

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA

*"Empowering women of achievement through leadership,
advocacy and education."*

AUGUST 8 - 14, 2016

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN



2017 NATIONAL PAGEANT

ADVOCACY EDUCATION EMPOWERMENT LEADERSHIP



City of Grand Rapids, Michigan

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ROSALYNN C. BLISS
MAYOR

Dear Guests:

Welcome to Grand Rapids – we are delighted to host the 2017 Ms. Wheelchair America Annual National Pageant.

While you no doubt have a full agenda, I do hope you will take time to explore our beautiful City and its dynamic neighborhoods. From a walkable downtown with more than 90 restaurants, clubs and museums to endless outdoor options such as golfing, fishing, hiking and biking, Grand Rapids is a great place to be – and we're so glad you're here.

Grand Rapids is widely recognized as one of the most sustainable cities in the U.S. In fact, we have been honored as having the most number of LEED-certified buildings per capita and have been named the most sustainable midsize city.

And that's not all we're known for – our metropolitan area is a knowledge center that boasts 22 colleges and universities. Plus, human medicine, medical education and health research make up our most rapidly growing economic sector.

And yet, these comprise only a sliver of what makes our City so great – it is the people who live and work here who have made us who we are today and who have contributed to our success.

We have been named the Best City to Raise a Family and selected among the Top U.S. Destinations to Visit. We also have been recognized among the Most Exciting Midsize Cities and Best Places to Retire.

But don't take my word for it – check it out yourself.

The creative energy of our City – with its wonderfully diverse culture, vibrant downtown and beautiful community spirit – will inspire you and beckon you to return.

On behalf of my colleagues at City Hall and all those who call Grand Rapids home, we hope you enjoy our City and have a wonderful time here.

Sincerely,
Rosalynn Bliss



A Message from the President of Experience Grand Rapids

Dear Ms. Wheelchair America Attendee:

Welcome to our vibrant destination that we are confident will captivate and delight you! Grand Rapids is the Top U.S. Travel Destination (*Lonely Planet*, 2014), the #1 Place to Visit in the U.S. (*Groupon*, 2015) and One of 52 Places to Go Worldwide (*New York Times*, 2016).

The Grand Rapids experience begins downtown, where three first-rate hotels are connected via skywalk to a state-of-the-art convention center. Four more hotels are within a 10-minute walk – and so are 150+ restaurants, shops and performance venues. Also within easy walking distance:

- Five premier museums: The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids Children's Museum and Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts.
- A scenic riverwalk, picturesque historic home district and public art everywhere.

More than 100 additional hotels and meeting venues are located within a 10-minute drive of downtown, close to such attractions and activities as:

- Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, one of the world's "Top 30 Must-See Museums."
- Shopping galore, including Tanger Outlet Mall, Woodland Mall, Rivertown Shopping Center and Breton Village Mall.
- The Grand Rapids Food Trail – 30+ delectable destinations that also serve as an introduction to eight distinct "destinations within the destination."
- Quaint cities and towns, offering diverse dining, retail and endless entertainment options sure to please your own tastes.

Wherever you go during your stay, you'll be surrounded by friendly faces and helpful attitudes – there are more than 1,000 Certified Tourism Ambassadors™ throughout the city and uniformed Safety Ambassadors roaming about downtown.

You can find information on all of this and much more at our award-winning website, **ExperienceGR.com**. Search for events on specific dates, activities that match your unique interests and even special hotel deals – perfect if you want to extend your stay or make a return visit with friends and family.

On behalf of Experience Grand Rapids, our tourism partners and the entire community, I want to thank you for visiting our special city. We are committed to showing you a great time – and we hope you'll share your experience with others!

Cheers,

Douglas Small
President & Chief Experience Officer



Welcome State Titleholders, Family and Fans,

On behalf of the Ms. Wheelchair America Inc. Board of Directors, I would like to welcome you to Ms. Wheelchair America 2017, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I hope you are ready for an experience of a lifetime. This week you will be challenged to learn about yourself and others. You will explore new ideas and activities that are meant to push you out of your comfort zone. You will leave different than you arrived, this week will change you. Be ready to experience, explore and excel!

Dr. Philip K. Wood saw challenge. He had devoted his career to rehabilitation, helping people use their talents, capabilities, and determination to be productive members of society. In 1972, he established Ms. Wheelchair America as a forum for change, a simple way for promoting the achievements and accomplishments of women who utilized wheelchairs for mobility. This year, as we crown the 45th Ms. Wheelchair America it is important we take a moment to thank Dr. Wood for his commitment.

This organization has challenged and changed countless people, including you. I want to congratulate each one of you for everything you have achieved to get here. You truly represent what the Ms. Wheelchair America program is about. You will have the opportunity to show your talents, capabilities, determination and share your platform.

Behind the scenes of this amazing organization are a group of volunteers, they are the state coordinators. They keep this program running at the state level, without their time and commitment, you would not be here. I would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication, as well as, challenge them to continue the work started by Dr. Wood.

A very special thank you to the Ms. Wheelchair Michigan team and the amazing volunteers that have worked to make this week happen!

“Leave a Legacy” to be proud of and remember “Love is Action”! Thanks to all of you for being here and helping us recognize and celebrate an amazing group of women!

Shelly Loose

President, Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc.

P.O. Box 86 – Byron Center, Michigan 49315
1-877-MSWHEEL (679-4335)



Welcome to Grand Rapids,

Enthusiasm is contagious. I hope you will be contagious before the week is over!

Hosting Ms. Wheelchair America 2017 allows me to take my favorite things and bring them together. One of the things you will get to see this week is Grand Rapids, my hometown, the best place to grow up. I'm proud of "My Giant Little Town" and hope that you "Experience Grand Rapids". It is my pleasure to share it with you!

You will also get to see and interact with staff from Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, and I am sure you will hear many stories about what a wonderful place it is! Over 29 years ago, I entered Mary Free Bed "scared", but left knowing there was a future. They truly do "Restore Hope and Freedom" and give patients a life that is "to be continued..." It is an extreme pleasure to introduce you to them!

My family and friends, without them I would not be who I am today. You will meet many of them this week. They are the volunteers that help make hosting Ms. Wheelchair America look easy. The Ms. Wheelchair America organization is my purpose. Through this program I have answered the question "Why me?" I am allowed to help other women with disabilities see their own value. This is more than a pageant; it is a sisterhood, which should drive you to become a stronger advocate for people with disabilities. Over the next six days, you will feel a sense of achievement and I hope you leave the pageant knowing that you will impact this world. This is your opportunity to leave a legacy to be very proud of.

Organizing a Ms. Wheelchair America pageant is a labor of love. I have always enjoyed a good challenge, because it allows me to see God at work. I attend Frontline Bible Church of Byron Center, our mission statement is "Equipping people to make an eternal impact". I want you to know that is why I "rolled" out in Faith to host this event. This is all God's doing, so don't "Thank me", but God! I am continually amazed, that He takes the ordinary in my life and allows me to be part of the Extraordinary!

Now let's get busy and spread enthusiasm!

Shelly Loose

990 Woodspointe Dr. – Byron Center, Michigan 49315

Achievement

Advocacy

Opportunity

2016 Board of Directors

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Member At-Large
Executive Director

Shelly Loose
Jennifer Kumiyama
Megan Abrams
Carrie Greenwood
Joey Murello
Stephanie Deible

2016 State Coordinators

Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Florida
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
New York
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
Wisconsin
Delegate Mentor

Jolene De Tiege
Pamela Garner
Jennifer Kumiyama
Zara Kruska Vargues
Shari Wilson
Kim Brown
Connie Todd
Judy Hoit
Carrie Greenwood
Pat O'Bryant
Anita Gray
Robert Watson
Shelly Loose
Anne Neumann
Lauren Compere
Shameka Andrews
Brandee Ponder
Megan Abrams
Vicki Kerkvliet
Bliss Welch
Angela Wrigglesworth
Katie Johnson
Pam Cobler
Julie Broadwell
Carol Banks
Mary Zendejas

2016 Independent Delegates

Oklahoma
South Carolina

Cailan Fry
Byronica Banks



Ms. Wheelchair America Titleholders

1973	Patricia Nevins	Michigan	1995	Wendy Petzold	Wisconsin
1974	Janie Robinson	Texas	1996	Amy Baxter-Ley	Texas
1975	Kathy Smith-Tiley	Alabama	1997	Elaine Stefanowicz	Washington
1976	Dixie Lee Etheridge	Mississippi	1998	Terri Cecil	Kentucky
1977	Beverly Chapman	Florida	1999	Christina Gilmore	Wisconsin
1978	Margie Sloan	Georgia	2000	Tracy Charlton-O'Connor	South Dakota
1979	Marge Chmielewski	Michigan	2001	Nicki Ard	South Carolina
1980	Nancy Pudvin	Georgia	2002	Candy Marsh	Colorado
1981	Vivian Thompson	Massachusetts	2003	Catherine Gugala	Wisconsin
1982	Marian Schooling-Vessels	Maryland	2004	Cinda Hughes	Oklahoma
1983	Barbara Crozier	Alabama	2005	Juliette Rizzo	Maryland
1984	Gaynell Colburn	Maryland	2006	Kristen Connors	Rhode Island
1985	Lori Cottam	Utah	2007	Autumn Grant	Massachusetts
1986	Donna Cline	Nevada	2008	Kristen McCosh	Massachusetts
1987	Sandra Honbaier	North Carolina	2009	Michelle Colvard	Texas
1988	Peggy Simpson	Alabama	2010	Erika Bogan	North Carolina
1989	Jewell Massey	Georgia	2011	Alexandra McArthur	North Carolina
1990	Kathy Garcia Farnsworth	Utah	2012	Josie Badger	Pennsylvania
1991	Mercedes Rodriguez-Fowler	Florida	2013	Mariah Kilbourne	Texas
1992	Deanna VanHook	Texas	2014	Jennifer Adams	Washington
1993	Kim Mensi	Alabama	2015	Samantha Schroth	Wisconsin
1994	Dawn Blodgett	California	2016	Alette Coble-Temple	California



History

In 1972 Dr. Phillip K. Wood of Columbus, Ohio had devoted his career to treating and rehabilitating persons with functional impairments. During his practice, he became aware of the talents, capabilities, determination and courage of persons with disabilities. As a result, he established Ms. Wheelchair America as a forum for promoting the achievements and accomplishments of women who utilize wheelchairs for mobility, as well as the needs of all persons with mobility challenges.

