

**By Mindy Raye Friedman**  
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*This deacons  
quorum president  
served a quorum  
member in a  
unique way.*

# RACING FOR





Imagine competing in a triathlon where you swim 500 meters, bike for 12 miles, and then run for 3.2 miles. Sound pretty hard? Now imagine pushing and pulling a good friend the entire time. That is what Spencer Zimmerman of Arizona did with his friend Dayton Hayward.

### One of the guys

Dayton, 13, has cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder. He can't speak or walk, but in the deacons quorum of his ward, he is just one of the guys. When Dayton entered the Young Men program, his dad told the other deacons they would need to help Dayton fulfill his priesthood duties, and the quorum members have taken that challenge seriously.

"When I help Dayton pass the sacrament, I feel as if I am on a mission from Heavenly Father to give him the opportunity to participate in our deacon duties," says Hunter McKown, a fellow deacon.

### The triathlon idea

Spencer loves to run and compete in triathlons. As the deacons quorum president, he encouraged his fellow quorum members to do a triathlon with him. But Dayton wouldn't be able to do it on his own.

"I thought it would be really cool to do a triathlon with Dayton," Spencer says. "He should have the opportunity to do and enjoy what everybody else does."



# TWO

Along with passing the sacrament with help from his quorum members, Dayton collects fast offerings, does baptisms for the dead, and even goes on campouts with the other young men. They treat him like he is no different from anybody else. And no one is better at this than his quorum president, Spencer.

Spencer, 13, knows what it means to fulfill his priesthood duties, so serving his fellow quorum member just came naturally.

"When I got called to be the deacons quorum president, I felt a great sense of responsibility on my shoulders," he says. "I knew that I should watch out for everybody in the quorum and make sure they're doing good."



So Spencer talked to his parents and Dayton's parents about doing the triathlon with Dayton. Everyone thought it was a great idea, so they asked Dayton if he wanted to do it.

"Spencer went to Dayton and asked him, and Dayton just blinked really definitely like he was really excited about doing a triathlon with him," says Dayton's father, John Hayward.

## SHARING ONLINE

**A**fter Spencer and Dayton's story was made into a video called "Dayton's Legs," on [youth.lds.org](#), a Church member in Florida sent the video link to his friend Tracy in Arizona.

Tracy knew that a Church that taught young men to serve like Spencer and Dayton was a Church she wanted her sons to be a part of. She went to church with Spencer and Dayton's families and met with the missionaries. The Spirit bore witness of the truth of the gospel, and Tracy and her family were baptized.

You can share the gospel by doing something as easy as sending a video link from [youth.lds.org](#). You never know whose life will change.

### *See Spencer and Dayton in Action*

Watch a video about Spencer and Dayton at [lds.org/go/111](#).

## Dayton's legs

So Spencer trained, and he and Dayton did the triathlon together. For the swim, Spencer pulled Dayton behind him in a small, inflated boat. On the bike, he attached a cart for Dayton to sit in, and on the run, he pushed Dayton in a jogging stroller. The race was hard, but Spencer says he and Dayton "loved every second of it," and he was grateful to have Dayton with him.

"Throughout the swim, the bike, and the run, I knew that Dayton was five feet from me the whole time," Spencer says. "It was awesome to know that one of my really good friends could be with me."

Spencer says he and Dayton grew closer together during the race and that he felt spiritually strengthened.

"Near the finish line was very spiritual for me and Dayton, because I felt that I was out of energy, but then Dayton started smiling. I started to speed up, and I had the energy to sprint the last few hundred yards into the finish line. I felt that the Spirit was there helping Dayton and me to finish that race."

They ended up finishing in an hour and 28 minutes and won first place in the team category. But Spencer doesn't want any credit or glory for what he did.

"The triathlon was such a neat experience, because it was hard for Spencer, and yet he made it look easy," says

Dayton's mom, Sherrine Hayward.

"And he always has given the glory to the team. He's been very humble, and he doesn't want the spotlight. He wants Dayton to look like the hero, and he's just Dayton's legs."



## After the race

Even though Spencer didn't want the attention, many people were inspired by what he did for his friend. The mayor of the city was so impressed that he made Spencer and Dayton citizens of the month. Throughout the experience, Spencer didn't take credit for anything, something that really inspired his mother.

"Spencer has shown a lot of humility that has been an example to me," Shelly Zimmerman says. "He has gotten a lot of attention. Attention that he didn't want. And the whole time if anyone said, 'Spencer, this is so cool; you're so great,' he turns it around and says, 'It's Dayton. Dayton's on this team too.'"

Spencer was just happy he could serve his friend. "I fulfill my duty to God when I do service for others and I act on what needs to be done," he says.

## Service in the quorum

Spencer knows Dayton loved the triathlon. He could tell from the smile on his face. But he also knows Dayton is happy whenever the members of their quorum include him, so

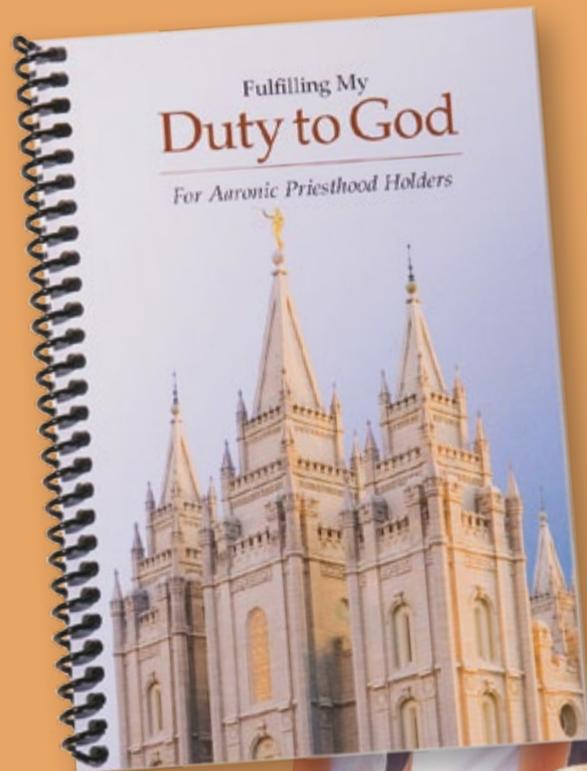


as their quorum leader, he is always encouraging them to serve one another.

“These boys are not inhibited by Dayton at all,” Sherrine Hayward says. “They’re not afraid or intimidated. They all really want to serve, and Spencer shows the boys that it’s not hard; it’s easy to serve.”

And that service goes both ways, as Dayton also serves the members of his quorum by teaching them. “Dayton is a true pleasure to be around because he may not talk but you can sure feel the Spirit when you are around him,” says quorum member Ryan Smith.

“Dayton has been a good friend to me because he has taught me a bunch of life lessons,” Spencer says. “He’s taught me that you can do hard things no matter what your circumstances are. You can be just like everybody else.” **NE**



## A DUTY TO GOD

**S**pencer Zimmerman and Dayton Hayward both used their participation in the triathlon to help fulfill the physical health project for their deacon years in Duty to God.

“The physical health in the new *Fulfilling My Duty to God* book—we fulfilled that by doing this triathlon and training together,” Spencer says. “Dayton’s got his *Duty to God* book too, and he can fulfill projects. We can do projects for him that maybe he can’t do, but he does as much as he can, and he loves doing his Duty to God.”

“I like the new *Duty to God* because you’re able to create your own plans,” he says. “You get to decide what you do and then act on it. Then you get to share it with everybody and let them receive the blessing that you did and let them feel the way you felt.”

