

presented by Mary Free Bed Guild

AUGUST 18-24, 2025 | GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Empowering Women of Achievement Through Leadership, Advocacy & Education



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Ms. Wheelchair America 2025 Tamara Blackwell



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August 23, 2025

Dear Friends of Ms. Wheelchair America,

The day is finally here and I couldn't be more thrilled! Tonight, we crown our next Ms. Wheelchair America 2026! This is the moment we've all been waiting for a celebration of courage, advocacy, and unstoppable determination. Every single one of our incredible state titleholders is more than worthy of wearing the crown. They've each spent the last couple of months raising awareness, breaking down barriers, and representing their states with strength, pride, and purpose. Their commitment to advocating for people living with disabilities across the nation is nothing short of empowering.

Let's be honest just getting to Michigan was no small task! Traveling with a disability can be incredibly complex and exhausting, but these women pushed through every challenge, showed up, and brought their full selves to this life-changing experience. And now, here they are ready to shine on one of the most meaningful stages in the country.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our amazing executive leadership team. Your heart, your vision, and your endless hours of preparation have made this spectacular weeklong competition not just possible but unforgettable. You are the magic behind the scenes, and this organization thrives because of your passion and dedication.

To our state host, Shelly—thank you for welcoming us back to the beautiful Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This venue feels like home to Ms. Wheelchair America, and your commitment to hosting us for the past couple of years, even through personal challenges, reminds us of the deep love and legacy that lives within this organization. We are forever grateful.

We also extend our sincerest thanks to our incredible sponsors, whose generosity and belief in our mission help make all of this possible. Your support fuels the transformation that happens here when women with disabilities are empowered to lead, speak out, and motivate others to do the same. Your partnership doesn't just support an event; it uplifts a movement. Thank you for investing in our titleholders and in a future where disability leadership is seen, heard, and celebrated.

And to the family members, friends, companions, and supporters of our titleholders, thank you. Thank you for being their rock. Your belief in their power and potential has helped shape the bold, brilliant advocates we see before us today. None of this would be possible without you.

Together, we are witnessing greatness. We are amplifying voices. And we are building a future where disability is not a barrier, but a powerful platform for leadership, advocacy, and change.

With so much love and excitement,

Mary Zendejas Mary Zendejas

President Ms. Wheelchair America



DAVID LAGRAND MAYOR

Dear Guests:

Welcome to Grand Rapids - we are delighted to host Ms. Wheelchair America here in our city.

While you no doubt have a full agenda, I do hope you will take time to explore Grand Rapids' downtown and its dynamic neighborhoods. From a walkable city center with restaurants, shops, and museums, to endless outdoor options such as golfing, fishing, hiking and biking, Grand Rapids is a great place to both live and visit – and we're so glad you're here.

If you're an art connoisseur, a walk downtown will take you by our Robert Indiana *LOVE* sculpture, and Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* (more commonly referred to as "*The Calder*") which is the first public work of art funded in part by the National Endowment of the Arts. Or if you need a break from the bustle of downtown, look no farther than one of our 75 City-owned parks, or take a stroll on a trail alongside the Grand River. And of course, as we are referred to as "Beer City USA," a trip to Grand Rapids would not be complete without a stop at one of our many breweries that are located downtown and throughout our neighborhoods.

And that's not all we're known for – our metropolitan area is a knowledge center that boasts over a dozen colleges and universities. Plus, human medicine, medical education and health research make up our most rapidly growing economic sector – just take a walk up our Medical Mile to see this growth for yourself.

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 as a 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 Midsized 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 dynamic neighborhoods – will inspire you. You will not find another city that matches our amenities and beautiful community spirit. Add to that the West Michigan friendliness of those who live and work here, and you will feel right at home.

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,

David LaGrand

Mayor, City of Grand Rapids



Dear Contestants, Families, and Supporters, Welcome to the 2025 Ms. Wheelchair America Competition, proudly sponsored by the Mary Free Bed Guild.

We are delighted to welcome you to this extraordinary celebration of advocacy, achievement, and empowerment. Your presence here reflects not only your personal strength and resilience, but also your unwavering commitment to creating meaningful change in your communities and beyond.

Ms. Wheelchair America program is so much more than a competition—it is a powerful platform to elevate voices, share impactful stories, and champion disability advocacy on a national stage. Each of you brings a unique journey and perspective, and together, you represent a vibrant and inspiring movement of leadership and inclusion.

Over the course of this exciting week, you'll have the opportunity to form lasting connections, participate in thoughtful dialogue, and share your passions and purpose. We encourage you to embrace every moment—from the spotlight to the quiet conversations—and know that your advocacy leaves a lasting impact.

As you embark on this empowering experience, please know that the Mary Free Bed Guild, along with everyone involved in this event, stands behind you with deep admiration and support. You are each a powerful reminder that leadership, advocacy, and purpose transcend barriers.

We are honored to celebrate your accomplishments and look forward to the joy, strength, and inspiration you will bring to this year's event. Best of luck to each of you—may the 2025 Ms. Wheelchair America competition be an unforgettable chapter in your journey.