The mission of Ms. Wheelchair America is to provide an opportunity of achievement for women who happen to be wheelchair users to successfully educate and advocate for the more than 56 million Americans living with disabilities. The Ms. Wheelchair America Program is in no way a traditional beauty contest.

Purpose and Goals

Each year the Ms. Wheelchair America Program holds a competition to select the most accomplished, articulate spokeswoman for people with disabilities. The titleholder must be able to communicate and educate the public, business community, and lawmakers regarding the dignity, productiveness, and basic value of people with disabilities. Ms. Wheelchair America continues to eliminate the architectural and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with disabilities from assuming their rightful place in society.

Ms. Wheelchair America has numerous duties. During her reign she has the opportunity to travel, visit advocacy groups, make public appearances and conduct interviews. Ms. Wheelchair America promotes her chosen platform in a variety of settings. She serves as a positive role model for the next generation of Americans with disabilities, inspiring them to leave their own legacy. Her commitment and personal example serves to further the mission of Ms. Wheelchair America.

This pageant is made up of a multitude of activities. These activities allow the judging panel time with the state titleholders, while enabling the competitors an opportunity to share with each other and develop friendships. They become stronger advocates throughout the week because of the variety of interesting workshops that strengthen them. The workshops develop skills that heighten awareness on issues within the community, and are designed to open a dialogue between the women about their thoughts, ideas, values and experiences.

Ms. Wheelchair America, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is staffed and coordinated solely by volunteers from many different community organizations, businesses, private citizens, and previous titleholders. It is through the monetary and in-kind support of many sponsors that the national titleholder is able to fulfill her duties throughout the year and travel across the country with her message of empowerment for people with disabilities. The Ms. Wheelchair America Program is actively seeking volunteers and sponsors and would appreciate any support that is offered.

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA CREED

As Ms. Wheelchair America, I promise to do my best
to promote public awareness of people with disabilities,
to use my time and efforts to this purpose,
to strive to achieve the best that is within me,
to offer my hand in friendship to everyone I meet,
to be cheerful, honest and loving,
to give hope to the less fortunate,
to set an example by my attitude,
and to do all this with grace, warmth and dignity.





A Whole New World of Unforgettable Experiences as Ms. Wheelchair America

How do I put into 2-pages the tremendous impact being Ms. Wheelchair America had on my life? I never imagined becoming a pageant titleholder. I honestly did not know or understand the power behind the power of the crown and sash bestowed on me August 1, 2015.

Since that unforgettable night, I made appearances at over 125 events. I traveled to 3 countries, 38 different states, and over 100 different cities. I drove 10,000 miles and flew approximately 135,000 miles. I spoke to countless different groups including 6 national conferences, 10 universities, 5 high schools, 5 middle schools, 10 elementary schools, 8 rehabilitation hospitals, 7 Easter Seal's programs, 5 rotary clubs and over 40 other agencies serving the disability community. I met 2 Governors, 5 State Senators, 10 State Representatives, over 50 legislators, and received 5 governmental citations. I visited with thousands of people across the country and took a "million" photos.

While my overall goal as Ms. Wheelchair America 2016 was to be a professional role model for people with disabilities, I wasn't prepared for the profound impact it had on me personally. Early in my reign, while presenting at an elementary school, a kindergarten wheelchair user with CP asked me if I was really a doctor. When I said yes, she began jumping up and down in her wheelchair, squealing with glee, and stating, in front of the whole school, "I want to be a doctor too! Now I know I can because you're like me." Later that night I received a thank you email from her mother explaining her daughter has wanted to be a doctor since she was three, but always questioned why she never saw other doctors in wheelchairs. I remain in touch with her to this day and serve as her mentor. Little did I know, stories like this would become a common theme from Hawaii to Florida to Louisiana to Wisconsin and everywhere in between.



The cornerstone of my reign was advocating for parental rights and disability equality. Throughout the year, I had many opportunities to speak to national conferences, hospitals, and universities regarding best practices, proper assessment tools, and how to shift legislation to eliminate discriminatory processes. I was recognized in the States of California, Arkansas, and Louisiana for my advocacy efforts. The ultimate honor was being invited to the first White House Forum on Civil Rights for Parents with Disabilities and being an agent of change in eliminating barriers for people with disabilities in their quest to parenthood.

Growing up my only mentor with a disability was Geri Jewell from the Facts of Life. While I never knew her personally, she provided me motivation and the realization I had the ability to succeed with Cerebral Palsy. I dreamed of meeting her one-day, but honestly did not think it would happen. In March, as Ms. Wheelchair America 2016, I had the distinct honor of spending the day with Geri. I was surprised to learn she knew who I was, knew of my advocacy efforts, and that we both regarded each other as fellow mentors.

In addition to creating new friendships and working relationships was the unexpected experience of being reconnected with multiple friends from my past





whom I had lost contact with. When I was asked to attend a best practice for women's healthcare conference in Washington DC, I was reunited with my lifelong CP sister whom I had not seen or heard from for 12 years. Now we're in daily contact. The most shocking experience of reconnection occurred in South Dakota while I was attending the Black Hills Ski for Light event. During the last day of an amazing week of skiing, snowmobiling, and making new friends, we were given the royal tour at both Mt. Rushmore and Crazy Horse National Monuments. As we were ordering lunch at the Mt. Rushmore cafeteria, a young woman behind the counter exclaimed "Dr. Coble!" Here at a National Park in a small South Dakota town, I was reunited with one of my first students with whom I had lost contact for 15 years. It was wonderful to see her succeeding and enjoying life.

My motto in life is "Work hard, Play harder!" Ms. Wheelchair America definitely allowed me to maintain adventure in my life. Soaring through the air on a hot air balloon in Washington, going deep and beyond with adaptive snorkeling in Hawaii, to rock climbing in Connecticut, skiing in South Dakota, and sand dune riding in Indiana. Each adventure offered new challenges and an ability to interact with people with disabilities.



The greatest gifts I take away from this year are the lifelong friends I developed with state titleholders and state coordinators across this country. I would not have had the amazing adventures without their friendship, motivation, and coordination. I want to personally thank Juliette Rizzo, Ms. Wheelchair America 2005, Lauren Compere (Mississippi), Jenny Morton (Tennessee), Casey Schaeffer (Kentucky), Carrie Sunday (Kansas), Jamie Duplechene (Louisiana), Karen Rivera (Arkansas), Julie Broadwell (Washington), Tiffanie Garcia (Colorado), Andrea Dalzell (New York), Sara Gaver (Florida), Kimberly Jordan-Gaskins (Maryland), and Leslie Peoples (Georgia) for hosting me in their states. In addition, Alexandra Yount (Alabama) was a huge support in designing Ms. Wheelchair America 2016 shirts for fundraising efforts, along with Kristen Milefchek (Michigan), Angela West (Virginia), Shelly Gray (Texas), Jennifer Jackson (Alaska), and Angelique Lele (Minnesota) for being awesome allies! These friendships were developed over the course of the national pageant competition and they have gone deeper over the course of my reign. Additionally, I am blessed to have made connections and friendships with multiple state coordinators as well as new and past titleholders. Together the sisterhood of MWA is changing the face of disability at local, state, and national levels. We rock!

In closing, I must thank a few important people. First, John F. Kennedy University for granting me the time off to travel and to advocate across the country. Second, Team Alette for managing all my travel, scheduling appearances, and being able to put up with unusual and complex schedules for the last year.



Third, the Ms. Wheelchair America Organization for giving me the opportunity to promote the organization and represent the disability community. Fourth, American Airlines, my friends, and supporters for their generous support with fundraising and publicizing my platform. Finally, and most importantly, my family, especially Robert and Kathryn, for your patience, willingness to hold down the fort without me, and your unconditional love. This was a life-changing experience for everyone in the Coble-Temple network. I am thankful for what we accomplished and equally excited to see where this whole new world will take us next.



*Thank you for opening my eyes to a whole new world,
helping me to fulfill my dreams, and giving me
an unforgettable year filled with so many
memories.*



#TeamAlette

Robert Temple
Kathryn Temple
Rosie Humphery
Justine Collier
Katie King
Loris Lorona
Courtney Knoch
Alannah Weber
Jenni Norton
Ed Coble
Shira Leeder



*Good luck and best wishes to the Ms. Wheelchair
America Class of 2017!*



Ms. Wheelchair Arizona

Katherine Griffith

Katie lives in Gilbert, Arizona and is the President of People First of Arizona. She obtained her Associate Degree in Biblical Studies at Andersonville Theological Seminary. Katie enjoys archery, downhill and water skiing, and being a member of an inclusive dance program and a theatre troupe. She has Cerebral Palsy. Katie describes herself as articulate, compassionate, and optimistic.

Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas

Tabitha Mayberry

Tabitha lives in Springdale, Arkansas and works at the Children's Therapy TEAM. She obtained her Master's Degree in Communication Disorders at Arkansas State University. Tabitha enjoys swimming, attending sporting events, and house projects. She has a spinal cord injury. Tabitha describes herself as comical, gregarious, and resourceful.



Ms. Wheelchair California

Kathleen Barajas

Kathleen lives in Los Angeles, California and is a Disability Rights Advocate and web/graphic designer. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems at California State University, Los Angeles. Kathleen enjoys writing, attending concerts, and spending time with family and friends. She has Cerebral Palsy. Kathleen describes herself as tenacious, innovative, and outgoing.





Ms. Wheelchair Colorado

Amber Gersch

Amber lives in Denver, Colorado and is a tutor at Reading Partners. She studied Elementary Education at Arizona State University and Scottsdale Community College. Amber enjoys volunteering, singing, and going to concerts. She has Spina Bifida. Amber describes herself as resilient, courageous, and caring.

Ms. Wheelchair Florida

Heather Taylor

Heather lives in South Daytona, Florida and is a firm advocate for persons with disabilities. She is pursuing a Master's Degree in Leadership at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Heather enjoys singing, volunteering, and collaborating with community stakeholders. She has a genetic form of Dysautonomia called Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. Heather describes herself as optimistic, resilient, and most important to her, Christian.



Ms. Wheelchair Indiana

Erin Walker

Erin lives in Indianapolis, Indiana and teaches English at the Ben Davis Ninth Grade Center. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with an Endorsement in English at Indiana University. Erin enjoys traveling, writing, and crafting. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Erin describes herself as humorous, empathetic, and open-minded.



Ms. Wheelchair Iowa

Patricia Duff

Patricia lives in Des Moines, Iowa and works with Easter Seals of Iowa. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at The University of Phoenix. Patricia enjoys reading, spending time with family, and go-karting. She has a spinal cord injury. Patricia describes herself as strong willed, courageous, and warm hearted.

Ms. Wheelchair Kansas

Tiffany Walter

Tiffany lives in Olathe, Kansas and works as an accountant for Steve's Handyman Services. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Business with an emphasis in Accounting at Emporia State University. Tiffany enjoys volunteering at church, reading, and spending time with friends and family. She has Cerebral Palsy. Tiffany describes herself as determined, dedicated, and an overcomer.



Ms. Wheelchair Kentucky

Alena Chesser

Alena lives in Radcliff, Kentucky and is the Director of the Block Out Brain & Spinal Cord Injuries Charity. She obtained her Master's Degree in Conflict Management at Sullivan University. Alena enjoys writing, traveling, and watching movies. She has a spinal cord injury. Alena describes herself as friendly, outgoing, and organized.



Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana

Krystal E. Thibodeaux

Krystal lives in Lafayette, Louisiana and volunteers at the St. Joseph Hospice. She obtained a Certificate of Achievement from Comeaux High School. Krystal enjoys shopping, going to church, and writing poems. She has Cerebral Palsy. Krystal describes herself as funny, loveable, and sweet.

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland

Nadía Ibrahim

Nadia lives in Rockville, Maryland and works at the U.S. Department of Labor. She received her Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Nadia enjoys writing, traveling, and spending time with friends and family. She has Cerebral Palsy. Nadia describes herself as driven, passionate and steadfast.



Ms. Wheelchair Michigan

Jamie Spore

Jamie lives in Ludington, Michigan and works at About Face Christian Counseling Services. She received her Associate Degree in Medical Office Information Systems at West Shore Community College. Jamie enjoys spending time with her family, taking her dog for long walks, and working on accessibility projects. She has Spina Bifida. Jamie describes herself as resilient, determined, and compassionate.



Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota

Lauren Thompson

Lauren lives in Champlin, Minnesota where she is a freelance writer and advocate. She received her Associate Degree in Liberal Arts at North Hennepin Community College. Lauren enjoys watching movies, playing sports, and shopping. She has Cerebral Palsy. Lauren describes herself as smart, witty, compassionate.

Ms. Wheelchair Mississippi

LisaAnn Redd

LisaAnn lives in Magee, Mississippi and is a teacher in Mendenhall, Mississippi. She obtained her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Special Education at the University of Southern Mississippi. LisaAnn enjoys kayaking, horseback riding, and jet skiing. She was diagnosed with a tumor of lower back-Ependymoma. LisaAnn describes herself as tenacious, adventurous, and loyal.



Ms. Wheelchair New York

Jessica De La Rosa

Jessica lives in New York, New York. She received a degree in Security Management from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Jessica enjoys advocating, creating and expressing art, and sports. She has Ostengogenesis Imperfecta. Jessica describes herself as loving, spiritual, and determined.





Ms. Wheelchair North Carolina

Madeline Delp

Madeline lives in Asheville, North Carolina and works at Massage Envy Spa. She currently studies Spanish and German at the University of North Carolina Asheville. Madeline enjoys singing, traveling, and creating inspirational videos. She has a spinal cord injury. Madeline describes herself as optimistic, motivated and adventurous.

Ms. Wheelchair Oklahoma

Cailan Fry

Cailan lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma and works at State Farm Companies. She is a current student in the Certified Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Consultant programs at American College. Cailan enjoys singing, boating, and traveling. She has Bilateral Neuropathy. Cailan describes herself as bright, self-motivated, and energetic.



Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania

Danielle Stevens-Orsborne

Danielle Stevens-Orsborne lives in Houtzdale, Pennsylvania and works with various organizations promoting advocacy and offering support services. She studied Medical Administration at the Computer Learning Network. Danielle enjoys reading, creative writing, and everything that has to do with being in nature. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Danielle describes herself as empathetic, strong, and bold.





Ms. Wheelchair South Carolina

Byronica Banks

Byronica lives in Irmo, South Carolina and works at Verizon Wireless. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Business at Brenau University. Byronica enjoys reading, traveling, and karaoke singing. She has Osteogenesis Imperfecta. Byronica describes herself as compassionate, devoted, and optimistic.

Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota

Kristi Eisenbraun

Kristi lives in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and volunteers at LifeScape. She studied Social Work and Psychology at Southwest Minnesota State University. Kristi enjoys going to the gym, scrapbooking, and writing poetry. She has Cerebral Palsy. Kristi describes herself as independent, determined, and compassionate.



Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee

Carly Pearson

Carly lives in Knoxville, Tennessee and works as a motivational speaker. She obtained her Master's Degree in Business at Lincoln Memorial University. Carly enjoys spending time with her children, participating in adaptive sports, and helping others become involved in sports and recreation. She has a spinal cord injury. Carly describes herself as athletic, passionate, and outgoing.



Ms. Wheelchair Texas

Sandy Spoonemore

Sandy lives in Plano, Texas and works as an Independent Sales Director for Mary Kay Cosmetics. She received her Bachelor of Business Administration in Computer Information Systems at Baylor University. Sandy enjoys traveling, volunteering at church, and shopping. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy. Sandy describes herself as persistent, joyful and full of faith.

Ms. Wheelchair Utah

Eliza McIntosh

Eliza lives in Salt Lake City, Utah and is an intern at the Disability Law Center. She studies Political Science at the University of Utah. Eliza enjoys politics, wheelchair basketball and chess. She has Spinal Dysgenesis and is paralyzed from the waist down. Eliza describes herself as stubbornly cheerful, capable, and adaptive.



Ms. Wheelchair Virginia

Laura Tollin

Laura lives in Blacksburg, Virginia and works at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Biology at Virginia Tech University. Laura enjoys water sports, adventures, and traveling. She has Spinocerebellar Ataxia, a progressive neurological disease, and deafness. Laura describes herself as friendly, an apt learner, and observant.





Ms. Wheelchair Washington

Nicole Martini

Nicole lives in Woodinville, Washington and works at Alaska Airlines. Nicole enjoys spending time with family and friends, helping others in need, and card-making. She has Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus, and Chiari Malformation. Nicole describes herself as ambitious, confident, and unstoppable.

Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin

Carol Abraham

Carol lives in Twin Lakes, Wisconsin. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy at Mount Mary University. Carol enjoys camping, spending time outdoors, and doing volunteer or advocacy work within the Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy (LGMD) community. She has Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy. Carol describes herself as ambitious, compassionate and resourceful.



Awards

Ms. Wheelchair America 2017

Ms. Wheelchair America 2017 is chosen by the judging panel. The contestant that earns the highest total score during the judging sessions will become Ms. Wheelchair America 2017.

Lifetime Achievement Award

The Lifetime Achievement Award is chosen by the judges and given to the contestant that they believe has made the largest contribution and significant impact for people with disabilities.

Nicki Ard Achievement Award

The Nicki Ard Achievement Award recipient is chosen by the judges and awarded to the woman who exemplifies the philosophy of Nicki Ard, which is to “always exhibit a positive attitude and be willing to serve others.” The delegate receiving this award will have made an outstanding contribution to the disability community through her talents, her efforts, and her example.

