

# 2013 Torchbearer Recipient

## Lyn Isbell

Lyn Isbell has faced many obstacles in her life, but despite them all she found a way to follow her passion and change the lives of numerous children in her Michigan City community. Her love and talent for dance along with her benevolence, particularly for children, led her to found a program called Soul Steppers. In 2000 Lyn began using dance routines to teach the youth members of her church scriptures from the Bible, inspiring the name of Soul Steppers.

The popularity of her program quickly grew and became a dance drill team. Lyn led these children as they performed at a number of different events throughout the community. It did not take long for youth from outside the church took notice of her dance team and wanted to participate, prompting her to move the program out of the church open up her own home for them. Lyn realized that a lot of underprivileged youth are turned away by other clubs and organizations because of financial or academic reasons. She wanted to give them a place to come be productive and stay away from crime and misbehavior, requiring only commitment from them.



Soul Steppers continued to grow and became well known throughout Michigan City and nearby areas. Lyn's hopes and ambition did not stop there. She worked hard to secure the Soul Steppers an appearance at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York. The entire 35 member team traveled there and began their national award winning journey.

Lyn's vision and dedication to the children has shown them that they can achieve success and self-confidence through ambition and discipline. Many of Lyn's young dancers are disadvantaged children in need of structure and guidance, which Lyn provides by reaching out to them on a personal level. She continues her dedication to Soul Steppers by requiring members of the team to give back through participation in community service projects. Lyn Isbell's perseverance and compassion for children has made her a deserving *Torchbearer Award* recipient.

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