



**AUGUST 1-7, 2011
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**



**She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs
without fear of the future. When she speaks her words are
wise, and she gives instruction with kindness.**

Proverbs 31:25-26



City of Grand Rapids, Michigan
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

GEORGE K. HEARTWELL
MAYOR

July 15, 2011

Dear Ms. Wheelchair America Contestants:

Greetings! On behalf of the citizens of Grand Rapids, the City Commissioners and I extend our very warmest greetings to you as you gather for your convention. I am extremely pleased to welcome you to Grand Rapids.

You are sure to be kept busy during your conference, but I do hope you have the opportunity to participate in some of the many recreational and cultural activities our community has to offer. Museums fill our center city area – we offer a public museum, a children's museum, two art museums, and a presidential museum all within walking distance of your headquarters hotel. Professional, amateur, and recreational sports score high and are a vital part of our community. Our downtown features an ever-expanding diversity of specialty restaurants and entertainment venues, as well as our wonderful downtown river walk trail. From a relaxing picnic at an area waterside park to dinner atop a luxurious downtown hotel, from live performance in one of our community theaters to a Broadway production, Grand Rapids has something for everyone.

Thank you for choosing to meet in our city, enjoy yourselves, and please return often.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Heartwell", is written over a circular stamp.

George Heartwell



July 15, 2011

Ms. Wheelchair America
2012 National Pageant

Dear Contestants:

I am pleased to extend a warm welcome to you from Michigan's second largest city.

While in Grand Rapids you will have the opportunity to experience first-hand why we are Michigan's fastest growing visitor destination and a favorite convention venue. We encourage you to make the most of your visit and experience the many cultural attractions around the area and invite you to explore unique neighborhoods throughout the community.

Downtown has four premier museums within walking distance of each other. The Gerald R. Ford Museum invites you to experience America's most entertaining presidential museum where you can see the original Watergate break-in tools and "attend" a White House cabinet meeting. Across the street is the Public Museum of Grand Rapids with its world-class exhibitions on history and nature. You can even ride their antique carousel in a pavilion that extends over the Grand River. The Grand Rapids Art Museum and Grand Rapids Children's Museum are also nearby and have special exhibitions that continue to excite visitors.

Just ten minutes from downtown is the award-winning Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. It has the largest sculpture garden in a natural setting in the Midwest with world-renowned sculptures by artists such as Rodin, Moore and Chihuly. You will marvel at its crowning glory, the three-story-tall Leonardo da Vinci horse.

Downtown offers a lively entertainment district and a variety of excellent concert, jazz, theater, ballet and opera options. There are over 75 dining options that include cuisines from around the world—you'll truly be amazed.

Check out our website ExperienceGR.com to discover all the fun awaiting you. You may even decide to extend your stay and bring your family to take advantage of all the exciting activities Grand Rapids has to offer.

Thank you for choosing to come to Grand Rapids—we hope you enjoy the experience!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Small". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Doug Small
President

MWA President Welcomes You!



Dear Contestants, Family and Friends,

On behalf of the Ms. Wheelchair America Inc., Board of Directors, I would like to welcome you to Ms. Wheelchair America 2012, here in beautiful Grand Rapids, Michigan. You are about to embark on an amazing week that you will remember for the rest of your lives.

This incredible program was first started in 1972 by Dr. Philip Wood who wanted to promote the achievements of amazing women who also, just happened to use wheelchairs. Now as we celebrate our 40th year, we must look back and thank Dr. Wood for giving so many women through the years the opportunity to become involved with Ms. Wheelchair America.

I want to congratulate you on all you have achieved to get here. You truly represent what Ms. Wheelchair America is all about and I am proud to have you all here to show off your talents, accomplishments and personalities. A big thank you needs to go out to your state coordinators. They are the reason we are all here, they put their time, effort and sometimes their personnel funds to make this all possible.

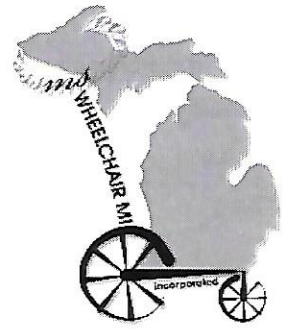
I must thank our host state coordinator, Shelly Loose and her volunteers for their hard work putting this week together for us. Shelly's passion for Ms. Wheelchair America is like none I have seen before and her hard work and dedication is the reason we are all here this week.

Finally, thanks to all of you for being here and helping us recognize and celebrate these amazing women!

Kristen Connors

President, Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc.

Welcome to Michigan!!



August 1, 2011

Welcome Titleholders,

I am still contagious, and I hope you will be contagious too! The enthusiasm you will experience during the Ms. Wheelchair America 2012 pageant should make a difference in your life. You will have an opportunity to meet amazing people. You will hear impressive and inspiring stories. You will learn things about yourselves and others. You will gain knowledge that will empower you. You will understand the power within each of you. It is my hope that you will leave Michigan different, and you will believe different is "Great!"

Hosting allows me to take four of my favorite things and bring them together. First, there is Grand Rapids, my hometown, the best place to grow up. I'm proud of "My Giant Little Town" and it is a pleasure to share it with you! Secondly, Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital. Over 24 years ago, I entered Mary Free Bed "scared", but left believing there was a future. They truly are "Restoring Hope and Freedom" and giving patients a life that is "to be continued..." It is an extreme pleasure to introduce them! Third, my family and friends, without them I would not be who I am today. You will get a chance to meet many of them, this week, as they are the volunteers that help make hosting Ms. Wheelchair America look easy. Last, the Ms. Wheelchair America program is my passion. This passion has helped me answer the question "Why me?", now I get to witness change in the lives of women with disabilities. It is more than a pageant; it is a sisterhood, which should drive you to become an advocate for people with disabilities. You should feel a sense of achievement and know that you are impacting the world. You should understand that this is an opportunity for you to leave a legacy. So, make me proud and let Grand Rapids, Mary Free Bed and the volunteers understand why I believe in you and all of the Ms. Wheelchair America family!

Organizing a Ms. Wheelchair America pageant is a challenge. I have always enjoyed a good challenge, because it allows me to see God at work. I attend Frontline Bible Church of Byron Center, where we are encouraged to "Go out and make a lasting impact for Jesus Christ". I want you to know that why I "rolled" out in Faith to host two years in a row. This is God's doing, so don't "Thank me", but God! I am continually amazed, that He takes the ordinary out of my life and allows me to be part of the Extraordinary!

I am honored to consider each one of you, a friend!

God Bless!

Shelly Loose

2011 Board of Directors

President	Kristen Connors
Vice President	Ida Esh't
Secretary	Denise DiNoto
Treasurer	Crystal Childers
At-Large	Carrie Greenwood
Executive Director	Shelly Loose

2011 State Coordinators

Alabama	Xaveria Powell-Anderson
Arizona	Ida Esh't
Arkansas	Rebecca Williams
District of Columbia	Jeri Wasco
Florida	Eileen O'Brien
Illinois	Pamela LaPorte
Indiana	Nancy Cottrell
Iowa	Judy Hoit
Kansas	Carrie Greenwood
Kentucky	Pat O'Bryant
Maine	Jessica Littlefield
Maryland	Robert Watson
Massachusetts	Autumn Grant
Michigan	Shelly Loose
Minnesota	Anne Kresbauh Neuman
Nebraska	Crystal Childers
New York	Denise DiNoto
North Carolina	Brandee Ponder
Ohio	Melissa Milnovich
Oklahoma	Lauren Abbott
Pennsylvania	Megan Abrams
Rhode Island	Kristen Connors
Texas	Angela Wigglesworth
Utah	Katie Warner
Virginia	Pam Cobler
Washington	Meg Paulsen
Wisconsin	Carol Banks

2011 Independent Delegates

Hawaii	Susannah Rice-Kamanu
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Ms. Wheelchair America Titleholders

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



1996



1997



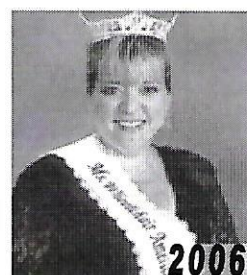
2001



2004



2005



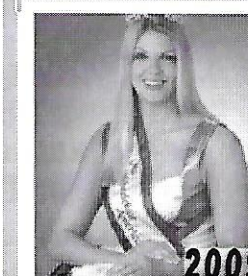
2006



2007



2008



2009



2010



2011

History

In 1972 Dr. Philip 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 for women of achievement to successfully educate about and advocate for the more than 54 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.