Xaveria Powell-Anderson Community Service Award

The Xaveria Powell-Anderson Award recipient will be chosen by the judges and will be given to the contestant who demonstrates a strong passion and commitment toward community service. The titleholder receiving this award will have an uncanny ability to lift others higher through her service and will have made a lasting mark on the communities that she serves.

The Outstanding Speech Award

The Outstanding Speech Award is chosen by those in attendance on speech night. Each individual attending receives one vote to cast for the contestant that they feel delivered the most memorable speech of the evening.

The People's Choice Award

The People's Choice Award is presented to the contestant who receives the most votes. Votes cost \$1.00 each and can be purchased during the week of the pageant. Forty percent of the funds raised will be distributed to the award recipient's Ms. Wheelchair State Program while the remaining funds will go into a Ms. Wheelchair America 2017 travel Fund.

The Congeniality Award

The Congeniality Award is chosen by the contestants. Each contestant cast one vote for person that they feel was kindest, friendliest, most helpful, and caring throughout the week.

The Business Award

The Business Award is chosen by the various businesses that present workshops, attend events, or interact with the contestants. This award will be given to the contestant that the businesses feel was able to communicate on a variety of topics.

Nicki Ard Achievement Award



Nicki's philosophy was to always exhibit a positive attitude and be willing to serve others. This award is presented to contestant that has made an outstanding contribution to the disability community through her talents, her efforts and example. Nicki was Ms. Wheelchair America 2001 and passed away in 2002, about a month after crowning her successor. Nicki was born with a debilitating disease called Spinal Muscular Atrophy which resulted in her using a wheelchair. She also developed Scoliosis, as a result, she lost full function in her left lung. Although she was given a predicted life span of 13 years, she faced and conquered her physical challenges for almost 30 years. She began singing at the age of 6, established "the Music Ministry of Nicki Ard" in 1986, and released two albums "From Nicki, With Love" and "Walk With Me".

XAVERIA POWELL ANDERSON COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



GIVEN THIS YEAR TO HONOR HER SERVICE TO MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA AND MS. WHEELCHAIR ALABAMA! XAVERIA HAD A PASSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE. HER FAVORITE QUOTE WAS FROM THE BIBLE, MATTHEW 25: 35-40, REMINDS US THAT WHAT WE DO FOR THE LEAST OF THESE WE DO FOR THE LORD! XAVERIA SPENT HER LIFE LIVING THAT MESSAGE.



XAVERIA WAS MS. WHEELCHAIR ALABAMA 2007.

SHE SERVED AS THE ALABAMA STATE COORDINATOR FROM 2009 - 2016 AND SERVED ON THE MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA EXECUTIVE BOARD 2011-2012. SHE WILL BE GREATLY MISSED!

NOVEMBER 1975- MARCH 2016

Judges

Head Judge - Autumn Grant



Autumn Grant is a lifelong resident of Massachusetts. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Providence College with a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and also holds a Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration from Boston College. Autumn has worked in the field of Higher Education since 2000, in areas including disability support services, academic affairs and academic advising. Ms. Grant currently serves as the Associate Director of Academic and Student Affairs in the College of Professional Studies at Northeastern University in Boston Massachusetts.

Ms. Grant was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at the age of ten and began using a wheelchair shortly after graduating college. In 2006, she was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Massachusetts and later that year was crowned Ms. Wheelchair America 2007. She traveled the country promoting her platform of "Independence through Education". Ms. Grant also served as the State Coordinator of the Ms. Wheelchair Massachusetts Foundation from 2007 – 2012 and completed two terms on the Ms. Wheelchair America Board of Directors as Secretary and Member-At-Large

She is passionate about advocacy for people with disabilities. For the last several years, Ms. Grant has traveled regularly to Capitol Hill promoting access to complex rehabilitation technology for people with disabilities. In addition, she also serves as an ambassador for the Abilities Expo.

Darci Luyk



Darci Luyk has over 31 years of experience in the field of physical rehabilitation. As Director of Physician Relations and Network Development at the 5th largest rehabilitation hospital in the U.S. – Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. – Mrs. Luyk has regular contact with the top rehabilitation facilities and rehabilitation physicians across the country. As a seasoned rehabilitation professional, her professional career at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital has included experiences as an Occupational Therapist, Therapy Recruiter, Marketing and Public Relations Manager.

Mrs. Luyk has a passion for sharing the mission of Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital - *Restoring hope and freedom through rehabilitation*. As a result, she has been involved in hosting international rehabilitation providers at Mary Free Bed in an effort to enhance the quality of rehabilitation provided across the world. In 2010, Mrs. Luyk served as a judge for the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant. She is an avid runner and healthy lifestyle proponent who is a huge advocate for Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital's Wheelchair & Adaptive Sports Program.

Barry Siegel



For the past six years Barry Siegel has been a tutor for Center for Independent Futures, which is a non-profit organization located in Evanston, Illinois, that is devoted to helping individuals with disabilities live full and more independent lives. In addition, Mr. Siegel has been involved with the North Suburban Special Recreation Association and its Special Olympic Program for more than 20 years where he has served as a coach, referee and fundraiser. His connections with the disability community do not stop there. Mr. Siegel also started a creative writing workshop and sanctuary called heARTwords for adults with disabilities.

Along the way Mr. Siegel has been fortunate to receive a number of honors including Special Olympics Coach of the Year and Volunteer of the Year. He was also honored as a recipient of the March Forth Award from the Keep on Keeping On organization and received the Excellence in Service award from the Illinois Therapeutic Recreation Section.

For Siegel, being recognized by these groups is appreciated. However, the real 'honor' for him is being part of the many who help advance the notion that we are all so much more alike than we are different and that everybody should be given the same opportunities to live a purposeful, healthy, independent and happy life.



David Weinandy

David Weinandy is a Professor of Communication at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he was twice awarded The Outstanding Faculty Member by both the student body and the Aquinas College Alumni Association. As well, Mr. Weinandy has been acknowledged with Aquinas College's Distinguished Service Award. He also received the Outstanding Alumni Service Award from his alma mater, Bowling Green State University. Mr. Weinandy has earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work, a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Counseling, a Master of Arts degree in College Student Personnel, and a Ph.D. in Interpersonal Communication.

Mr. Weinandy has conducted hundreds of seminars and workshops throughout the Midwest on such topics as public presentation, positive interpersonal communication, motivation, and customer service. Additionally, Mr. Weinandy serves as a personal communication coach for local and national, high-profile individuals.

In the pageant world, He has served on both the Miss Michigan and Miss Michigan Outstanding Teen Board of Directors, where he was the Vice President and Judges Chair. As part of the Michigan Prep Team, David worked with Miss Michigan 2007 Kirsten Hagland, who went on to become Miss America 2008. Having judged numerous state Miss and Teen pageants, Mr. Weinandy was on the judge's panel that selected Miss Virginia 2009, Caressa Cameron, who went on to become Miss America 2010. He was also the Judges Chairperson when Miss America 2014, Nina Davuluri was named Miss Michigan Outstanding Teen. Mr. Weinandy has also conducted training workshops and served as a judge for the Ms. Wheelchair Michigan Program.

Perhaps most importantly, Mr. Weinandy has been a leader in his community as a volunteer and board member for numerous organizations including Community Circle Theatre, the Bowling Green State University Alumni Association, and Spectrum Health.



Kemi Yemi-Ese

Kemi Yemi-Ese is an emerging artist and aspiring graduate student living in Austin, Texas. After sustaining a cervical level spinal cord injury in 2006, Ms. Yemi-Ese graduated from Baylor University with a degree in Neuroscience and a minor in Studio Art with the hopes of somehow combining her interests in medicine and the visual arts. In the interim of seeing that dream realized, Ms. Yemi-Ese taught elementary and intermediate science courses under programs serving at-risk youth in Houston and Austin for five years. During that time, she won the title of Ms. Wheelchair Texas 2010 and was named third runner-up for Ms. Wheelchair America with the platform of increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. She has been an advocate for this and other causes since her reign as Ms. Wheelchair Texas. Ms. Yemi-Ese credits her time as a titleholder for

helping her become more impassioned to speak out on inaccessibility and spread the message of hope to people who were newly injured and receiving care in rehabilitation hospitals. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors for the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living and is pursuing a Master's Degree in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. She also exhibits her paintings at national and local art venues.



Celebrating
Judy Hoit



Thank you!



