

# Joni Eareckson Tada Honored for Defending Disabled

A tragic diving accident at age 17 took Joni Eareckson Tada's life on an unexpected detour. Even though the accident left her wheelchair-bound and without the use of her hands, Tada became a sought-after Christian artist and advocate for the disabled community.

Next week, Tada's work will be recognized by the Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview with the 2012 William Wilberforce Award, honoring Tada for her work on behalf of the disabled and her stands against social injustice.

"A fearless champion for the rights of the disabled, Joni models the passion and principles of William Wilberforce and the **love of Christ** to everyone in our world, disabled or not," says Colson Center president Alan Terwilleger. "Her tireless work on behalf of life and human dignity has inspired thousands to break the spiral of silence against discrimination and value the lives of those whom many in society view as unworthy of respect."

Since 1979, Tada's Joni and Friends ministry has provided assistance to thousands through its international disability awareness campaigns, retreats for families with disabled loved ones, wheelchair gifting program, disabled relations training for churches, public policy initiatives and sharing of the **gospel** worldwide. Many thousands more receive encouragement and biblical worldview insights through Joni's daily radio program, heard on stations across the U.S.

"The Colson Center helps Christians develop an informed worldview that sees, understands and engages the world from a biblical perspective," adds Terwilleger. "By recognizing Tada for her campaigns to raise disability awareness, public policy

advocacy and efforts to spread the gospel across the globe, we hope to shine a light on her esteemed work that promotes the sanctity of all lives.”

Named for famed British abolitionist William Wilberforce, the Colson Center’s Wilberforce Award is given annually to a **Christian** trailblazer who has combated the social ills of the day through extraordinary personal effort, skill and influence, affecting positive change in the values and character of society.