

DSAM insights

bimonthly newsletter to support people with Down syndrome and their families



2010 DSAM Board of Directors & Staff:

President Mike Karst
Vice President Mark Price
Treasurer Mark Olivito
Secretary Chandra Evans
Sherry Brooks
Amanda Cash *Self-Advocate*
Aggie Coughlin-Fratta
Manuel DeTuya
Marie Dodson
Carolyn Graff
Holly Holt
Ray Jancso
Lauren Powers
Jessica Smart *Self-Advocate*
Nina Staples
Brandon Wann
Melissa Wenger
Executive Director Alyson Edwards
Communications Manager Kelli Polatty
Admin Assistant Sonya Oliver
Events Manager Jennifer Atkeison

Insight's Staff

Editor: Kelli Polatty
Art Director: Bill Berry
Contributors: Alyson Edwards, Sonya Oliver and Kelli Polatty.

DSAM INSIGHTS IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. IT WANTS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP TO BETTER UNDERSTAND DOWN SYNDROME. THE DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF MEMPHIS AND THE MID-SOUTH CANNOT GUARANTEE THE ACCURACY OF ANY INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

DSAM

2893 So. Mendenhall, Suite 3
Memphis, TN 38115
901.547.7588 Fax 901.547.7589
email Admin@DSAMemphis.org
www.DSAMemphis.org

From the desk of the Executive Director...

DSAM is so excited about our upcoming conference in April. The second annual Focus, Aim, Achieve conference is sure to be a great success as we bring many national and local speakers to share their expertise with the Mid-South community.

In addition, the final Down Syndrome Specialist training will take place on April 15th. This session will be presented by Michael Remus. Mr. Remus is a national consultant and author of several books on inclusion who has served in various roles such as, a general education teacher, special education teacher, school principal, college instructor, school district special education director, Kansas State special education director, and is also the parent of four children, two of which have disabilities. Most of his professional career has been spent in the field of education and in training parents and educators how special education works. Currently the Director of Special Education for Deer Valley Schools he continues to consult with school districts, provide individual assistance and training to parents and educators on special education issues, and serves as a consultant to other districts. He is co-author of five books for parents on how special education works and of two training curriculums based on these books. Mr. Remus will speak on inclusive practices.

April 15th's session will be open to all educators. Mr. Remus will be discussing ideas on system's change and practical IEP solutions. Educators will also be able to register for 0.4 CEU's for this session. We encourage you to contact your school district administration and invite them to attend this workshop. Please contact the DSAM office if you would like a sample invitation letter to send to your teachers, schools and administration or if you need to get contact information for your districts administrators.

Alyson Edwards
Executive Director

Ability is what you're capable of doing.
Motivation determines what you do.
Attitude determines how well you do it.
Lou Holtz

inside DSAM

Board Bio

Sherry Brooks

I remember the day well- a rainy day in April of 2002. I was in my office in City Hall returning emails and tending to a large pile of papers that had overtaken my inbox during the lunch hour. My office phone rang and with delight, I hear my sister Judy on the other end of the line. Six months pregnant with "our" second child (I was so in love with child number one, my nephew Hunter, that he was more like my own), she had gone in for a routine doctor's visit. The concern in her voice was obvious and to say that the phone call changed my-our-lives forever would be an understatement.

The results of a test called a "triple screen," one that tests for Down syndrome and two other conditions were positive and she needed to have further testing performed. She was being sent to a specialist. I received this news and, ever the brave older sister, offered words of love and encouragement. Maybe the test was wrong? My sister was told that many times this test results in a "false positive" and that just because the result indicated her little one would be born with Down syndrome that might not be a correct diagnosis. Everything will be fine. I heard the words automatically pour out of my mouth with less reassurance than I had hoped to convey.

Further testing indicated that yes, the results were likely incorrect. A false positive! The remaining months flew by (well, for me anyway, I wasn't carrying the extra weight!) and before long Judy was in the home stretch, ready to deliver at any time. That conversation we had on that April day seemed to be a distant memory, thoughts and fears tucked away never to be brought up again. Until August 28, 2002. That is when I met Abby Caroline Goldberg- a little girl who has forever changed my life.