*20 years as the State
Coordinator for Iowa!*

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Arizona

Ability360
Southwest Institute for
Families and Children

Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas

Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas
State Program
Arkansas Valley Insurance
Mitchell's Nursing Home
Robert R Redfern & Co
Mike & Pat Novinger
Danville Hardware, Inc.
Do Drop In
Jerry Wilkins
County Discount Pharmacy
Penjamo Restaurante
Cornwell Funeral Homes
Master Made, Inc
Danville Medical
State Farm Insurance
Children's Therapy TEAM

*"Your smile is
your logo, your
personality is
your business
card, how you
leave others
feeling after
having an
experience with
you becomes your
trademark."*

- Jay Danzie

Ms. Wheelchair California

Thomas Powell, Powell Medical
Equipment
Mark Potter, Potter Handy LLP
Metz & Harrison LLP
John & Kittie Richard
Gilbert and Sharon Leon &
Breakfast Club
Lydia Ward Carbajal
Raul & Carmen Barajas
Manuel & Helen Nava
Julie Placencia & Family
Spencer Kulani
William Gray
Dr. Robert Segalman, Speech to
Speech
Dave & Thelma Robles
Tony & Dora Huitron
Susan Leonard-Giesen
Janet Iwata
Joan Mitchell
Alfredo Torales
Gilbert & Eloise Barajas
Linda Barajas
Hollynn D'Lil
Beth Currier
Hazel Weiss
Karla Slavin
Myrna Cabanban
Marcia, Clive, & Pony Gayle
Page Shugrue
Gordon Cardona
Global Paratransit and Access
Services (State Pageant Sponsors)
Omnichair (State Pageant Sponsor)

Ms. Wheelchair Colorado

Jeremy Vigil
Clift Family
Christopher Williams
Dayna Jung
David Albertsen
Tyler Farley
Alicia Sajdyk-Meyer
Erika Lightburne
Kathie Gersch
Christine Remy
Anne Hermason
Jose Silva
Stephen Gersch
Kari Eccher
April Holladay
Gary Morrison
Sandra Phillips
Kim Haworth
James Angerer
Michele Bishop
Don Uhlhorn
Zach Wallace
Denise Thatcher
Rhonda Wood
Jim & Cherie Strickland
Linda Lewis
Erin Henninger

**"FOCUS ON THE
JOURNEY, NOT
THE DESTINATION.
JOY IS FOUND NOT
IN FINISHING AN
ACTIVITY BUT IN
DOING IT."
- GREG ANDERSON**

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Florida

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical
University
Lynne Gann
Easter Seals - Volusia/Flagler
First Baptist Church of South
Daytona
Randall Taylor
Margaret Taylor
Kent and Glenna Dollar
First Baptist Church of Pottsville
The Mayo Clinic
Florida Department of
Transportation
Cynthia Owens
Karyn Parks
Jean Hoolihan
Dysautonomia International
Dysautonomia Advocacy
Foundation
The Dysautonomia Project
City of South Daytona
SMA-Behavioral
The Echo Group
Daytona Heart Group
Halifax Health
Sallie Williams - Unlimited
Printing, Inc.
International Academy

Ms. Wheelchair Indiana

Family & friends of Erin Walker
Students & staff members of Ben
Davis Ninth Grade Center,
Indianapolis, Indiana
Decatur Township Educational
Foundation
Ms. Wheelchair Indiana, Inc.
David Cozza of Trends
International

Ms. Wheelchair Iowa

Judy Hoit
Gene's Bar
Twisted Ink
White's Auto
Vickie Duff
Tim Strong
Kolton Whitmore
Kris Duff
Theda Ford
Easter Seals
Hy-vee
Walmart

Ms. Wheelchair Kansas

Prairie Brand Potawatomi Nation
The Honorable Robert J. Dole
Royal Mechanical Services, Inc.
United Access of Lenexa
United Cerebral Palsy of Wichita
Numotion of Kansas City
Klein & Walker Orthodontics
Overland Park Sam's Club
Bill & Vi Walter
Norman & Betty Bowland
Todd & Kelly Apple
Chad & Jody Gilloth
Karen Bowland
Ken & Joanne Bowland
Mike & Terri Miller
Marie Cannady
Tom & Charlene Shyver
Nathan Shyver
Brad Shyver
Jamie Leeper
Ellen Stacks
Anonymous donors from Grace
Bible Church
Commerce Bank, Olathe, KS (Santa
Fe & Murlen)
Kansas Department of Agriculture

Ms. Wheelchair Kentucky

Brenda Webb, Mother
Jerry Wheatley, Family/Best Friend
Betty & Greg Sims
Amber Barns
Chloe Dale
Mikaela Cash
Revia & Danny Stockley
Jessica & Jimmy (& kids) Powell
William, Amanda, & Kyler Rodgers
Patti & Steve Milinger
June Scoggins
Pam Taulbee
David Howard
David Hartsek
Kevin Richardson
Kristen Hickman
Thomas Nielsen
Lou Ann Hill
Mike Hatfield
Sandra Lawson
Rosene McLean
Tom Vincent
Lisa McLean & family
Sweet Retreat Bakery in Radcliff
Ms. Wheelchair Ohio 2015

Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana

Family & Friends of
Krystal Thibodeaux
Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana
State Program
Anita Gray

**"Do what you can
with what you have
where you are."**

**- Theodore
Roosevelt**

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland

My family: Shawki & Katy Ibrahim;
Nabeel & Asha Ibrahim;
& Karl & Lila Liebat
Nick & Mona Ghawi
Robert & Charlene Vigil
Karen Herson & staff at Concepts
Communications, Inc.
Giant Food
Jonalee Earles Photography
Chuck and Lori Fraleigh
Cathy Hammoud
Barbara Latin
Bethany Applebaum
Joe Hooks
Yvette & Vivek Subramanian
Alexia Guidry, Emily Cook, Judy
Wang, & my other assistants
Susan Woodall
Kenley & Elaine McMIndes
Marianna Sadowski
Samantha Wong
Shawn Brennan
Bethany Hansen
Ellie Warner
Shannon Brier
Rachel Dorman
Gail Kennedy Lovett
Carrie Dee
Katie Dutze
Reiko Onuma
Lara Day
Anthony Fiorani
Laura Curcio
Robin Frazier

Ms. Wheelchair Michigan

Russ & Dixie Spore
Matt Quick, Sara Spore & Family
Rick Wellman & Kitty Schwass
About Face Christian Counseling
Services & Dr. Linda Koch
Todd & Brad Reed Photography
Director's Cut, L.L.C. & John Bailey
The Mitten Bar
Sportsman's Restaurant &
Irish Pub
Deb Wahr
Kwik Print Plus
Cops & Doughnuts--Ludington
Precinct
Safety Decals & Nick Tykoski
Shagway Arts Barn, L.L.C. & Nancy
Miller
Catholic Daughters of the Americas
Court #745
Walmart Supercenter #2102
Meijer
Shop-N-Save
House of Flavors & Barry Neal
Oakview Medical Care/Sutter
Living Center
Coolman-Anderson Realty--Doug
Shoup
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Grace Episcopal Church
Patti & Andy Klevorn
Bruce & Julie Lowing
Pat & Carleen Shinn
Cal & Beth DeKuiper
Todd & Julie Schrader
Betty & Tony Greene
Bill Kerans

Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota

Midwest Association of Medical
Equipment Suppliers(MAMES)
Reliable Medical Supply
Handi Medical Supply
Corner Home Medical Supply
Key Medical Supply
Numotion
Signature Studios
Maddog Revolutionary Fitness
Liz's Shop
PCA Connections Minnesota
Seamstress Gabrielle
Members of Partners in
Policymaking Minnesota Class 32
The Wiggins Residents
Lori Opitz
The Mohs Family
The Thompson Family
The Dunlop Family
The Stephani Family
Meadow Lake Elementary Staff
Numerous Gofundme Donors

*"I alone cannot
change the world,
but I can cast a
stone across the
waters to create
many ripples."*

- Mother Theresa

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Mississippi

Immanuel Baptist Church
Heather Wilson
Melanie Baker
38th Avenue Baptist Church
North Greenwood Baptist Church
Purposeful Refuge
Ollie Mayhall WMU
David Mayhall Sunday School Class
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Partidge
Lisa Winpigler
Joe & Janet LaSalandra
Ellen Williams
Pat Hubbard
Gail Mayhall
Cindy Jennings
The city of Magee
Judy Thompson
Jennie Jones
Raymond Sullivan,
Dry Creek Baptist Church

Ms. Wheelchair New York

Monroe Wheelchair
Arbonne
Wheelers Vans
HDS Medallion
We Are Beautiful Magazine
Denise DiNoto
Timothy Westbrook and Family
Diane & Michael Hubbard
Angela & Marilyn Harmer
Carole Fraser
Jan Fritzgerald
Michelle Moorehead
Fatim Horne
Glennpeter Jewelers
Melting Pot Restaurant
Five Guys Burgers & Fries
Colonie Center
Regal Cinemas
Redbox
Albany Marriott
Central Florist
Tri-City Valley Cats
Austin Beauty School
Krauses Candy
Cecilia Sakosky
LC Liang-McIntosh
Helen Lai
Lisa Wilde and Family
Wheeling Forward
Soo Lee

Ms. Wheelchair North Carolina

CT Young Enterprises
Massage Envy
Liberty Corner Enterprises
Sara Whitaker
Morgan Norris
Clint Hunnicutt
Kiel Baumbauch
Justin Lammonds
Kirk Randleman
Karen Hunnicutt
Edward Reid
Olivia Kalescky
David Batchelder
Dean Penland
Deborah Merker

Ms. Wheelchair Oklahoma

Steve Glasgow, Hair Stylist
Dr. Conrad Casler, DDS
Cailan's Family & Friends

*"Be an advocate for the people and causes
important to you, using the most powerful tool
only you have—your personal stories."*

—John Capecci and Timothy Cage

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania

God
David, my love
My kids
Mom
Dad
Ken Stehley
Amanda Grove
Karen Mcconnell
David Peterson
Diamonds and Lace Bridal
The Eagle
The Legion
The Celtics Knot
SMA Family
Women of SMA
Friends
Community
5 Star Mitsubishi
The Fashion Exchange
Soaps By Michelle
Ramsay's
Gretchen Davis
Tonda Wilt
David Wilt
Megan Abrams
Forshey's
Groves'
Wtaj
Greg Bock
Tyrone Herald