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

The Ms. Wheelchair America 501(c)3 non-profit is staffed and coordinated totally by volunteers from many different community organizations, businesses, private citizens, and previous titleholders. It is through the monetary and in-kind support of the 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 the people with disabilities. The Ms. Wheelchair America Program is actively seeking sponsors and volunteers and would appreciate any support that is offered.

Ms. Wheelchair America 2011

Alexandra McArthur

When I heard my name called as Ms. Wheelchair America 2011, I felt a mixture of overwhelming excitement and gratitude. These feelings have only increased throughout this amazing year.

I surprised many people when I decided to compete in a pageant. I don't own a hair dryer, have a particular "talent," or have good answers about how to save the world. As Ms. Wheelchair America 2011, I have had the opportunity to defy the expectations of "pageant queens," and most importantly, of someone who uses a wheelchair.

The Ms. Wheelchair America Organization allows women who use wheelchairs to advocate and raise awareness for the issues that affect people with disabilities. This year, I have been able to travel across the country representing Ms. Wheelchair America and share my platform of employment to promote inclusion for people with disabilities.

There are too many trip highlights to share here, but here are some of the most memorable:

In November, I attended the Mayor's Leadership Conference in Chicago sponsored by the Real Economic Impact Tour. This two-day conference brought together government officials, IRS employees, nonprofit organizations, and others to discuss the economic challenges unique to people with disabilities. I gave a welcome to the attendees and was able to attend many of the workshops, to listen to the compelling speakers, and to serve on a panel about life with a disability. This conference opened my eyes to the need to support people with disabilities through their complex tax returns, unexpected expenses and unique savings needs. I would encourage you all to learn more about the

Real Economic Impact Tour at <http://www.realeconomicimpact.org/>.

A visit to Orlando, Florida for the National Federation of Women Legislators was a welcome the break from the chilly weather in November! This was four days of insightful speakers, heated policy debates, and bipartisan collaboration among women. The energy and brainpower in the room was inspiring. However, I also noticed who wasn't in the room: people who use wheelchairs. Like women, people with disabilities have been vastly



unrepresented in legislative bodies. But, I wouldn't be surprised if some of our Ms. Wheelchair America or state titleholders change that in the future!

During the last week of January, I traveled to South Dakota for Ski for Light, a week of skiing and fun for about a hundred people with various disabilities. The entire week was amazing. Not only did it allow me to meet some incredible people and experience skiing, but it also helped the way I think about the importance of fun and connecting with other people with disabilities. The organization was able to flawlessly adapt to and include people with disabilities (and the able-bodied volunteers) during both skiing and downtime. I cannot speak more highly of the organization, the dedicated people who run it, and the time that I spent there. More information can be found at its website: www.bhsfl.org.



In June, I acted as a Youth Mentor and gave several presentations at the weeklong NC Youth Leadership Forum. This forum brought together people with disabilities ages 16-28 to learn about self-advocacy, the government process, and disability history. It was amazing to see the students grow and learn throughout the week. I left with several new friends and role models!

In addition to these events, I was honored to hold events at Bank of America, Progress Energy, the IZOD IndyCar Series, the Houston and New York Abilities Expos, Lowes Corporation, several elementary, high schools, and universities, sporting events, and conferences.



These memories, in addition to the countless conversations and connections made during my travels, have made this year remarkable. I am incredible grateful to my sponsors Wachovia-Wells Fargo Foundation, Enable America, American Airlines, Flexiciser, Growler's Pour House and to my colleagues, friends, and family who supported me throughout this year. Finally, my love and appreciation goes to my mom, Margaret Herman, my 'person', Kendall Patterson, and my boyfriend, Owen Fitzpatrick, as each of them sacrificed their time and sometimes their backs to join me on several trips.

I have been privileged to be Ms. Wheelchair America 2011. I am thrilled to celebrate the accomplishments of the 2011 state titleholders and to crown Ms. Wheelchair America 2012. I hope to pass along my feelings of excitement and gratitude as she begins her own remarkable year.



Ms. Wheelchair Alabama

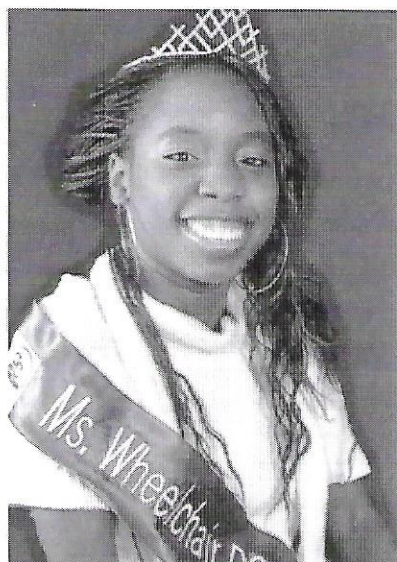
Shannon Roberts

Shannon lives in Madison, Alabama and works for Athens State University. She studies Psychology at Athens State University. Shannon enjoys swimming, bowling and helping others. She has a spinal cord injury from a car accident. Shannon describes herself as motivated, loving, and fun.

Ms. Wheelchair Colorado

KenDara Peoples

KenDara lives in Littleton Colorado. She studied business at Hastings College in Nebraska. KenDara enjoys leg lifts, arm lifts and wheeling around her Cul-de-sac. She has a brain injury. KenDara describes herself as funny, happy and determined.



Ms. Wheelchair District of Columbia

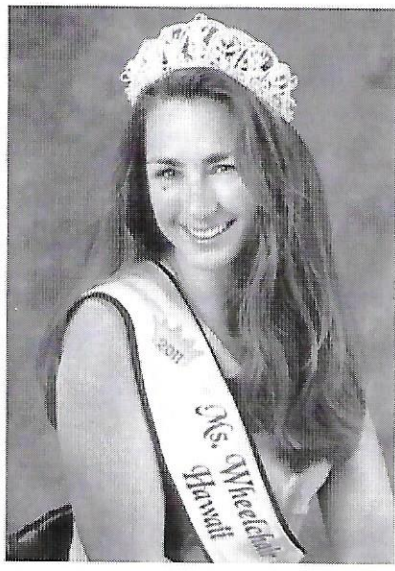
Jameika Andrews

Jameika lives in Washington DC and works at Rehoboth Child Development Center. She received a Bachelor's Degree from Trinity University. Jameika enjoys reading, shopping, internet, and once a month peer counseling group. She has Cerebral Palsy. Jameika Andrews describes herself as outspoken, loving, and caring.

Ms. Wheelchair Florida

Mayra Paulina Reyes

Mayra lives in Tampa, Florida and works for Hillsborough Recreation Department at All Peoples Life Center. She obtained a degree in Administrative Assistant from Erwin Technical Center. Mayra enjoys being an active member of the Tampa Bay Paralympic Sports. She has Cerebral Palsy. Mayra describes herself as ambitious, motivated, and kind-hearted.