My niece Abby was born with Down syndrome. From the moment we first laid eyes on each other, I could tell that this relationship was going to be special. Abby loves me unconditionally. She accepts me for who I am. She doesn't judge me based upon the clothes I wear or the car I drive. Abby helps me understand how to look at the world. She is patient and kind and doesn't get frustrated when things don't go as planned. She is smart, intuitive,

good-natured, hilariously funny and is one of the best dancers I have ever seen, especially when she and her brother Hunter want to show off in front of a crowd.

Abby greets her many challenges just like a best friend, welcoming the opportunity to embrace a difficult situation whether it be in a classroom full of typical children,

on a stage during a dance recital (with typical children), or beside her brother on a baseball field or basketball court. Abby is my hero.

And I want to be just like her when I grow up. She is the complete package-the perfect recipe of a child-bursting at the seams with love for her family and friends, a cup of compassion, a dash or two of innocence, a pinch of mischief...she is my reason for being involved in this exceptional organization. For what she has given me in her seven years, I can only hope to give back to her, to DSAM and to the community in some small way.

It is a privilege to begin my service on this Board. I am truly excited to roll up my sleeves and get to work. And you can guess who will be in my mind and in my heart during each board meeting I attend and at each and every event I help plan...Abby! My hero!



Sherry graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1988, and from the University of Memphis School of Law in 1992. In the past, she served on the board of Special Kids and Families for six years, serving first as secretary and two terms as president. She is currently Vice President, Associate General Counsel at Terminix.

YES I CAN! Award

DSAM would like to congratulate Jessica Smart for being chosen as a recipient of the 2010 Yes I Can! Awards in the Self Advocacy category. Jessica will travel to Nashville in April to receive this outstanding award!

The Yes I Can! Awards were established to honor children and youth with disabilities who have excelled. Thousands of children and youth have been recognized since the program's inception in 1982. Each year, CEC selects approximately 27 winners for their outstanding achievements in one of nine categories:

*Academics • Arts • Athletics • Community Service
Employment • Extracurricular Activities
Independent Living Skills • Self-Advocacy • Technology*

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

NDSC 2010 Annual Convention July 16-18, 2010

The 38th Annual National Down Syndrome Congress Convention will be held on July 16-July 18, 2010 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Walt Disney World, Orlando, Florida.

National Down Syndrome Congress Convention Grants

The Down Syndrome Association of the Mid-South's board of directors has established a stipend program to assist individuals with Down syndrome and their families attending the convention. The DSAM board provides these grants as incentives for individuals with Down syndrome and their families to attend a NDSC convention and have access to the most up to date educational resources, research and networking opportunities. This stipend is a reimbursement program. Families and individuals may seek reimbursement for registration

fees, transportation and lodging up to \$500 per family or up to \$1000 for first time attendees.

A conference stipend form needs to be completed to apply for reimbursements. The form can be obtained by emailing admin@dsamemphis.org or calling 901-547-7588. The application is also available on the DSAM website under the "News & Events" tab.

The deadline to apply for grants is May 1, 2010. Grants will be awarded on a first come first serve basis. Applicants will be notified of awards no later than May 21, 2010.

For more information about the convention or to reserve your lodging accommodations visit www.ndscenter.org or call: (407) 939-1020.

Lori M. Siegal Self-Advocate Conference Leadership Scholarship

In memory of Lori Siegal and in honor of her efforts to advocate for individuals with Down syndrome, her parents Bruce and Sheila Siegal established the Lori M. Siegal Self-Advocate Conference Leadership Scholarship. Lori Siegal was the first self-advocate elected to the DSAM board of directors and served as co-chair of the Buddy Walk of the Mid-South. She was also elected to the National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) self-advocate's board. Lori, who passed away in November 2005, had a passion for speaking on behalf of individuals with Down syndrome. Her voice continues to be heard through this scholarship.