Mar Koul

With warmest regards,

Mary Beth Brown & Maureen Kozel Mary Free Bed Guild Co-Presidents



A Message from the President of Experience Grand Rapids

Dear Ms. Wheelchair America, 2025 Annual National Pageant Attendee:

Welcome to our vibrant destination that we are confident will captivate and delight you! Grand Rapids is America's Best Beer City (USA Today, 2024) and one of 16 Midsize Cities You Don't Want to Miss (TravelAwaits, 2023).

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

- Five premier museums: The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids African American Museum & Archives, Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids Public Museum, and the Grand Rapids Children's Museum.
- 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.

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!

Douglas Small
President & Chief Experience Officer

Know Before You Go - Grand Rapids

Get ready for your conference in Grand Rapids with four tips for great deals, things to do and ways to get around. See you soon!





1. Attendee Exclusives

Enjoy special restaurant and attraction discounts. Start by scanning the QR code below. ExperienceGR.com/Exclusives





2. Great Food

Food City & a Top 20 U.S. Foodie City.

ExperienceGR.com/Food



Explore 200+ restaurants, shops & entertainment venues on foot or FREE bus. ExperienceGR.com/ Downtown-Map





3. Downtown





4. Free DASH Bus

Look for the pink DASH bus as it makes its way around downtown.

ExperienceGR.com/DASH







SPEECH NIGHT **AUGUST 22, 2025**



Welcome and Introductions



Entertainment



MWA 2026 Platform Speeches

CROWNING NIGHT AUGUST 23, 2025



National Anthem



Welcome and Introductions



Honor Roll Call of State Titleholders



Announcement of Top 5



Top 5 Questions



Ms. Wheelchair America 2026, Tamara Blackwell



Entertainment



Awards and Recognition



Crowning of Ms. Wheelchair America 2026



HISTORY

Ms. Wheelchair America was founded in 1972 by Dr. Phillip K. Wood, a physician from Columbus, Ohio. It serves to promote the achievements and needs of individuals with mobility impairments and to recognize the accomplishments of women who use wheelchairs. The organization consists of State Coordinators and Titleholders. State programs are staffed and coordinated by dedicated volunteers who aim to increase public awareness, ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to lead productive and meaningful lives.

MISSION

The mission of Ms. Wheelchair America is to provide an opportunity for women who use wheelchairs to achieve their goals and advocate for the more than 64 million Americans living with disabilities. Ms. Wheelchair America focuses on advocacy, achievement, communication, and presentation to select the most accomplished and articulate spokeswoman for individuals with disabilities. The chosen representative must effectively communicate the needs and accomplishments of her community to the general public, the business sector, and legislature.

Empowering Women of Achievement THROUGH

Leadership, Advocacy, and Educaton

The Ms. Wheelchair America Executive Team comprises a dynamic group of women who exemplify leadership, advocacy, and resilience. Each member brings a unique perspective and a shared commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities.

Together, this Executive Team leads Ms. Wheelchair America with a shared vision of promoting equity, accessibility, and empowerment for individuals with disabilities across the nation.

Ms. Wheelchair America President Mary Zendejas



Mary Zendejas is an inspiring figure who embodies resilience and determination. Born in Mexico and diagnosed with polio at just eight months old, she has faced challenges head-on. Her parents sought better healthcare opportunities, which brought the family to the United States. Growing up, Mary was surrounded by strong family values and the belief that every hurdle could be turned into a chance for growth.

With the encouragement of her loved ones, Mary became the first of her nine siblings to graduate from high school and college. These achievements paved the way for a life dedicated to public service and breaking down barriers.

In 2012, Mary was crowned Ms. Wheelchair California, an honor that ignited her passion for advocating for people with disabilities. She quickly became an essential part of Ms. Wheelchair America, a respected organization. She has

held various leadership positions throughout her journey, including member-at-large, secretary, and vice president. Today, she proudly serves as president, using her platform to amplify voices within the disability community and create positive change.

In a groundbreaking moment, Mary became the first Latina wheelchair user elected to public office in the U.S. In her fifth year, she represents the First District of Long Beach, a vibrant area with nearly half a million residents. Her district, which includes downtown Long Beach, is known for being both challenging and rewarding, serving as the city's economic engine and cultural heart.

With her personal journey and passion for advocacy, Mary is dedicated to promoting equity and accessibility for everyone. She is committed to empowering others and creating a more inclusive world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

ONCE A QUEEN ALWAYS A QUEEN

-Mary Zendejas

Ms. Wheelchair America Executive Director Rebecca Sentell



Born with Spina Bifida, Rebecca proudly navigates the world in her wheelchair and happily calls herself a #ChairChick. As a Rehabilitation Specialist III for the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, Rebecca makes a real difference in people's daily lives.

In 2017, she had the incredible honor of being crowned Ms. Wheelchair Mississippi. As a titleholder, she championed her platform, "All About the Journey," helping to educate healthcare professionals on making their facilities more welcoming and accessible for everyone, regardless of their abilities.