Ms. Wheelchair Hawaii

Susannah Rice-Kamanu

Susannah lives in Kamuela, Hawaii and works at Big Island Substance Abuse Council. She received her certification from Sand Island Treatment Center. Susannah enjoys animals, animals, and animals. She is a partial paraplegic. Susannah describes herself as able, honest, and curious.

Ms. Wheelchair Illinois

Wendy Settles

Wendy lives in Bethalto, Illinois and is a freelance writer. She received a Bachelor's of Science in Mass Communication from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Wendy enjoys writing, listening to music and being outdoors. She has Cerebral Palsy. Wendy describes herself as outspoken, driven, and unique.





Ms. Wheelchair Indiana

Jodi Logman

Jodi lives in Indianapolis, Indiana and volunteers around the state, in various capacities. She obtained a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology from The College of Mount St. Joseph. Jodi enjoys singing, various different art mediums, working with children, and playing adaptive sports. She has Generalized Dystonia and Spastic Quadriplegia. Jodi describes herself as artistic, determined, and compassionate.

Ms. Wheelchair Iowa

Jennifer Wolff

Jennifer lives in Waverly, Iowa and works at Taylor Physical and Occupational Therapy at the Waverly Health Center. She obtained a Master's degree of Occupational Therapy from the College of St. Catherine. Jennifer enjoys spending time with friends and family, volunteering in her community, continuing her education and traveling. She is a paraplegic due to an Ependymoma. Jennifer describes herself as an advocate, positive, and an "out of the box" thinker.



Ms. Wheelchair Kansas

Jennifer Kreutzer

Jenny lives in Wichita, Kansas and works at Koch Industries, Inc. She obtained a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Fort Hays State University. Jenny enjoys being a Girl Scout Troop leader, participating in wheelchair sports, such as tennis and horseback riding, as well as being a mom to two girls, Kelsie and Karlie. Jenny describes herself as driven, hardworking, and dedicated.



Ms. Wheelchair Kentucky

Stacey Herald

Stacey lives in Dry Ridge, Kentucky with her husband and their three children. Stacey holds the Guinness Book of World Records as the 'smallest mom'. Stacey enjoys spending time with her wonderful husband and God sent children, talking and interviewing around the world. She has Osteogenesis Imperfecta Type III. Stacey describes herself as fun, enthusiastic and energetic.



Ms. Wheelchair Maine

Monica Quimby

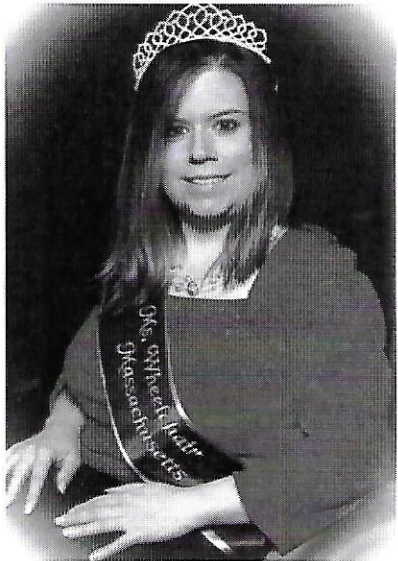
Monica lives in Scarborough, Maine and teaches at Southern Maine Community College. She obtained a Master of Science Degree in Higher Education: College Teaching and Learning from Kaplan University. Monica enjoys adaptive waterskiing, watercolor painting, traveling, and mentoring students. She has a Spinal cord Injury. Monica describes herself as ambitious, positive, and friendly.

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland

Sharonda Johnson-Wilkes

Sharonda lives in Fort Washington, Maryland and works at the Department of Treasury, FMS. She is pursuing a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration from University of Maryland University College. Sharonda enjoys praising the Lord, spending quiet time with her husband, Darryl, and children, and helping people with disabilities with disabilities excel. She has Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy. Sharonda describes herself as inspirational, enthusiastic and determined.





Ms. Wheelchair Massachusetts

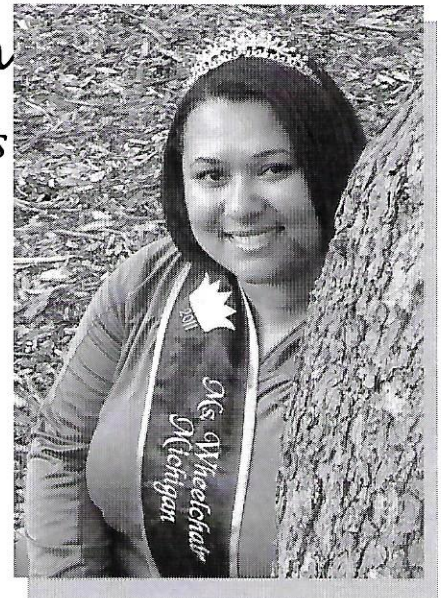
Megan Mamaty

Megan lives in Quincy, Massachusetts and works at Wal-Mart. She obtained a nail technician certificate from Mansfield Beauty School. Megan enjoys the outdoors, music, and animals. She has Spina Bifida. Megan describes herself as out-going, humorous, and energetic.

Ms. Wheelchair Michigan

Sharina Jones

Sharina lives in Troy, Michigan and founded Think Beyond the Chair, Inc. She earned a Master of Business Administration from Wayne State University. Sharina enjoys handcycling, writing, swimming and breaking down attitudinal barriers. She is a gunshot survivor paraplegic. Sharina describes herself as determined, versatile, and a motivator.



Ms. Wheelchair Minnesota

Jenni Taylor

Jenni lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota and is a motivational speaker. She studies communications at Normandale Community College. Jenni enjoys motivational speaking, volunteering, writing and painting with her mouth. She is a C1-C2 Quadriplegic on a ventilator. Jenni describes herself as positive, outgoing, and creative.

Ms. Wheelchair Nebraska

Joann Harris

Joann lives in Hastings, Nebraska. She studied at Eastern Nazarene College. Joann enjoys time with family and friends, church activities, traveling and time in the great outdoors, of course documenting everything with pictures which must be scrapbooked. She has Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy. Joann describes herself as passionate, fun loving and tenacious.



Ms. Wheelchair New York

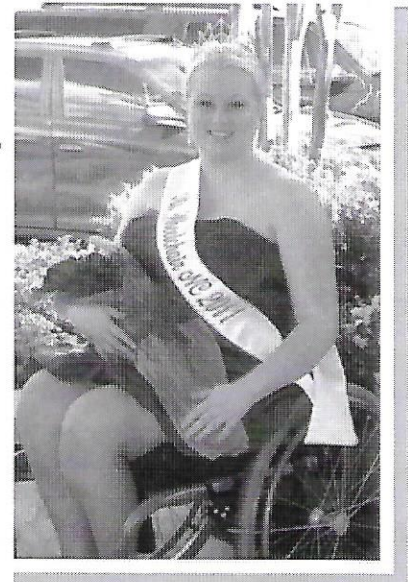
Luticha Andre' Doucette

Luticha lives in West Henrietta, New York and is currently a student in Bioinformatics at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Luticha enjoys crocheting in 3D, traveling, being with friends and studying science. She is an incomplete quadriplegic. Luticha describes herself as quirky, sparkly, and nerdy.

Ms. Wheelchair North Carolina

Elizabeth Lentz

Elizabeth lives in Winston Salem, North Carolina and works at Carolina Veterinary Specialists. Elizabeth enjoys spending time with family and friends, playing with her dogs, and going out on dates with her husband. She has a Spinal Cord Injury. Elizabeth describes herself as positive, brave, and outgoing.