The Lori M. Siegal Scholarship is given annually to a self-advocate (a person with Down syndrome ages 14 and older) who wants to attend the NDSC Convention. Priority for the scholarship are given to (1) a self-advocate seeking a NDSC board position or (2) a self-advocate who will be demonstrating leadership/advocacy by leading or presenting at the convention. If no individual is found for either category then another self-advocate will be chosen.

Interested individuals may contact the DSAM office to receive an application form. Applications must include a paragraph stating why the self-advocate is interested in the scholarship. The scholarship will pay for transportation, registration, lodging and meals up to \$1250. Application deadline is May 15, 2010. Applicants will be notified by June 1, 2010.

For more information or to request an application form please call (901) 547-7588 or email Alyson.edwards@dsamemphis.org.

Making Relationships a Priority

Dr. Paula Kluth

One of the biggest myths I hear in my work in inclusive education is about friendship. Teachers commonly share that they struggle to facilitate relationships during the middle and high school years because older students simply are not interested in socializing with students with disabilities. As one teacher told me, “When they are little, they are more accepting but as kids get older... they are just more into their own thing. We can’t force friendship!”

It is certainly true that no teacher can create friendships between students (nor would we want to), but it is equally true that every educator can create conditions in the classroom that will give students opportunities to strengthen social relationships, learn about and from each other, and get and give support. These opportunities, in many cases, lead to the development of friendships.

Many students with disabilities—including those with significant disabilities—make friends during the secondary school years and sustain those friendships for years. We know this dream is possible. The goal, then, is to create the conditions that will make the dream a reality for a wider range of students. Five ways that schools can encourage interactions, build community, and facilitate relationships are offered here.

Make It a Priority

It almost seems so simple to be true but when students with disabilities do have a robust network of friends it is often, in part, because they are supported by teachers who value and cultivate student collaboration and interaction. In other words, schools that succeed in bringing students together understand relationships as a priority and engage in practices that are related to that priority. In these schools, for examples, social interactions are prioritized on Individual Education Plans and considered in the development of lesson plans.

Build a School Community

The development and sustenance of a school community involves strategies and practices that purposefully

encourage and teach sharing, learning, interdependence, and respect. For example, teachers might encourage community through cooperative learning experiences, conflict resolution opportunities, play and games, class meetings, service learning, social-justice education, cross-age and same-age tutoring and mentoring, and school and classroom celebrations (Sapon-Shevin, 1999). Teachers can also cultivate community by working for whole-school change. For instance, by lobbying for smaller classes, challenging competitive school structures (e.g., cutting students from sports teams), and developing ways to connect students across classrooms and grade levels (e.g., in-school e-mail pals), teachers can not only strengthen the classroom community but help the school as a whole become more responsive to a wider range of learners.

Create Spaces for Sharing

Teachers who seek information about students’ experiences, dreams, interests, and needs can use this information to better educate their students and to facilitate relationships between learners. Too often (especially in secondary schools), students are educated in the same classrooms day after day without developing personal relationships. When I was observing one middle school classroom, I asked a young man to tell me the name of one of his classmates. “I don’t know his name” the student replied. “I’ve never talked to him”. I later found out that these two students had been in the same classroom for over two months.

Students’ voices must be central to work in the classroom and time must be carved out for communication and idea sharing. Teachers interested in incorporating students voices might begin by increasing forums for student participation and leadership. For instance, students might be asked to lead weekly class meetings or to mentor one another. In Kim Rombach’s classroom, students have ample time and space for sharing; they are even in charge of managing conflicts. Rombach facilitates this process by providing two “talking chairs” that are available to any two students who engaged in a disagreement. Students in this classroom don’t go to the teacher to have their recess scuffle assessed, instead they secure permission from the teacher to use the “talking chairs”. In the chairs they discuss their issues and try to find a solution or explain their feelings (Sapon-Shevin, 1999).

