

Jackson Hankins-Responsibility

Jackson walks through life exemplifying character, but the one character trait that comes to mind for those who know Jackson is responsibility.

What Jackson would want you to know about himself is that he is a 6th grade student at Underwood Elementary school. He plays roller hockey, takes karate lessons, and is a student representative on the school's H.E.R.O. (Helping Everyone Respect Others) team which works to eliminate bullying.

What Jackson probably wouldn't tell you is that he's worked through some very tough situations in his life to be "normal." Jackson was born with **Goldenhar** Syndrome which resulted in facial deformities, partial blindness and deafness. He has had to endure numerous surgeries with more yet to come. Another tough situation for Jackson has been the stares and questions of others. He worked with the counselor at school to educate other students. Their talks did address Jackson's situation, but the focus was on how, even through differences, kids are more like each other than different. The tough situations don't define Jackson. He works hard to achieve academically and personally. In school, he maintains high grades and is known for his responsibility and leadership. Jackson takes personal responsibility for his own learning and has high expectations for himself. He is recognized as a leader in the classroom, both through his words and actions.

Jackson is an inspiration. For seven years, he has shown others at Underwood Elementary what is possible if you have a positive outlook and don't let anything stand in your way.

Karen Hudson

Underwood Elementary School