skills they would need, but nobody would give them a chance."

Spencer's Place provides training and jobs to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Of York's 31 employees, half have special needs. The coffee shop has become a community hub where people with disabilities and their families gather.

"Karin exemplifies the spirit of this award," said Liz Carter, president and CEO of the Scripps Howard Fund. "In addition to giving employees of Spencer's Place opportunities they may not have had otherwise, she's creating an inclusive community for families of children with special needs and giving them hope."

York hopes to continue the success from Spencer's Place by opening a second coffee shop later this year.

The ABC15 Arizona team [surprised York with The S.J. Dilenschneider Community Award](#) on Monday, June 19, at Spencer's Place surrounded by her employees.

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About the Scripps Howard Fund

The [Scripps Howard Fund](#) is a public charity that supports philanthropic causes important to [The E.W. Scripps Company](#) (NASDAQ: SSP) and the communities it serves, with a special emphasis on journalism education, excellence in journalism and childhood literacy. At the crossroads of the classroom and the newsroom, the Fund is a leader in supporting journalism through scholarships, internships, minority recruitment and development and First Amendment causes. The Scripps Howard Awards stand as one of the industry's top honors for outstanding journalism, and the Fund's annual "If You Give a Child a Book ..." childhood literacy campaign has distributed thousands of new books to children in need across the nation. In support of its mission to create a better-informed world, the Fund also partners with Scripps brands to create awareness of local issues and support organizations that help build thriving communities. The Scripps Howard Foundation, an affiliated organization with the Scripps Howard Fund, supports Scripps' charitable efforts through its endowment, key assets and major donations.