Look to Peers to Teach and Support

Peer support is an essential part of inclusive schooling for students with and without disabilities. In some cases, students succeed when teachers cannot. Often times, peers will learn quite naturally how to support a friend with disabilities. They will know how to calm, how to teach, and how to encourage a classmate without any direction or interference from adults. In addition, peers are valuable resources because they tend to understand each other in ways authority figures or adults do not. Even the best teachers lack the same degree of intimacy with students that students share with each other. Students know each other's secrets and their fears. They often recognize each other's needs and gifts in ways that adults do not always recognize.

Peers are valuable resources because they tend to understand each other

This type of help and mutual support is great preparation for adult life for all participating.

In any peer support model, however, it is critical that teachers seek opportunities to give all students opportunities to both give and receive help and support. Relationships where some individuals are always helped while others are always helping are neither natural nor particularly useful in building a classroom community. It is a teacher's job, therefore, to cultivate a classroom culture that allows all students to give assistance and receive assistance.

Provide Opportunities for Social Connection Beyond Classroom

In order to support the development of relationships in the classroom, teachers may need to help students find social opportunities outside of the classroom. Extracurricular activities with all of the related fun, camaraderie, and socializing can offer some of the richest opportunities for relationship building students are likely to have during their school years.

While some schools offer activities to meet the needs of all students, other schools need to develop a wider array of activities so that every student can find an extra-curricular home. Some schools, for instance, are moving beyond the traditional sports-based and arts-based extra-curricular options and offering clubs and activities related to

academic content (e.g., chess club), political issues (e.g., conservation groups, Students Against Drunk Driving [SADD]), and social support (e.g., anti-drug groups).

All schools must be conscientious about offering options that will interest and engage a range of students in the school (Sapon-Shevin & Kluth, 2003). This means questioning whether or not all students can afford certain clubs or activities; whether meeting times are convenient for students who may have after-school responsibilities; and whether students can get the appropriate supports they need to participate in after-school activities. If a student with a disability, for instance, needs personal support to participate in activities, teachers must brainstorm ways to provide this. Schools may try and provide natural supports by structuring the activities in creative ways or they may ask paraprofessionals or teachers to provide this support or look to student or adult volunteers.

References

- Sapon-Shevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world: A practical guide to building cooperative, inclusive classroom communities*. Boston : MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Sapon-Shevin, M. & Kluth, P. (2003). *In the pool, on the stage, and at the concert*. In P. Kluth, D. Straut, & D. Biklen (Eds.). *Access to academics for all students: Critical approaches to inclusive curriculum, instruction, and policy*. Erlbaum Publishing.

This article was reprinted with permission from Dr. Paula Kluth and can be found on her website at <http://www.paulakluth.com/articles/relationships.html>.



How can we help Businesses be more inclusive?

Information in this article was reprinted with permission and can be found at <http://disabilityawarenesssolutions.com/>.

Did you know that people with disabilities are America's largest minority group?

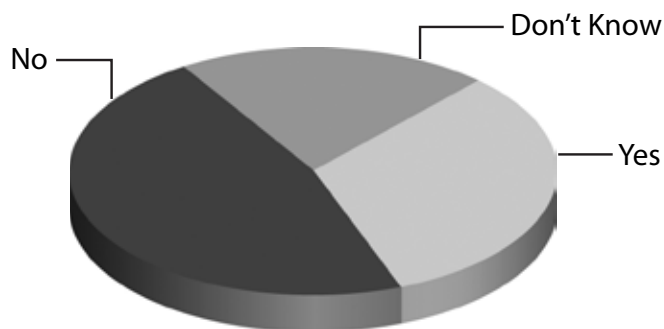
1 in 5 people has a disability.

It is one of the only minority groups that you don't have to be born into to join.

People with disabilities are our biggest minority group, yet often the most overlooked and underserved. For example, the employment rate is only 35%.

According to a 2004 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, of those with disabilities who are unemployed, 73% would rather be working.