Ms. Wheelchair South Carolina

Midlands Orthopedic
All Medical Inc.
Brenau University
Dutch Fork High School
Michael Kors
Flori Roberts Cosmetics
Winston County, Mississippi
Community
David Banner
Lieutenant Governor's Office on
Aging
Union Chapel M.B. Church

Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota

Black Hills Special Services
Franklyn & Carolyn Roitsch
The City of Webster
Shopko Hometown Webster
Tailfeather Photography
Mike's Jack & Jill
Dorsett Chiropractic Center
Mike & Raynette Schulte
Troy Osterloo
Southwest Health & Human
Services - Marshall MN
Jessica & Jay Lamb
Barb Ohleen

Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee

Jim & Diane Pearson
Dot & Mike Helton
Truan Equipment
Edward Jones / Jeff Lane
Kathy Black
Paige & Matt Craig
Brazzle Custom
Blaylock Firearms
Dodd & Associate Training
Match Masters Munitions
Dawn of Defense
Shooters Connection
Brownells
Freedom Munitions & Extreme
Bullets
Goodyear Express Tire
Carter's Shooting Supply
XSteel Targets
Jabs Extreme Steel Targets
Shultz and Associates
Chattanooga Shooting Supplies
DK Custom Triggers
Maven Group
Master-Tac
Dee Dee Bailey
Lynn Haddock

**"The power of your story may not lie in its drama, but
in its absolutely perfect relationship to your cause."**

**— John Capecchi and Timothy Cage, Living Proof: Telling Your
Story to Make a Difference**

2016 Titleholder Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair Texas

MING WANG KNITS
Nature Nate's Honey
Teskey's Saddle Shop
Greg & Felicia Johnson
Marnie Smith
Marketing Brainology
GeoWhiz Universe LLC
Greg Solomon Miss Texas Pageant
Coaching Consultant
Gregory Allen Kerbal, DDS, PLLC -
Family & Cosmetic Dentistry
Robert Jones Beauty
Prestige Portrait Studio
Allison Sharpe Graphic Design
Wingostarr Jewelry by Mallory
Wingo
Whimsy Hall Photography
Claire Vasquez at ANEW Wellness
Spa
Daphne Patelis
Tonya Johnson
Dawn Neufeld
Steve Noviello
Liza Krisher
Michael Contello
Cynthia Stanley
Independent Mind Set
Marilyn Vincent
Michelle Diffie

**"The best
way to predict
your future is
to create it."**

**- Abraham
Lincoln**

Ms. Wheelchair Utah

Hull Foundation
Neuroworx
Salt Lake County Adaptive
Programming
Disabled Rights Action Committee
(non-profit)

Ms. Wheelchair Virginia

Cynthia & Dick Luke
Gretchen Luke
Bobbi & Jim Littlefield
Judy & Arthur Snoke
Kathie & Doug Sewall
Susie & Bill Frye
Dennis Moody
Isabel Berney
Bridget & Jim Flowers
Sally & Dean Mook
Johnny McCord
Pat Traynor
Darrel Clowes
Gloria & Alan Heath
Tim Pickering
Alan Bodenhorn
Amy Pruden-Bagchi
Susan Blanchard
Jane Mahone
Barbara Stites
Steve Keighton
Bill Gardner
Christopher Walter
Chris Murphy
Carwile LeRoy
Ms. Wheelchair Virginia Board of
Directors & Family
Representative Sam Rasoul
State of Virginia
Nancy Bodenhorn
Thomas P. Martin & Jennie C.
Martin
Jennifer Martin

Ms. Wheelchair Washington

ABC Medical
Divine Inspirations
Pink Papaya
Seattle Adaptive Sports
Clear Water Bidets
Wheelchair Gear
Sequim Airport
Talk & Roll Enterprises Inc.

Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin

Michael & Michelle Mantuano
Knights of Columbus Council 6554
Southport Bank
Western Kiwanis Club of Kenosha
Susie, Dan & Dana Heitman
Dick, Carol & Josh Klak
Rick & Jody Leidholm
Jeff, Renee & Matt Scheel
Ken & June Ondrus
Todd & Cindy Wiesendanger
Tom & Cindy Fredericksen
Scott & Karla Lennon
Clem Stein
Leanne Watson
Anthony & Andrea Klein
Monica Postell
Scott & Vickie Abraham
Pat & Sandi Abraham
Peter Abraham
Steve, Kaja & Josie Augustyn
Terry & Jeannie Littel
Jenn Wolff
Mark Barnett
Anne Brastow
Westosha Community Seniors
Buster & Cindy Amore
Thoughtful Learning
Knueppel Healthcare Service, Inc.
Right At Home
And Many Other Friends & Family

Ms. Wheelchair America & Host State Sponsors

Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc., the host state of Michigan, and Ms. Wheelchair Michigan, Inc. would like to thank the following sponsors for their generous donations. Without their support, the National competition and advocacy efforts of our organization would not be possible.

Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc. Sponsors:

American Airlines
Schwartr, Roller and Zwilling
Mobility Ventures

Host State & 2017 Pageant Sponsors:

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital
Think Beyond The Chair
Push Goddess
Hy and Greta Berkowitz Foundation
Michigan Personalized Home Care
All American Roll Models
Amway Grand Plaza
Airway Oxygen
Brush Studio
CareLinc
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
Frontline Bible Church
Fusion Medical
Master Arts Theatre
Susan G Komen of Michigan



Congratulations Sandy!
We are so proud of you

Ms. Wheelchair Texas Foundation / www.mswheelchairtexas.org




Sandy Spoonemore
MS. WHEELCHAIR TEXAS 2016
"Defying Gravity"

Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee

Is proud to support our 2016 titleholder



Best of Luck!

from the Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee organization

www.mswheelchairtn.org

Team Cailan

DR. Kane & Sally
Kyle

Chuck, Donna & Jen

Chuck Lee & Rosa



Mike O & Sheila
George, Candace, Adie and
Wally

Erin & Dion

Dr. Conrad Casler

Janie & Randy

Oklahoma!

Natausha & Kids

Stephen Glasgow

Joshua Brittney

Mandy & Kyal

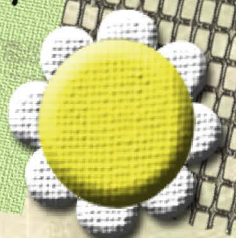
Michigan is Proud of YOU!



Jamie Spore
Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2016



You
Make
Michigan
Special



DateAble, Inc.

The Dating Service with Heart
& www.TheCPGroup.org



Proud Supporter of
Nadia Ibrahim

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland 2016
& Ms. Wheelchair America 2017 Pageant

DateAble, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides dating and social opportunities for people with and without disabilities.

15520 Bald Eagle School Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613
301-657-DATE (3283)

www.dateable.org

Ms. Wheelchair

K
Kentucky



*Alena,
the entire
commonwealth of
Kentucky
wishes you
Good Luck!*



Congratulations Pattie Duff



The State of Iowa
supports you and wishes
you the BEST!

Dreams, Inc.

Congratulations
Ms. Wheelchair America 2016
Dr. Alette Coble-Temple
Ms. Wheelchair California 2015
Thank you, on behalf of The
Ms. Wheelchair California
Foundation, for your
tremendous work representing
people with disabilities across
our nation. We are grateful for
your dedication to being a
proactive advocate! We love
you!