Ms. Wheelchair Ohio

Margaret Long

Margaret lives in Cincinnati, Ohio and is a community activist and volunteers for several violence prevention and intervention efforts. She studied at Hughes Career Center in Cincinnati and is currently attending Ashworth College and Career Center. Margaret enjoys skydiving, making candles, and public speaking. She has a C6-C7 Spinal Cord Injury that caused her quadriplegia. Margaret describes herself as courageous, hopeful, and inspirational.

Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania

Josie Badger

Josie lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and works at the PEAL Center as a youth coordinator. She received a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from University of Pittsburgh and is finishing a PhD in Healthcare Ethics from Duquesne University. She has a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy. Josie describes herself as passionate, dedicated and a visionary.



Ms. Wheelchair Rhode Island

Dawn Kelly

Dawn lives in Warwick, Rhode Island. She obtained a Human Service's degree from Community College of Rhode Island. Dawn enjoys reading, taking art classes, and advocating for people with disabilities. She has Congenital Myopathy. Dawn describes herself as friendly, motivated and empathetic.

Ms. Wheelchair Texas

Amanda Hall

Amanda lives in Stephenville, Texas and interprets for the deaf in Granbury ISD. She received a Bachelor of Science in Communication from Tarleton State University. Amanda enjoys her work with Camp Craig Allen, 501©3 and the America Legion Auxiliary. She has Muscular Dystrophy. Amanda describes herself as friendly, creative, and compassionate.



Ms. Wheelchair Utah

Sandra Anderson

Sandra lives in Logan, Utah. She is currently studying Elementary Education from Utah State University. Sandra enjoys bowling, singing, and hanging out with friends. She is a quadriplegic. Sandra describes herself as optimistic, compassionate, and energetic.

Ms. Wheelchair Virginia

Emily McGrail

Emily lives in Radford, Virginia and is a former elementary school teacher. She received a Bachelor's of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies from Radford University. Emily enjoys traveling, home improvement, bargain hunting and spending time with friends and family. She has complications from radiation therapy for a spinal cord tumor. Emily describes herself as accomplished, sensible, and quirky.





Ms. Wheelchair Washington

Kendra Schraml

Kendra lives in Bonney Lake, Washington and works at SanMar Corporation. She studied for a Masters of Business Administration with an emphasis in Project Management from City University of Seattle. Kendra enjoys handcycling, spending time with friends and family, and reading a good book. She has Sacral Agenesis. Kendra describes herself as ambitious, tenacious, and caring.

Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin

Kristin Larson

Kristin lives in Beloit, Wisconsin and works at Mercy Health System. She received a Marketing Degree from Blackhawk Technical College. Kristin enjoys volunteering, wine tasting and raising mini-dachshunds. She is a T12 paraplegic due to Lupus with a secondary of transverse Myelitis. Kristin describes herself as optimistic, giving, and kind.



Awards

Ms. Wheelchair America 2012

The title of Ms. Wheelchair America 2011 is chosen by the judging panel. The contestant that earns the highest total score during the judging sessions will become Ms. Wheelchair America 2011.

Lifetime Achievement

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

Nicki Ard Achievement

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 will have made an outstanding contribution to the disability community through her talents, her efforts and example.

Outstanding Speech

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

People's Choice

The People's Choice Award is present to the person that gets the largest number of votes, which cost \$1.00 per vote. The funds raised will be used for the MWA 2011 travel fund. People's Choice votes can be purchased anytime during the week.

Congeniality Award

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

Business Award

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

More on the Nicki Ard Award



Nicki Ard 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".

Nicki was also enjoyed writing poetry.

My Thoughts

I've seen times in my life when I was given only five seconds to say the right words,
only to have them come out wrong or not at all.
Times when I've loved with every part of me and then lost that which I loved so much.
Times when I knew the odds were against me, but thought,
"Who created the odds anyway?"
Times when my heart was so full of grief that tears meant nothing.
Times when "my" life wasn't mine alone.
These are the times that nothing can change.
They will remain forever a part of me, but I cannot bring them back and
make them over to be times of joy.
Sadness and grief are inevitable.
So, I must take those memories and hold them close,
for I have also seen times of happiness that
some only dream of.
This life God gave me is MY life and it is good.
~nicki



A quote from Nicki that the contestants will appreciate

"The night I won was one of the most humbling experiences because every girl there deserved it. I mean it was amazing just being among a group of women who all had the same goal in mind: to overcome the barriers that we face every day."

Judging Criteria

The Ms. Wheelchair America judging is based upon criteria established by the national committee of the Ms. Wheelchair America Program. The following excerpts were taken from the official guidelines:

A. Accomplishments

1. Personal Achievements and Accomplishments Since Disability in the following areas:
 - A. Academic
 - B. Vocational
 - C. Personal
2. Adjustment to Disability

B. Community Skills

1. Ability to Deal with Media, Peers, Civic Groups, etc.
2. Public Relation Skills
3. Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
4. Self-confidence - Motivation - Initiative - Creativity

C. Self Perception- Projection

1. Poise and Demeanor
2. Appropriate Attire and Personal Presentation

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.**

Judges



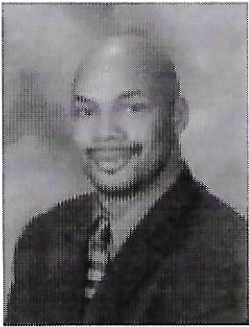
Head Judge—Susan Rotchy

was Ms. Wheelchair California 2007 and currently resides in Northern California with her husband and two children. She was left paralyzed from an automobile accident 15 years ago. Since her accident Susan has become an activist for people with disabilities beginning with, having a voice at the community college she attended and with that voice enforcing the college to become ADA compliance. Realizing, she had an aptitude to bring the disability community and the able body community together from this experience she proceed straight to the capitol while completing her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at Golden Gate University.

Susan wanted to move her paralyzed body again and realized that there was potential research being done for spinal cord injuries but there was no adequate funding for the scientists. In 2000 she helped pass the Roman Reed Spinal Cord Injury Research Act through her membership in Californians for Cures, which also took an active part in the passage of Proposition 71, the Stem Cell Research and Cures Act 2004. Additionally, she is one of the co-founders of Research for Cure, a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization which raises money for neurological dis-

eases, which has raised over 500,000 dollars for the Reeve Irvine Research Center at UC Irvine. For her continuous work on raising monies for research she has been thanked by the late Christopher Reeves and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Today, Susan is the Executive Director of Independent Living Resources of Solano and Contra Costa Counties and sits on the In Home Support Service advisory committee for Solano County and vice president of Research for Cure. She has played an instrumental role in advocating for people with disabilities and pushing for medical research.



Carl E. Daughtery is a native of North Little Rock, Arkansas. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Philander Smith College in Little Rock, and earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration in 2001 from Webster University in Jacksonville, Arkansas. He also graduated from the University of Arkansas Currents Leadership Institute in 2005. In addition to his education, Mr. Daughtery has an exemplary background in business and public relation. Before being appointed to his present position in August 2009, Mr. Daughtery served as the Interim Chief of Field Services. He previously served as District Manager for five years in the Vocational Rehabilitation Field Services Program covering North Little Rock, Conway, Russellville, and Lonoke field offices. He acted as head judge for the Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas twice and supported Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas.

Mr. Daughtery and his wife, Cynthia, have one son, Carl Jr. He plays a very active role as husband and father. As Chief of Field Services, he is committed to continuing his services and leadership to our state and its people with disabilities.

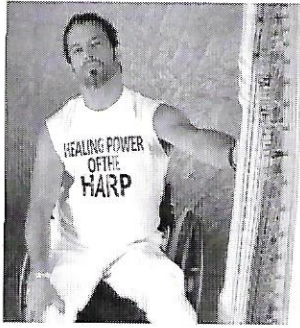


Stephanie Crenshaw

was Ms. Wheelchair Georgia 2006. She was selected as Ms. Congeniality at the national pageant in 2007. Stephanie has her Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from Thomas University and has worked as Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with Georgia Department of Labor. Stephanie uses a wheelchair due to progressive neuromuscular disease. She has participated in several road races and finished 2nd in Walt Disney World's half marathon in 2006.