In 2006, Bobby Dodd Institute (BDI) & International Communications Research surveyed 200 companies and asked if they felt that there was an employment crisis facing people with disabilities. Over two-thirds of surveyed respondents either don't consider it a crisis or don't know. Only one-third of respondents felt that there was a critical rate of unemployment.



In the same 2006 BDI survey, respondents were asked what they thought the biggest barriers were to the integration and hiring of people with disabilities.

1. Worried that people with disabilities cannot adequately perform required work duties
2. Lack of knowledge on people with disabilities
3. Concerns over cost of accommodating people with disabilities

Overcoming Barriers with Accommodations

The following information and tips can help communities welcome people with disabilities into local organizations and businesses.

Understanding Job Accommodations

Some employers may be hesitant to hire a person with a disability because they fear that it will generate extra expenses. In fact, the U.S. Department of Labor has found that 51 percent of accommodations cost between \$1-500. Even more surprisingly, 15 percent don't cost anything. In relation to the ADA, reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities. Accommodations will vary by individual and may be basic or require a bit of creativity. By working together, most employers can easily find a way for a person with a disability to be a part of the team.

For a list of accommodation examples or for specific guidance, please visit the Office of Disability Employment Policy's Job Accommodation Network's site at <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/>.

What barriers contribute to low inclusion of people with disabilities?

- Accessibility
- Transportation
- Support
- Attitudinal

Proximity to public transportation is a key element of a business' accessibility.

Not all people with disabilities have access to their own transportation and may rely on public transit to get to and from their workplace, community activities, houses of worship, and other personal or professional appointments or errands. Being close to public transportation can go a long way toward more easily including people with disabilities as customers, attendees, participants, and employees.

Accessibility Barriers: Things to Consider

Can a person with a disability easily gain entrance and maneuver around the location, whether it is a home,

park, store, restaurant, or workspace?
Can they adequately see or hear in order to participate?

Examples of Removing Accessibility Barriers:

Offer an alternative to the traditional job application process for people who are visually and/or speech impaired. You have a learning disability and cannot read well. Instead of asking you to read aloud at a meeting, your supervisor instead asks you to explain a concept

Transportation Barriers: Things to Consider

Can a person with a disability find a place to easily park and exit their car?

If the person with a disability does not drive is there a means of public transportation nearby?

Examples of removing Transportation Barriers

Your city's public transportation adds a stop to a nearby route. Individuals are now able to apply & work at the businesses near the new stop.

An individual lives on the public transportation bus line. The bus runs every 30 minutes and drops off at a stop only one block away from the employer.

Support Barriers: Things to Consider

Does a person with a disability have access to family, friends, or caretakers who can provide support, whether physical, financial, or emotional?

Is a person with a disability treated as a member of the work team and does he/she have friendly, open access with coworkers and other mentors?

Examples of removing Support Barriers

An individual is assigned a helpful mentor who includes them in activities at work.

Attitudinal Barriers: Things to Consider

Do people without disabilities act comfortably and inclusively around people with disabilities?

Examples of removing Attitudinal Barriers

You have a job with a great, supportive supervisor who works with your needs and schedule.

Management can consider any alternatives that would yield the same end result but yet make completing the task easier for you.

Ask someone with a disability what terminology they prefer to describe their disability. Use people-first language and always put the person before the disability.

Understanding barriers and accommodations can help employers as we work together to promote a more inclusive community. It is also helpful for employers to better understand how to interact with individuals with a speech impairment. A person may have a speech impairment for a variety of reasons. It is important to remember that speech impairment is not an indicator of an individual's intelligence level. Also keep in mind that a person with a speech impairment does not necessarily have a hearing disability.

