Congratulations to the 2013 CPD Volunteers of the Year!

Sue Reeves

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Emily Larson and Erica Lundahl

Two parents who have taken over the management of TOP Sports, which provides fully inclusive activities such as baseball and T-ball, basketball, soccer, bowling, swimming and art classes for children and youth with disabilities in Cache County, have been named 2013 Volunteers of the Year by Utah State University’s Center for Persons with Disabilities.

Emily Larson and Erica Lundahl received the award at a recent TOP Sports t-ball practice at Forrester Acres in Smithfield.

“Emily and Erica make a difference, and they deserve special recognition for what they’ve done,” said Bryce Fifield, CPD director during the presentation.

TOP Sports began about seven years ago, when the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council offered a grant to establish inclusive recreation and sports activities for children with disabilities. According to Sue Olsen, director of exemplary services at the CPD, TOP Sports was formed with the goal of working with Logan Parks & Recreation to create inclusion in their existing activities. Since then, the program has expanded to include the Smithfield Recreation Center.

Fifield said that when nominations opened for the award, “it took Sue Olsen about three seconds to nominate Emily and Erica. They have made TOP Sports available for families in this area.”

“A huge amount of energy is spent on therapy and appointments when you have a child with a disability,” Fifield continued. “Families lose the chance to be social and have community involvement.”

Larson and Lundahl, who both have children who participate in TOP Sports, agreed that their motive might be called selfish.

“We did it for our own kids,” Lundal said with a laugh.