Stephanie lives in Georgia with her daughter, Kaitlyn.

Judges



George Flores is X-Rock & Roller turned Harp Technician for Harpist all over the world. He was thrown from his motorcycle on September 11, 2004. He hung on to life in four feet of wetland grass for over twelve hours. Two men searching for scrap metal on the side of the road finally rescued him. George was taken to a hospital in the west suburb of Chicago where his disabled journey began. After many surgeries and complications George laid bed ridden for over two and a half years. Never giving up the dream to once again touch the top of the six-foot instruments he loves. George found the answer in technology and the form of a standing wheelchair. Working hard to reclaim his health & life in 2008 George became the first person in history to professionally service the six-foot instrument with a spinal cord injury. Today, George still works with the Harps he loves and just

finished building and regulating a Harp for the N.S.C.I.A. to be auction off to raise money to support people with spinal cord injuries.

George is also a huge advocate for people with disabilities. Using the knowledge he gained over the past seven years to help reassure that people would not have to suffer or struggle as he did.



Kate Pew Wolters serves as the President of the Kate and Richard Wolters Foundation. Founded in 1997 by Kate and her late husband, Richard, this private foundation makes grants to non-profit organizations with an emphasis in the arts, education, human services and people with disabilities. Kate is also a member of the Board of Directors of Steelcase Inc., chair of its Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee and chair of the Steelcase Foundation, an endowed corporate foundation of Steelcase Inc. Steelcase Inc., the global leader in the office furniture industry, delivers a better work experience to its customers by providing products, services and insights into the ways people work. Its portfolio includes architecture, furniture and technology products. Kate was appointed to the Board of Directors in September 2001. She was appointed chair of the Steelcase Foundation Board upon her leaving the post of executive director of the Steelcase Foundation in October 1996.

Kate was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the National Council on Disability in 1994 and was reconfirmed by the U.S. Senate in 1996 and served until 2003. For eight of her nine years on the council, she served as its vice chair. Kate currently serves as a board member for a number of organizations, including Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service and the Grand Rapids Symphony. She also serves as a member of the board of the Mary and Robert Pew Public Education Fund, a foundation established by her parents that addresses public education in Palm Beach County, Florida. She serves as co-chair of First Steps Early Childhood Commission and was appointed by Gov. Granholm to an eight-year term as a member of the Board of Grand Valley State University in 2004. Kate holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from Michigan State University and a bachelor of arts degree from Aquinas College.

Judging

The contestants will have three private judging sessions with the panel of judges during the week. On Friday evening, each state titleholder will present a two minute speech. The speeches are also judged. During the Saturday Crowning Gala the five contestants with the highest scores will give their speech again and answer two on stage questions. After the scores are tallied the runner-ups will be announced followed by the new Ms. Wheelchair America 2011.

Workshops

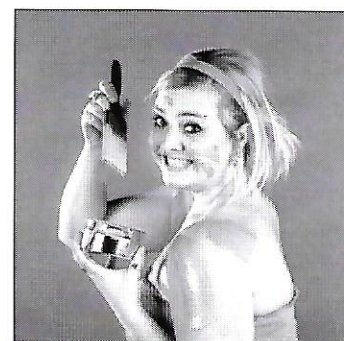
During the week the contestants will take part in many workshops. These workshops are designed to provide information on topics that will help each state titleholder develop various skills that are need to be an effective advocate, while building relationships with each other. Some of the topics are: Defining...Health, Defining...Fun, Defining...Mental Toughness, Defining...Media, Defining...Public Speaking, Defining...Service Dogs, Defining...the ADA and Defining...A year as MWA. Thanks to the many individuals that came and helped educate the contestants during the week.

Entertainment

Entertainment this week will provided by a variety of special guests, local performers and the Greater Grand Rapids Community. Grand Rapids is known for the many celebrations they have during the entire year, this week the contestants will join Swing Dancing and Blues on the Mall. The screening of "Defining Beauty" during the Ms. Wheelchair America will prove to be special. The crowning gala performers will include Amanda Johnson and David Martin, as well as, the Girls Choral Academy.

Photography

Lisa Hoogerwerf of Lisa Kathryn Photography is an artist, a dreamer, a lover of people, a creator, a caregiver, and a finder of beauty in everything. She is a graduate of the nursing program at Hope College and also attended Harrington College of Design in Chicago for digital photography. She resides in Holland MI with her two dogs and enjoys chocolate, massages, and traveling. Lisa's passion is photography! She specializes in portrait photography including weddings, seniors, newborns, fashion, events,



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where you are.**

Theodore Roosevelt

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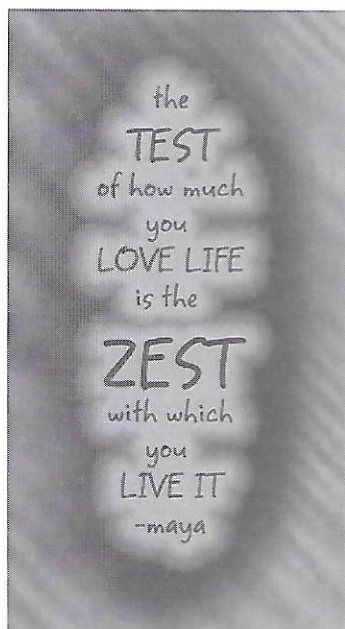
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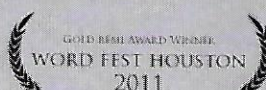
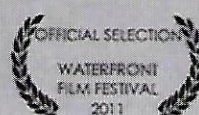
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friends and volunteers that have helped
make this event possible! There are so
many this book could be filled with all of
your names. You know who you
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Shelly Loose, President and State Coordinator

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Organize fun and challenging social events for our members in your community. Bring live streaming video into the All American Roll Models website that highlights the successes and achievements of our members.

Be a strong advocate in your community and help others with physical disabilities. Get connected with local rehabilitation centers, hospitals and support groups and become a valuable resource for those seeking help.

Contact us at Allamericanrollmodels.com and get signed up Today!!!



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Amanda!

Love,
The Ms. Wheelchair Texas Foundation

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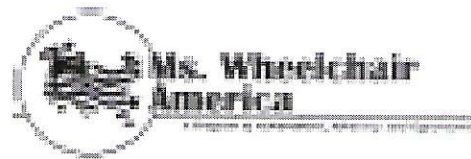


All of Kentucky wishes you well.