Tips for interacting with a person with a speech impairment:

- Be patient and unhurried when talking to the individual; understand that the conversation may not move along rapidly.
- Make eye contact.
- Use the same tone of voice and volume that you would normally use unless the person asks differently.
- Do not try to finish the person's sentences, rather be patient so the person can complete his or her thoughts.
- Ask questions that require a short answer or a nod or shake of the head.
- If you do not understand, ask the person to repeat the statement.
- Listen to the person's words, not to the manner in which they are said.
- Respect that a person with a speech impairment may prefer one-on-one conversation to group discussion.
- Ask the person how to best communicate instead of guessing.

Stay tuned for more Inclusive Business Practice Tips in our May 2010 DSAM Insights newsletter!



calendar

March

Financial Planning Workshop for Families of Children with Special Needs

March 23, 2010 from 11:30am-1:00pm at the DSAM office. This workshop is designed for parents, grandparents and caregivers of individuals with special needs. Light lunch will be served. The workshop is free but you must register through the DSAM office.

DSAM Community Groups:

Down Syndrome Inclusion Support Group

Tuesday, March 23rd at 6:00 p.m. at Laurie Gaut's house, 2439 Windy Oaks Drive, Germantown.

IQ testing as well as the direction the group wants to take will be two of the topics discussed. Snacks will be provided. While anyone is welcome whether they RSVP or not, we would appreciate an RSVP to Laurie at 624-2111 so we will know the number of people for which to plan.

DSAM Parent's Night Out

Saturday, March 27th, 6:00 pm at the home of Mills & Kelli Polatty. This is a nice opportunity to meet other parents. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share. RSVP to the DSAM office.

April

Morning Mingle

Thursday, April 8 from 9:30-11:30 am - Stop by the DSAM office and enjoy juice, coffee and light refreshments. Meet the staff and other parents and feel free to share concerns or ask questions. No need to RSVP, just come by!

Focus, Aim, Achieve! Conference

Saturday, April 17th, 8:00am-4:00 pm at Christian Brothers University, 650 E. Parkway S., Memphis
Don't forget to register for the Second Annual Focus, Aim, Achieve! Conference. In addition to keynote speaker Michael Remus, and lunch keynote speaker Lee Jones, there will be presenters from many community organizations and resources that will address topics from early childhood to school age, to adolescent and adult. There will also be self-advocate sessions for individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities, open to ages 14 and up. Watch for registration forms in the mail in March or log on to www.dsamemphis.org for more information.

2nd Annual

FOCUS, AIM, ACHIEVE!

Spring Conference

DSAM Zoo Day

April 25 from 12:30-3:00 pm

Join us for the Down Syndrome Association Zoo Day and Picnic, Sunday, April 25 at the Memphis Zoo. This is one of our most popular events! Tickets are \$5 per person and include admission to the zoo and lunch. Reserve your ticket by contacting the DSAM office by Monday, April 19. Tickets will be \$10 per person after April 19.

Lunch will be served at the Primate Pavilion from 1:00-3:00 pm. Lunch will be catered by Lancer Catering. A table will be set up in front of the zoo on the day of the event from 12:30-1:30pm for those who will be picking up their tickets then. Tickets may be picked up at the DSAM office on Thursday, April 22 from 9am-1pm and Friday, April 23 from 10am-1pm. Families are free to look around the zoo before and after the event. Zoo memberships may be used for parking, but not for admission to this special event.

For more information and to make reservations contact the DSAM office at (901) 547-7588 or email admin@dsamemphis.org. NOTE: On a sunny day the parking lines are long for the zoo. Please plan accordingly.

D.A.D.S.

Thursday, April 29th - Location and time TBA. Contact Mills Polatty at 901-827-7710 or polmil@patwar.com.

May

DSAM Campfire Party in My Big Backyard

May 1st at 6pm at Memphis Botanic Garden

Cost: \$10 per family

Join DSAM and enjoy hot dogs and marshmallow roasting. Sure to be a great night out with the family. Space is limited. Call DSAM to register your family ASAP.

Summer Camp Info will be posted online at www.dsamemphis.org.

Donations 1/1/10 – 2/28/10

DSAM makes every effort to recognize all donations and gifts. We apologize if we inadvertently missed a donation. Please notify us at 901-547-7588 or email admin@dsamemphis.org.

