

THE 2020 MIDGE KOVACS ANNUAL AWARENESS AWARD

Since 1999, the NSDA takes great pleasure in bestowing the **Midge Kovacs Annual Awareness Award**. Midge started one of the first SD support groups. She wrote a newsletter called *Our Voice* in order to share information about SD as well as experiences of people living with SD. She encouraged all of us with SD to think beyond our individual voice problems. “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead)

In presenting the Midge Kovacs Annual Awareness Award, we honor the outstanding work of an SD support group. This presentation marks our 22nd consecutive presentation. For their work in 2019 and several years prior to that, the award this year is given to **Dennis Kaszeta** and the **Greater Detroit SD Support Group**. Truly, Dennis follows in the footsteps of the late pioneering SD advocate, **Midge Kovacs**.

Dennis is a longtime clinical social worker. He helped to re-energize the Detroit group established by NSDA founding President, **Larry Kolasa**. Dennis has led the group for several years. It is fitting that we are bestowing this Award this year when we are “going back home” to the Detroit area where Larry started the NSDA. Dennis did site visits with Larry for the NSDA in advance of our 2020 Symposium. Dennis attended the 2018 Leadership Workshop in Dallas. Recently, Dennis participated in the spasmodic dysphonia research program in Minnesota which is looking at vibro-tactile stimulation as a treatment for improving the voice symptoms of people with spasmodic dysphonia. In addition, Dennis took part in a conference call on NSDA fundraising with seasoned fundraising leaders and those who are possibly interested in doing NSDA fundraising in the future.

“Great things are brought about and burdens are lightened through the efforts of many hands anxiously engaged in a good cause.” (Elder M. Russell Ballard) The NSDA is grateful for the experience, dedication and commitment to serve the spasmodic dysphonia community shown by **Dennis Kaszeta** and the **Greater Detroit SD Support Group**.