Ms. Wheelchair



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Congratulations and Much Love to Margaret Long!
2011 Ms. Ohio Wheelchair



~~~~~

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Best wishes to Sharina and the other state titleholders competing in the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant!



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"If God be for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31"

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Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2011



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Miss 2010



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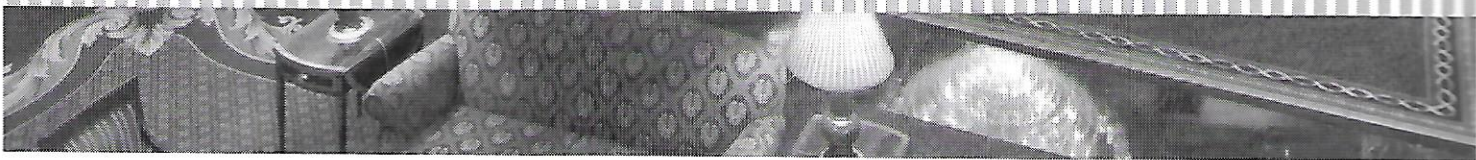


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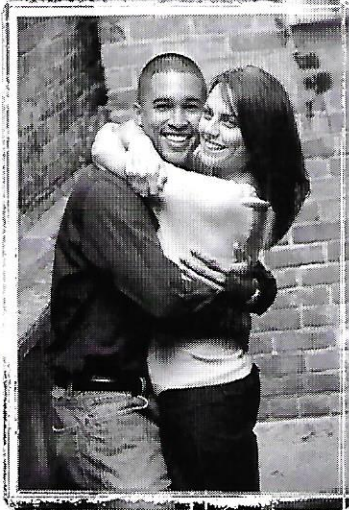
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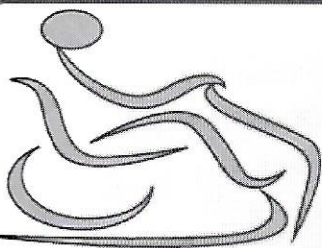
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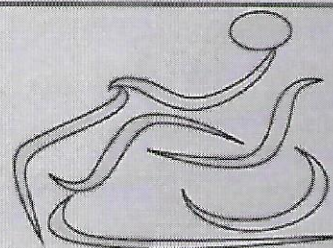
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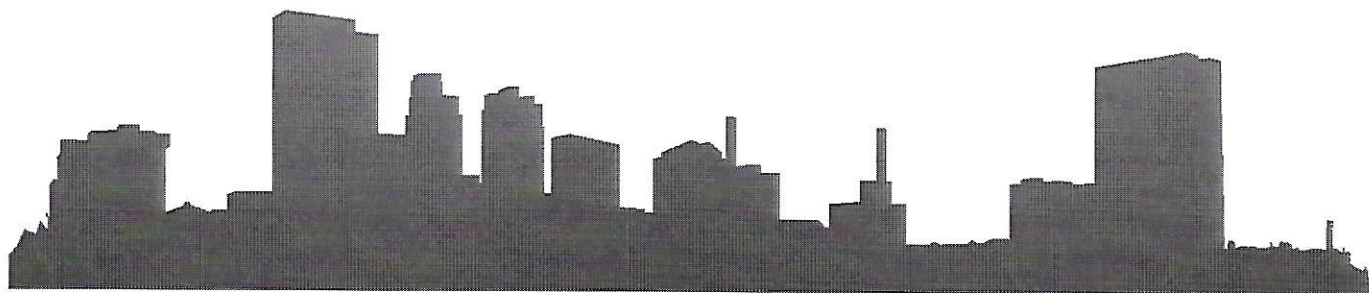
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THE LAW OFFICES OF Owen Dunn Jr.

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Ever have problems with accommodations at a hotel?

