

# Thinking Creatively

## Young Playwrights Explore Themes Of Disability

(NAPSA)—Teenage Izzy is fascinated by birds. With beach season fading, he loves to stand on the sand, flap his arms and watch the gulls take flight for winter. His movements have attracted the eye of budding photographer Dove, who waits poised with her camera, convinced he's going to fly. When her classmate insists that Izzy, who has autism, is dreaming the impossible, Dove is determined to prove her wrong.

Fifteen-year-old Aliza Goldstein wrote the play "Izzy Icarus Fell Off the World" about a teenage boy with autism "because it's something so easily misunderstood." Her play won VSA arts' annual Playwright Discovery Award, and Goldstein received \$2,000 and the chance to see a professional production of her play at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

VSA arts seeks submissions from writers in grades 6 to 12 every year for the award. The program invites middle- and high-school students to write a one-act play about disability.

Playwrights may draw from their own experiences or they may choose to write about an experience of someone they know or a fictional character. Young playwrights of all abilities are encouraged to participate. Students can submit their individual work or



Photo Courtesy of Scott Suchman

**An annual playwriting competition encourages students to create works about disability.**

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they may collaborate with a group or class of students.

Entries must be one-act plays of 40 pages or less. They should be original, unproduced and unpublished at the time of submission. VSA arts will accept plays that have had previous readings or workshops as long as they were not produced for a paying audience and have not been publicly reviewed. Budding playwrights can find guidelines and applications at [www.vsarts.org](http://www.vsarts.org).

Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith founded VSA arts in 1974 to create a society where people with disabilities learn through, participate in and enjoy the arts. VSA arts became an official affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2005 and has a network of affiliates throughout the country and in 55 countries throughout the world.