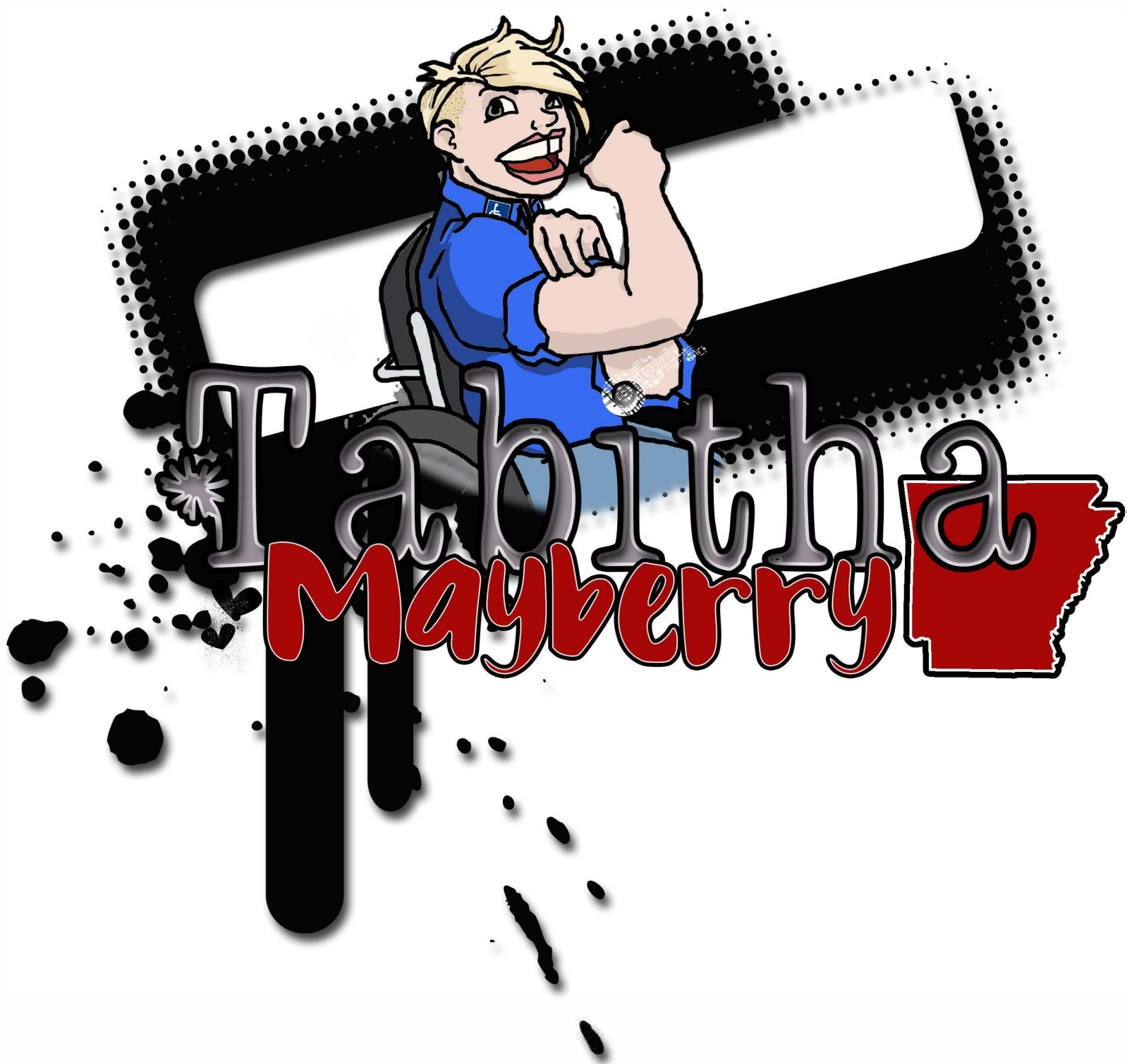


Congratulations and best of luck to
Ms. Wheelchair California 2016
Kathleen Barajas

Thank you for representing The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation and the
great state of California!



www.mswheelchaircaliforniafoundation.org



Good luck! Love Mom, Dad, Sis, Jade and Rich!

Wheels of Dreams



Judy Hoit is unstoppable! A polio survivor who has used a wheelchair for 67 years, she is also a single mother and grandmother, businesswoman and entrepreneur, inventor, published author, motivational speaker, and world traveler.

To purchase the book contact Judy:

dreamsiowa@gmail.com

800-351-8375

Visit www.judyhoit.us for more information

www.pakkie.info

pakkieinfo@gmail.com

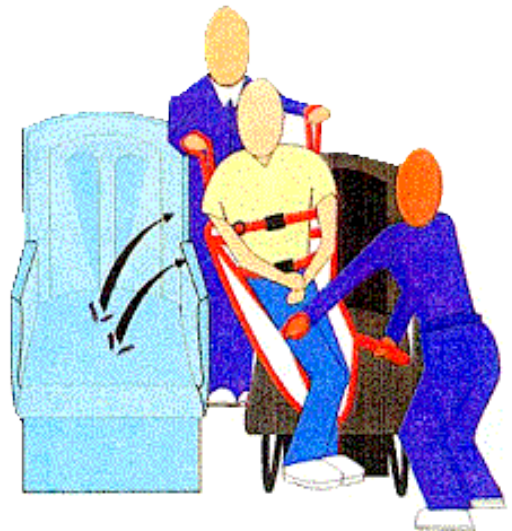


Personal Mobility Sling

Patent No. 6,276,006 by **ACCESS NOW LLC** 800-351-8375

Made in the USA

A mobility transfer sling that enables people to transfer a person who needs assistance from one location to another. Without ever physically touching the person that needs assistance.



The Pakkie weighs 9 ounces and supports 300 lbs.

Compact and easy to use!

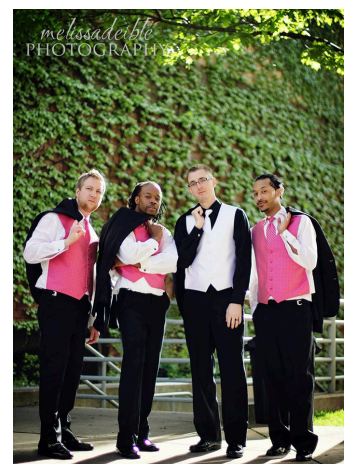
800-351-8375



melissadeible photography

weddings • engagements • families • children • seniors

melissadeiblephotography@yahoo.com





THINK BEYOND THE CHAIR

PROVIDES SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, SUPPORT, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

Think Beyond the Chair would like to congratulate the women competing in Ms. Wheelchair America 2017!

Would you like to open a Think Beyond the Chair chapter in your state? Please contact us for more information.

www.thinkbeyondthechair.org

248-247-8118

info@thinkbeyondthechair.org



Visit the Push Goddess Boutique and Motivational Blog

www.pushgoddess.com



Be Innovative, Diverse and Accessible *Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training*



Contact Us Today!

616-732-7358 • deafhhs.org

Proudly Serving West Michigan Since 1996



FRONTLINE

You Can Be A Roll-MODEL

Make up your mind!

1 Timothy 4:12b

Others First!

Philippians 2:3-4

Don't Give up!

Galatians 6:9

In Everything Give Thanks!

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Lift Each Other up!

Hebrews 10:24

Titus 2:7—And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good deeds of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.

Frontline Bible Church of Byron Center - 8283 Pfeiffer Farms Drive SW - Byron Center, Michigan 49315

616-878-3113

Our Vision: To be a place where people become equipped to make an eternal impact in the world!

WALK WITH COURAGE. RUN FEARLESSLY. FINISH WITH STRENGTH.



susan g. komen
race
FOR THE **cure**®
WEST MICHIGAN

Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016 • 9 AM
Ah-Nab-Awen Park
Grand Rapids, MI

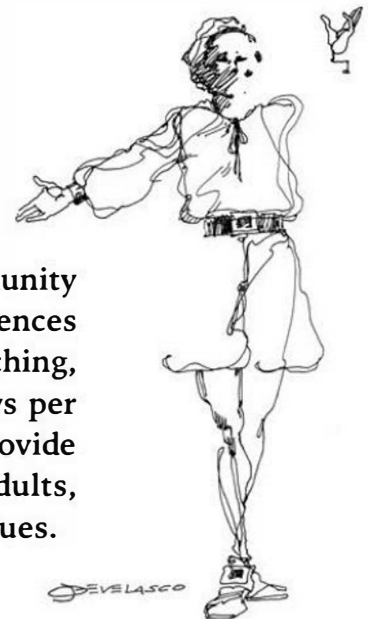
This year alone, it is estimated that over 8,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in Michigan.

Join us at this year's Race to help ensure that the women in our community who hear those four terrible words, **"you have breast cancer,"** find it early and beat it!

REGISTER NOW AT: KOMENMICHIGAN.ORG/WMRACE16

*wholesome
enlightening
enriching*

Master Arts Theatre is an intimate West Michigan based community theatre with a mission to positively impact artists and audiences through works that are wholesome, enlightening, and enriching, guided by a Christian worldview. We offer five main stage shows per year and two summer youth productions. In addition, we provide summer camps for youth, regular classes for children through adults, and a number of touring troupes that perform in a variety of venues.



**Master
Arts
Theatre**

Master Arts Theatre
75 77th Street SW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49548
(616)455-1001
www.masterarts.org

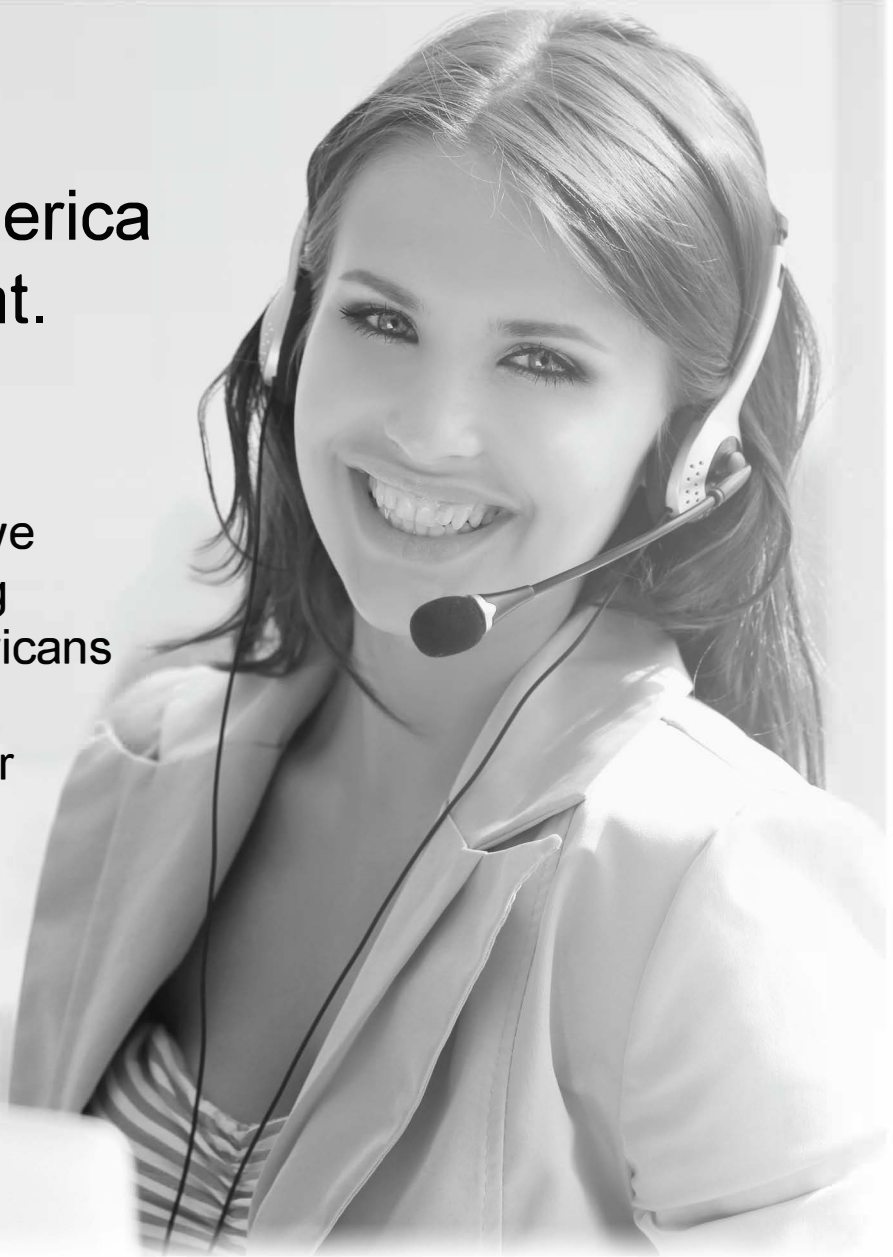
Creating Opportunities Is What We Do



J.Lodge is proud to support the Ms. America Wheelchair Pageant.