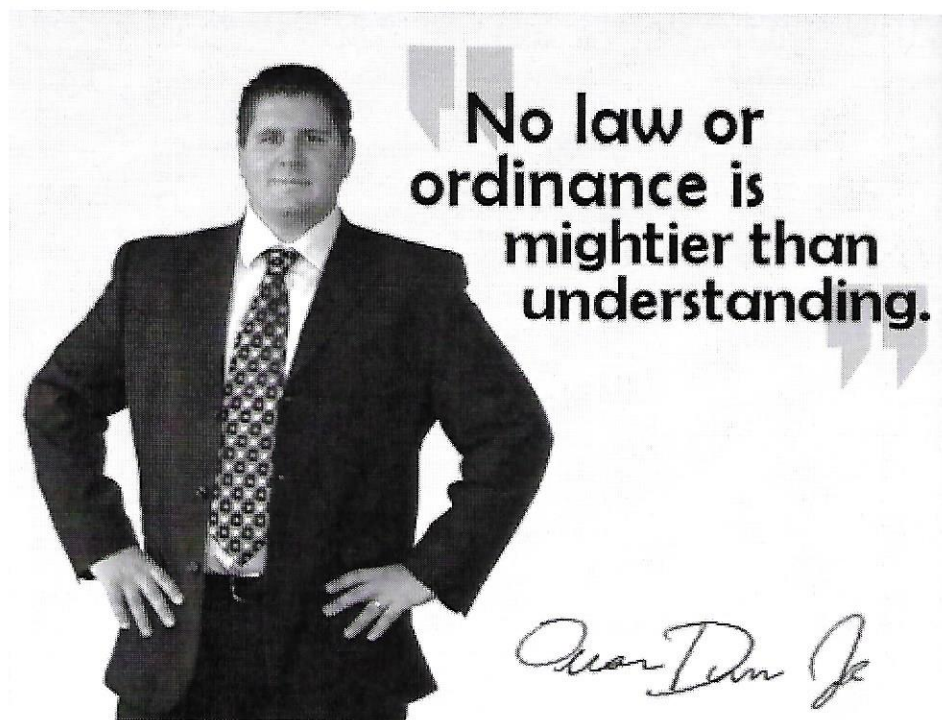
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Contact Owen Dunn!

Owen's mother was stricken with polio as a child and her disability would shape his career path as an Attorney focused primarily on Americans with Disabilities Act enforcement. "I am a dedicated disability advocate and believe strongly that it is a matter of civil rights and basic principals of equality that barriers to accessibility are removed, consistent with the requirements of the ADA, from all places of public accommodation. Places of public accommodation include a wide range of entities, such as restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, retail stores, museums, libraries, parks, private schools, and day care centers."

Owen has served as a judge for the Ms. Wheelchair Ohio Program.



The Law Offices of Owen Dunn supports Ms. Wheelchair Michigan!

Contact Owen through his website at www.OwenDunnLaw.com

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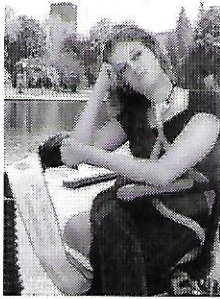
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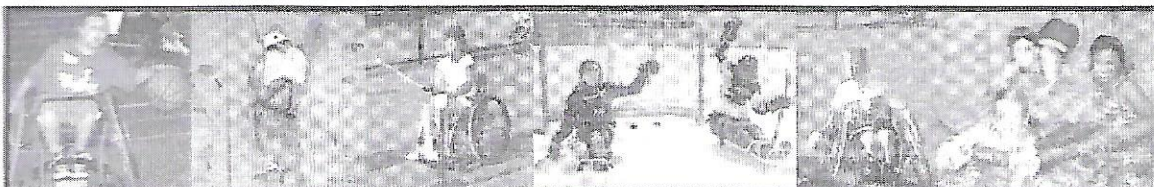
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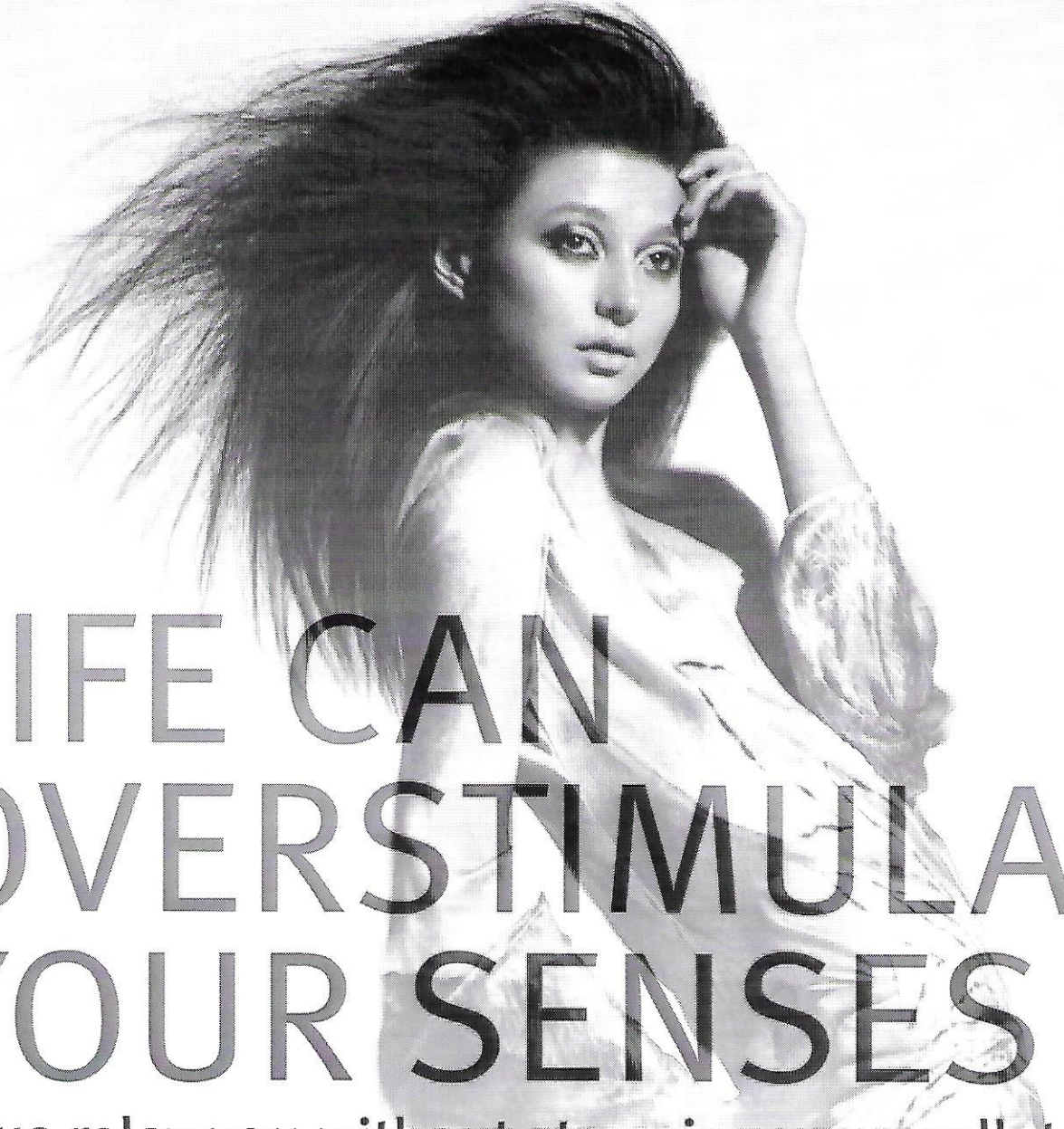
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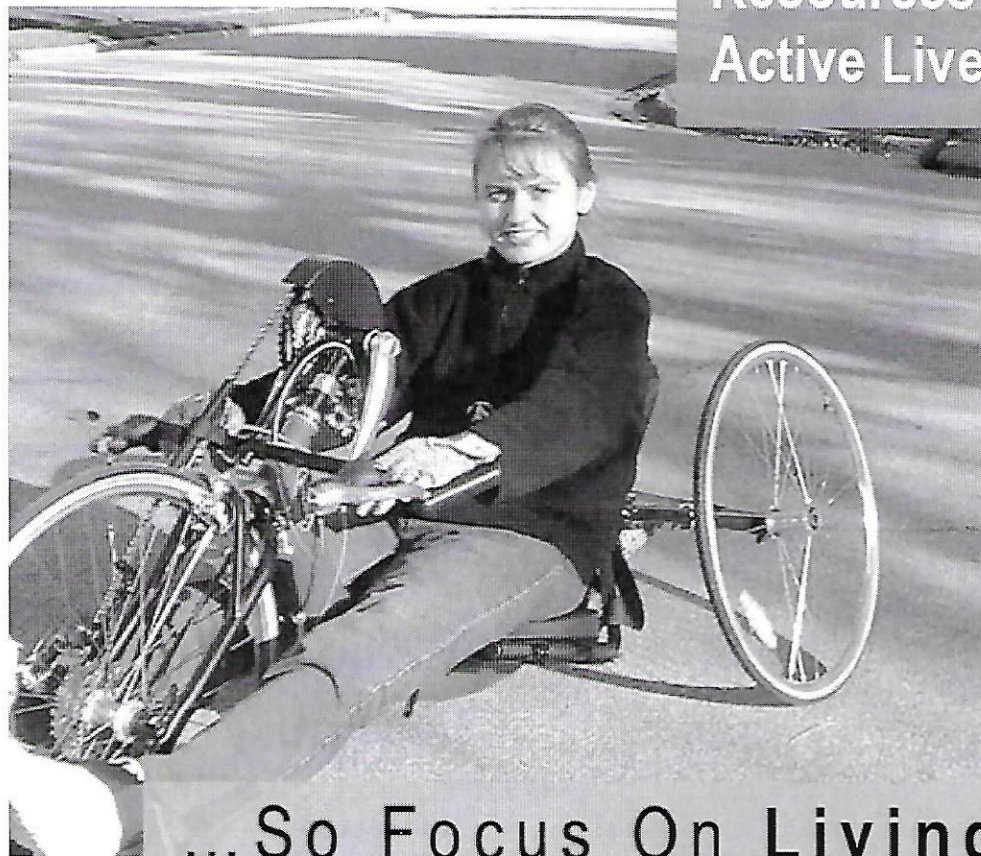


