

# Jessica DiLorenzo

## *A Mother Responds*

A Letter from Mrs. Jessica DiLorenzo  
(excerpted)

Dear Ken,

I wanted to write to you about Vinny and how you and Level the Playing Field have made a real difference in this young boy's life.

When it was first suggested to us that Vinny was showing signs of autism we, as a family, reacted immediately, knowing early intervention was key to giving him the best chance. Time moves so very quickly- even more when you are raising a child with special needs.

My husband and I, along with my parents, my grandmother and my sister invested much time, energy and attention in helping him progress. When he was very young, Vinny participated in different therapies on a nearly daily basis. The therapy bills could cost hundreds each week, not including aides and such. When Vincent was in middle school, we nearly depleted our retirement accounts fighting for outplacement for Vinny.

Years later, looking at colleges was a whole new learning experience for us. We visited a few schools and though nothing seemed to be a right fit, Vinny began to get better .

One day, I called Mitchell College. After discussing Vinny's case, they suggested we look at the Thames program- a transitional program within the college that would allow Vinny to live at the school. With the high price tag, I realized our college savings were going to be insufficient.

It was around this time you-Kenny- and Level the Playing Field came to our aid. I felt the universe was telling us we were on the right track- that someone was looking out for us. A few weeks after we wrote our letter to

you, you- Kenny-called to let me know Vinny was granted a very generous scholarship. I nearly dropped the phone.

To Vinny, this scholarship meant someone “saw” him. It let him know that what he had accomplished was extraordinary and valued by others.

Vinny is now in his second semester of college. He earned a 3.67 GPA in his first semester and a 99% grade on a mid-term- the highest grade a professor ever gave in the history of her class!

So you see, the “gift” you gave Vinny helped make this child’s self-sufficient lifestyle a reality. As we’ve learned throughout the years of raising Vinny, the right support is of ultimate importance. You allowed our family to enroll Vinny in the perfect program to prepare him for the future.

God bless you and Level the Playing Field. With heartfelt thanks,

Jessica Di Lorenzo