

THE 2019 MIDGE KOVACS ANNUAL AWARENESS AWARD *New York City Spasmodic Dysphonia Support Group*

Every year since 1999, the NSDA takes great pleasure in bestowing The Midge Kovacs Annual Awareness Award. Midge started one of the first spasmodic dysphonia support groups. She wrote a newsletter 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 21st consecutive presentation. For their work in 2018 and many years prior to that, this award this year is given to **Adrienne Simons** and the **New York City Spasmodic Dysphonia Support Group**. Truly, Adrienne follows in the footsteps of the late pioneering SD advocate, **Midge Kovacs** and Adrienne knew Midge well.

Adrienne served the NSDA as Northeast Regional Coordinator. She and Midge Kovacs organized the Eastern Regional Conference in 1996. In addition, she did site visits for the NSDA in advance of our successful 2007 Symposium which was held in White Plains, NY. The New York City SD Support Group was founded by Midge Kovacs in 1987 and remains one of the longest standing groups in the NSDA support network.

Adrienne Simons has been a dedicated support group leader for more than 25 years. The article which Adrienne wrote for *Prevention* magazine in 1990 was a significant advancement in awareness and education about spasmodic dysphonia. Adrienne represented the NSDA when she attended the memorial service for Midge Kovacs in New York City in late 2004. She also participated in the NSDA video series called “Sharing My Voice” where she discussed her journey with living with SD.

“Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.” (Aldous Huxley) The NSDA is grateful for the experience, dedication and commitment to serve the spasmodic dysphonia community shown by Adrienne Simons and the New York City SD Support Group.