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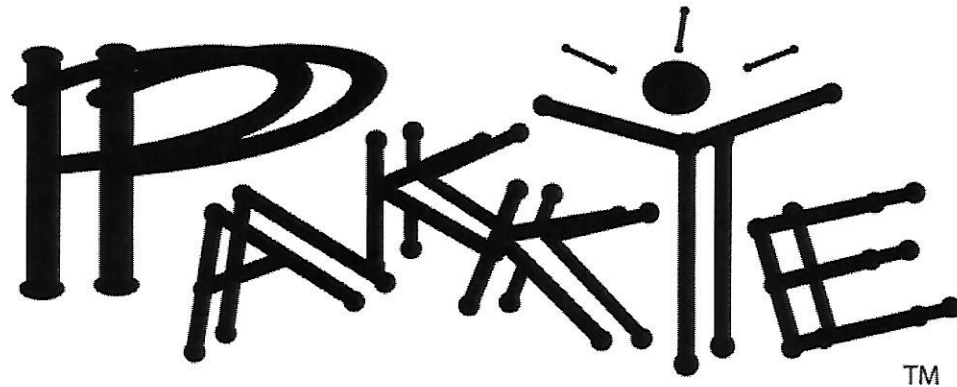


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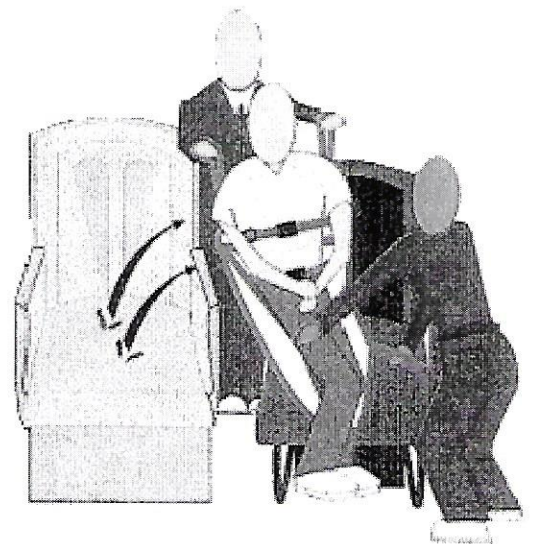


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**“I’m delighted that I can carry a message.
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to help others and if you can you ought to do it.”**

– Betty Ford

“The only disability in life is a bad attitude.”

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1 Timothy 4:12b

Others First!

Philippians 2:3-4

Don't Give up!

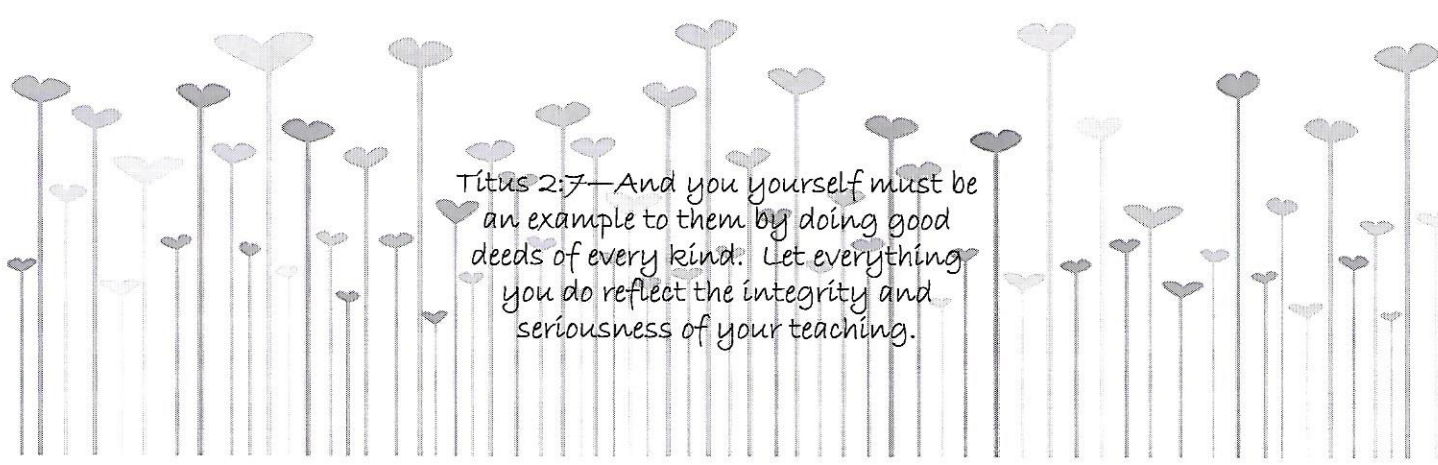
Galatians 6:9

In **E**verything Give Thanks!

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Lift Each Other up!

Hebrews 10:24

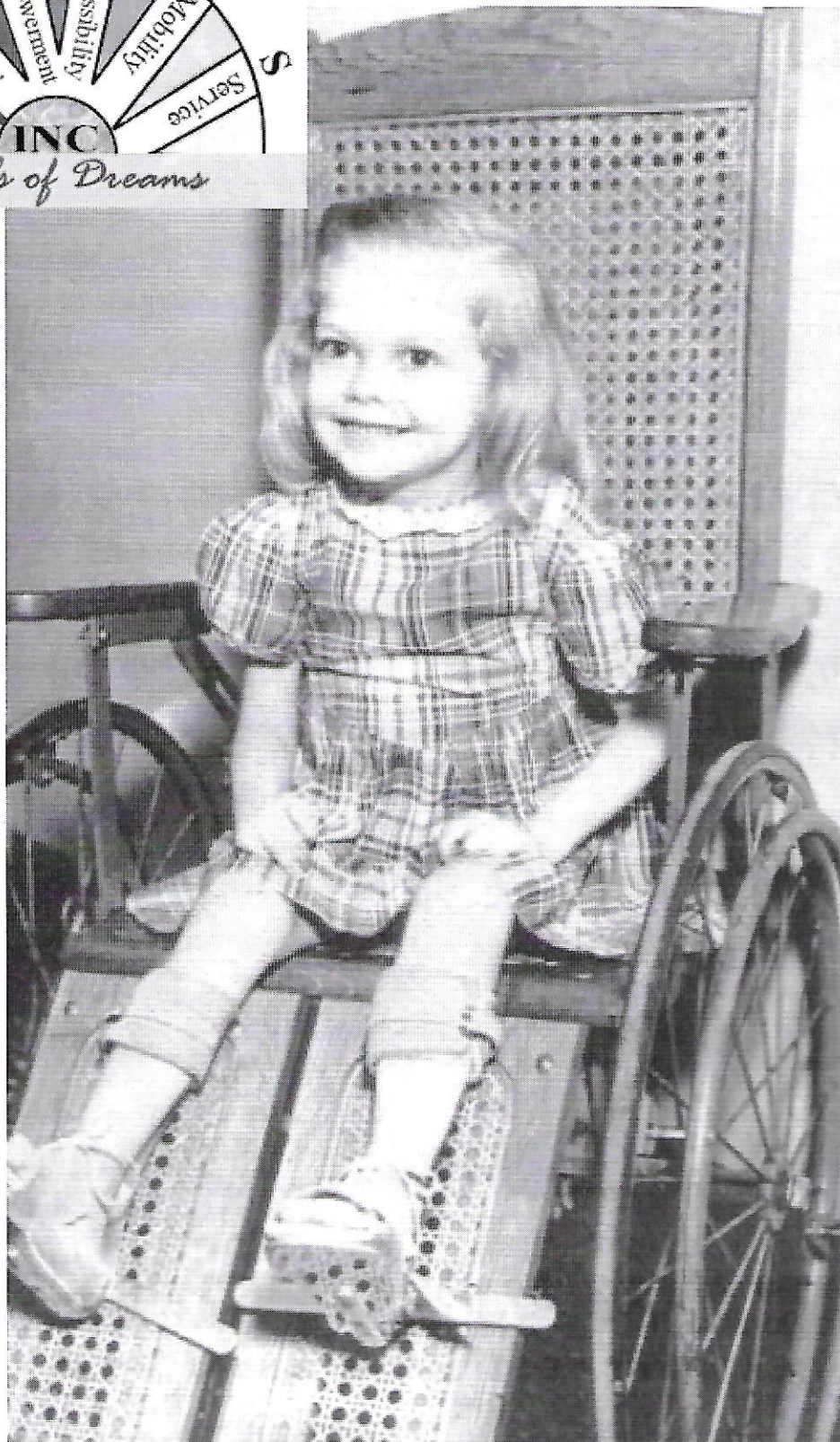


Titus 2:7—And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good deeds of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.

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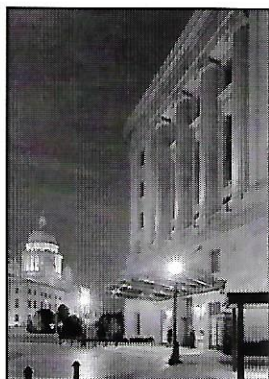
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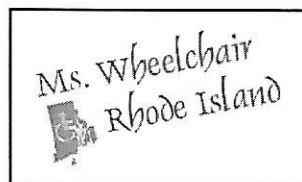
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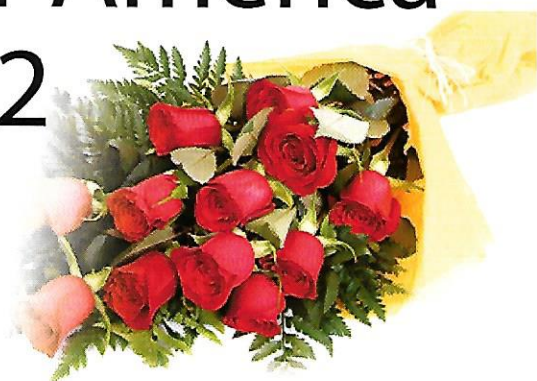
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