For over a decade now, we've provided rewarding, fulfilling career opportunities to Americans with disabilities to help them reach for the stars, no matter where they start from.

Find out more at
JLodge.com/careers



www.JLodge.com - Facebook.com/jlodgecorp

StatesideBPO Proudly Supports the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant



StatesideBPO is on a mission to provide career opportunities for Americans with disabilities by matching your need to re-enter the work force and our client's need for high-quality employees.

STATESIDE *BPO* 

facebook.com/statesidebpoLLC
www.statesidebpo.com

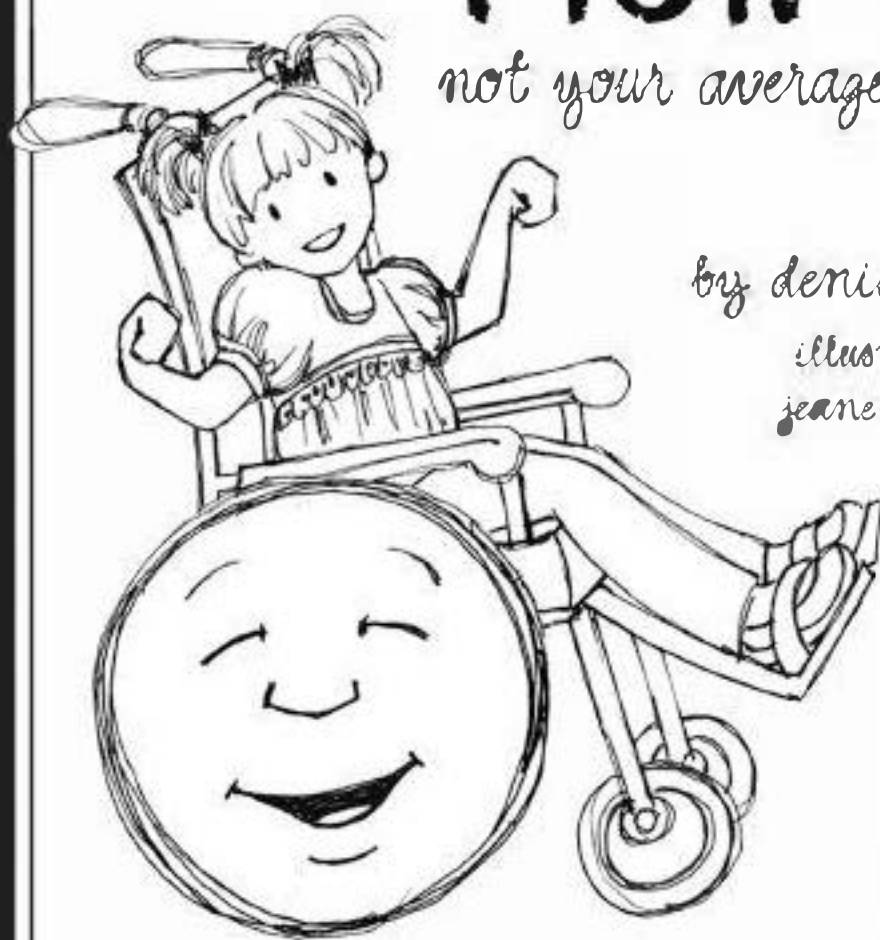
The *new*
Family Classic



A girl, a wheelchair, and an amazing
discovery that will warm your heart.

Hank

not your average chair . . .



by denis r. berkson

*illustrated by
jeane l. heckert*

ORDER your copy of the book at:
www.hankthechair.com

Restoring Hope and *Freedom*
Mary Free Bed
Rehabilitation Hospital

WELCOME TO GRAND RAPIDS!

The Mary Free Bed Guild is proud to support Ms. Wheelchair America 2017.

The women of the Mary Free Bed Guild have helped to restore hope and freedom for 125 years. We commend Ms. Wheelchair America for celebrating the achievements of women with disabilities.

The Mary Free Bed Guild wishes the best of luck to all participants!

JAMIE SPORE
Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2016
Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital Continuum Patient



JOCELYN DETTLOFF
Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2005
Annual Fund Director
Mary Free Bed Foundation

EMILY BLAUW
Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2010
Speech Language Pathologist
Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital

**MWA Pageant and Leadership Forum
August 14—20, 2017
Erie, Pennsylvania.**



The Flagship City, as it is also known because it is the home port of Oliver Hazard Perry's flagship USS Niagara, offers a variety of things to do and see. From the Erie Art Museum to the Annual Roar On the Shore, Erie offers something for everyone. Its proximity of Edinboro University, named the 6th best university in the country for wheelchair users, has made Erie one of the most accessible cities in the state.

Contestants will stay at the Courtyard by Marriott or the Hilton Garden Inn. Both of the hotels are connected to the Ambassador Center, a beautiful banquet and meeting center where all the events of the week will take place.



Pennsylvania looks forward to welcoming MWA 2018.
We hope to see you there!

SCHWARTZ, ROLLER & ZWILLING

If you have already hired or retained a lawyer in connection with matters related to civil rights and disabilities, please disregard this brochure. Our firm represents people with disabilities. Most frequently, we help them obtain accessible parking, routes of travel, and restrooms in public places. In addition, we often help enforce their right to accessible housing. We provide these services **without charge to our clients**. For more information, please see our website, email or call us.

Enriching Lives Through Advocacy

www.adaadvocacy.com

phone 205.822.2701

email ezwilling@szalaw.com



Required statement from the AL State Bar: **ADVERTISEMENT**. No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services provided by other lawyers. Any recoveries and testimonials are not an indication of future results. Every case is different, and regardless of what friends, family, or other individuals may say about what a case is worth, each case must be evaluated on its own facts and circumstances as they apply to the law. The valuation of a case depends on the facts, the injuries, the jurisdiction, the venue, the witnesses, the parties, and the testimony, among other factors.



When my wife and I took our daughter, who was three at the time, to see Disney on Ice several years ago, I felt the greatest sense of professional fulfillment that I'd ever experienced. Seated across the front row of the arena were several children in wheelchairs, each right beside parents and friends. They were laughing and having the best time. Clearly, it was a very special experience for the children and their families - and I had played a small part in making it happen.

Had they visited the arena a few months before that show, they would not have had lower level accessible seating. Instead, they would have had seats under stairs leading to the upper level, no clear view of the performance, and limited seating for family and friends. They would have had difficulty locating accessible parking, getting into the arena, and even more difficulty using the restrooms. Because some of my clients with disabilities had previously decided to enforce their civil rights, those children and their families were able to enjoy an experience without the barriers they so often face; an experience that countless people with disabilities have been able to enjoy since.

At Schwartz, Roller & Zwilling, we believe that every person should be able to experience life free of barriers related to disabilities. We help remove those barriers at absolutely no cost to our clients. If we can ever be of service to you or someone you know, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to helping you.

Sincerely,

EDWARD I. ZWILLING

Attorney at Law

SCHWARTZ, ROLLER & ZWILLING

Enriching Lives Through Advocacy

www.adaadvocacy.com

phone 205.822.2701 | email ezwilling@szalaw.com

Here's to those
who elevate the
world around them.

American is proud to support Ms. Wheelchair America.





The official accessible vehicle of Ms. Wheelchair America.

Congratulations to Dr. Alette Coble-Temple on an awesome year.

Best of luck to all of the 2017 contestants.

We look forward to working with you over the coming year.



Ryan Zemmer

Marketing Manager
Mobility Ventures LLC
12200 Hubbard St
Livonia, MI 48150
(248) 798-0263
ryan.zemmer@mv-1.us

Erika Bogan

Social Media Analyst
Mobility Ventures LLC
105 N. Niles Ave
South Bend, IN 46617
(704) 305-5028
erika.bogan@mv-1.us

- Factory built for universal wheelchair access
- Safest wheelchair accessible vehicle on the road*
- Durable performance with high ground clearance



*Based on NHTSA safety recall data



Visit www.mv-1.us or call 877-681-3678

REFER YOURSELF



Mary Free Bed
Rehabilitation Hospital

For more information visit
askformary.com