

Pamela M. Mines

Author | Entrepreneur | Mother | Special Needs Advocate

BIOGRAPHY



Pamela Michelle Mines is a true example that with perseverance, hard work and faith, anything is possible. After receiving a certification in both Early Childhood Development and Early Childhood Education. Pam's career began as a Nanny for multiple prominent Richmond, Virginia families. She continued to work in the field of early childhood development acting as a founder, consultant, director and evaluator for multiple Day Care and Child Development Centers in Richmond while her husband stepped out on faith to work towards opening their own Youth Services Business. By 2005, Pam and Perry were working together full-time for Luv'em Like MINES Youth Services, Inc helping and mentoring at-risk youth between the ages of 5 and 21 years old.

Pam and Perry have three children; Michelle, Sydnee and James Perry (JP). In 2005, while at JP's one year old check up, the examination led to concerns that he was not meeting typical developmental milestones. Immediately, Pam's "mommy heart" knew that her son had Autism and one month later, JP was officially diagnosed with a developmental delay. The diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder came when JP was 2 ½ years old.

Determined not to let JP's diagnosis get her down, Pam took what some might view as a devastating situation, and turned it into nothing less than a blessing and a calling. Pam and her family all

embraced JP's diagnosis and vowed to make sure Autism did not "run" their household. By taking JP's diagnosis head on, and adopting a pro-active approach to raising a differently-abled child, Pam has taken her experience and compassion as a mother of a special needs child, and written her 1st children's book entitled God Chose Me, An Interactive Book to Promote Family Building with her daughter Michelle as the illustrator. God Chose Me serves as a learning tool and guide for children with different-abilities.

In 2007, Pam started the *JP JumPers* a walk team of family, friends, and supporters of her son who participated annually in the Autism Society of America Central Virginia Chapter (ASCV) 5K run/walk and fundraiser. Having raised over \$11,500 for the ASCV, she looks forward to increasing her fundraising efforts via her own non-profit. In January 2013, she founded JP JumPers Foundation. The JP JumPers Foundation, "JumPs In" to positively impact families affected by Autism, Special Needs and Unique Circumstances. In their first year they gave gifts to 24 individual's from the JP JumPers Christmas Giving Tree, collected \$841 worth of gift cards, won 2nd and 3rd place in the RVA Has Talent competition, sponsored two special needs worship services, spoke in the three Nationwide Insurance Mid-Atlantic offices (Columbia, MD; Richmond, VA; Lynchburg, VA) to raise Awareness for Autism and raised over \$5,000.

Pam's daughter Sydnee is affected by Special Needs and Unique Circumstances as well. Sydnee's Biological mother (Pam's Godsisiter) LaBonte' Baker passed away from complications from Neurofibromatosis also known as NF in April 2008. Sydnee was just 6yrs old. Sydnee is a child with ADHD and NF. Pam and Perry asked Sydnees grandparents if she could stay with them to help with school, IEPs, advocacy, and Sydnee's social interactions with other children. Though a tough decision they agreed, and now the Mines family has a Baker, and Sydnee has a Mom, Dad, Sister and Brother. Pam PROUDLY says she has three children.

Pam has served on the board of directors for the Autism Society of Central VA and as a liaison for government officials helping their constituents navigate the challenges of finding and securing resources for families affected by Special Needs. Pam has been recognized for her work in this community. Pam was honored as one of three finalists for the *Radical Woman of the Year Award* (2010); was selected as one of Richmond, Virginia's *Top 40 Under 40* for her work with special needs and at-risk youth (2011); was the recipient of the *Special Olympics Virginia Community Service Award* for her volunteerism and support of athletes and Special Olympics Virginia (2012); was specifically asked to represent the Dale District as a parent representative on the *Chesterfield County Special Education Advisory Committee* (2013); and was the recipient of the *Urban League of Greater Richmond Leader in Our Community Award* (2013). She also started a Blog titled "*A Life Like MINES*", chronicling experiences and "Aha" moments in the life of an everyday mom who is *Chosen*. Most recently (2014), Pam lead the legislation to establish "*JP's Law*" (SB367) in VA with the support of Senator Donald McEachin, chief patron on the bill. On 7-1-14, "JP's Law" became effective and her son JP was the first in the state of VA to get this specialized identification card. On 11-5-15, Virginia Governor McAuliffe had a ceremonial Bill Signing for JP's Law and this accomplishment was acknowledged by US Senator Warner, US Senator Tim Kaine, US Congressman Bobby Scott and others. Pam also created a You Tube Video (2014) for the Pharrell Williams song "Happy" featuring the Richmond, VA special needs community called "*RVA Happy in a Special Way*" and it is quickly going viral with more than 2,300 views.

Pam understands and accepts the fact that she and her husband were chosen by God to be Michelle, Sydnee and JP's parents. She feels blessed and grateful that God saw fit to trust them with such a tremendous responsibility. Pam continues to share her experience, knowledge, and enthusiastic approach to helping those families affected by special needs and regularly speaks to other parents, therapists, school administrators, and more. Pam has been a featured speaker at such noted organizations as Penn State and Virginia Commonwealth Universities*. God Chose Me has received support and compliments from such notable personalities as First Lady Michelle Obama, Bishop TD Jakes, Holly Robinson-Peete, and DL Hughley. This remarkable wife, mother, entrepreneur, advocate, and author, hopes that many will be inspired, by her book, her foundation, her message and her actions; and know that through their many challenges, they are CHOSEN.