Step Up for Down Syndrome 2010 Event Sponsor

Harrah's Entertainment

Honorariums

In honor of Lily Edwards Birthday
Mills, Kelli, Emlyn & Jeb Polatty

In honor of Nathan Berry's Birthday
Mills, Kelli, Emlyn & Jeb Polatty

General Donations

Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts
Program

Matching Gift

Knights of Columbus

Maddox Foundation, Inc.

DSAM night at the RiverKings

Maddox Hockey, Inc./Mississippi
RiverKings

DSAM night at the RiverKings

STEP UP for Down Syndrome Needs You!!

Interested in being a part of the largest disability awareness event in the Mid-South? Work behind the scenes with the 2010 STEP UP committee. As STEP UP continues to grow and impact our community, it also needs more volunteers. Donate your skills to make the 2010 STEP UP Walk the best ever. Areas of service include: PR/Marketing, Team Recruitment, Donations, Registration, Imagine the PossABILITIES, Advocacy, Stage, and more! Join us at the DSAM office on Tuesday, April 6th at 6:30pm for the committee kick off meeting. The 2010 Corporate Sponsor package is ready to be distributed. If you know of a business or organization that might be interested in STEP UP sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jennifer Atkeison, DSAM Events Manager, at (901) 547-7588 or jennifer.atkeison@dsamemphis.org.

Give a Day Get a Day

The Down Syndrome Association of Memphis and the Mid-South is proud to participate in the Give A Day Get A Day Disney. All you have to do is go to www.DisneyParks.com, search for Down Syndrome Association of Memphis & the Mid-South opportunities, register yourself and/or your family for the program and commit to a volunteer opportunity before Disney reaches its goal of one million volunteers. Once you complete your volunteer project you are eligible for a 1-day, 1-theme park ticket to Disneyland® Resort or Walt Disney World® Resort. Act fast...over 600,000 people have already volunteered their services nationwide. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jennifer Atkeison at events@dsamemphis.org or call the DSAM office 901.547.7588 for more details.



Do you Know about the Partners in Policymaking Leadership Institute?

Partners in Policymaking is a free leadership and advocacy training program for adults with disabilities, and family members of persons with disabilities. It is funded by the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, and has been training Tennesseans since 1993.

What do Partners learn?

Over the course of seven, once-a-month weekend sessions (from 12 pm on Friday through 3 pm on Saturday), Partners will attend workshops conducted by national and local experts, on:

- The History of the Disability Experience
- People First Language
- Best Practices in Inclusive Education
- Building Inclusive Communities
- Self-Determination, Self-Direction and Person-Centered Practices
- Living in the Community
- The State and Federal Legislative Processes
- Customized Employment
- Conducting Effective Meetings
- Assistive Technology
- Working with the Media

...and much more!

Partners will also tour the Capitol, meet with a Tennessee Legislator, and participate in a Mock Testimony designed to enhance their public policy advocacy skills. In February, all of the Partners grads since 1993 are invited to attend an annual reunion conference, with keynote speakers, general sessions, breakout sessions on a variety of topics and a Friday night dance.

Weekend sessions take place September through November, and January through April, each year.

Partners sessions take place at a hotel in Middle Tennessee. All participants are required to spend the night, and attend all seven sessions. There is no cost for hotel rooms, meals during the program times or the trainings. Mileage to and from each session will be reimbursed approximately two weeks after each session.

All applications must be postmarked by April 30, 2010. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

If you need an application, or have any questions about the program including eligibility, please contact program director Ned Andrew Solomon at 615.532.6556, or by e-mail at ned.solomon@tn.gov.

Printing donated by International Paper



Down Syndrome Association
of Memphis & the Mid-South

DSAM
2893 So. Mendenhall Rd. Suite 3
Memphis, TN 38115
901.547.7588 fax 901.547.7589
www.DSAMemphis.org

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Germantown, TN
Permit 105