After her reign, Rebecca became the Ms. Wheelchair America State Coordinator for Mississippi. Since 2021, Rebecca has been a member of the Ms. Wheelchair America Executive Team. Recently, she began serving as the Executive Director of Ms. Wheelchair America!

Rebecca earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology in 2010 and later completed her Master of Science in Addiction Counseling from Mississippi College.

She lives in Madison, MS., with her wonderful husband, Leland and their adorable dogs, Copper Ed & Stormy Grace. When she's not working, Rebecca attends church or creates treasured memories with family and friends. She is passionate about positively impacting the disabled community!

Ms. Wheelchair America Vice President Kathy Ford

Kathy is a wonderful advocate living with Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva, proudly representing the Garden State! She first got involved with Ms. Wheelchair America in 2018 when she held the title of Ms. Wheelchair New Jersey as an independent delegate. Now, she's the state coordinator for New Jersey, positively impacting her community.

Kathy loves hanging out with her husband, Chuck, in her free time and their 19 pets! She's also passionate about cleaning up litter in her local area and enjoys well-deserved relaxation.



Ms. Wheelchair America Secretary Angela Piazza



Angela was proud to be named Ms.Wheelchair California in 2019. After serving her title, she became the state coordinator for the Ms. Wheelchair California Leadership Institute.

Living in beautiful Redwood City, CA—just a 30-mile drive from San Francisco—Angela has a vibrant life. She was born with cerebral palsy and is the proud mom of two wonderful adult children. Angela attended Sacramento State University, earning a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and a minor in Communications. These days, she is making a difference as an Independent Living Coach with Family Housing and Adult Resource.

Ms. Wheelchair America Treasurer Kathleen Barajas

Kathleen is a Disability Rights Advocate, an accountant, and the President and Founder of Project AIR. She has an impressive educational background, including an Associate of Arts in Business Administration, another in Media Arts, a Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems, and an Advanced Certificate in Accounting. Born with cerebral palsy, Kathleen has passionately advocated for disability rights and has become a well-respected figure in the disability community.

She has rolled up her sleeves and actively participated in various committees, including LAX's Disability Access and Accommodation Advisory Committee and the Department of Rehabilitation's Assistive Technology Advisory Committee. For Californians for Disability Rights has served as President, Newsletter Editor, and Web Mistress.



In 2020 Kathleen was appointed to the State Independent Living Council, where she was the Vice-Chair of Communication and Collaboration and State Plan for Independent Living Committees. She's currently the Chair of Los Angeles Metro's Accessibility Advisory Committee and serves as Secretary for Disability Rights California. She's also the Vice President and Treasurer of the Ms. Wheelchair California Leadership Institute!

Kathleen has many awards, including the Access Award from the LA County Commission on Disability and a Community Service Award from the Disabled Resource Center in Long Beach. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award during the Ms. Wheelchair America 2017 Pageant!

Kathleen is committed to advocacy for individuals with significant disabilities, especially those who use augmentative communication and need long-term support.

Ms. Wheelchair America Member-At-Large Shameka Andrews



Shameka Andrews is a passionate community outreach coordinator at the Self Advocacy Association of NYS and the founder of Disability Empowerment Consulting. She loves connecting with others through workshops on self-care, self-advocacy, and disability awareness.

In 2006, she celebrated a special achievement by being crowned Ms. Wheelchair New York. Since 2013, she has been leading the program with enthusiasm.

In 2017, she took on the exciting challenge of writing her first children's book, "Butterfly on Wheels." Shameka's commitment to empowering others and sharing her knowledge shines through in everything she does!

Ms. Wheelchair America Member-At-Large Kristi Walden

Kristi hails from the charming town of Six Mile, South Carolina. She had the incredible honor of being crowned Ms. Wheelchair South Carolina 2023! Living with a brittle bone disease known as osteogenesis imperfecta (OI), Kristi has experienced over 500 broken bones, but that hasn't held her back. She's a proud mom to four wonderful kids, who are her greatest joy.

One of Kristi's biggest passions is making schools accessible for all children, regardless of their disabilities. She's currently the Vice President of the Ms. Wheelchair South Carolina state competition and is thrilled to support her fellow contestants as they create platforms centered around their passions. Kristi's enthusiasm and dedication truly shine through!



MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA LEADERSHIP 2024 - 2025 STATE COORDINATORS

The Ms. Wheelchair America (MWA) state coordinators are the backbone of a transformative movement that empowers women with disabilities to become advocates, leaders, and changemakers within their communities. These dedicated volunteers, many of whom are former titleholders themselves, play a pivotal role in fostering leadership, promoting disability awareness, and building inclusive platforms across the nation.

Their dedication ensures that the MWA's mission—to celebrate the achievements and advocacy of women who use wheelchairs—continues to thrive and expand across the United States.























Missouri









MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA LEADERSHIP

2024 - 2025 STATE COORDINATORS











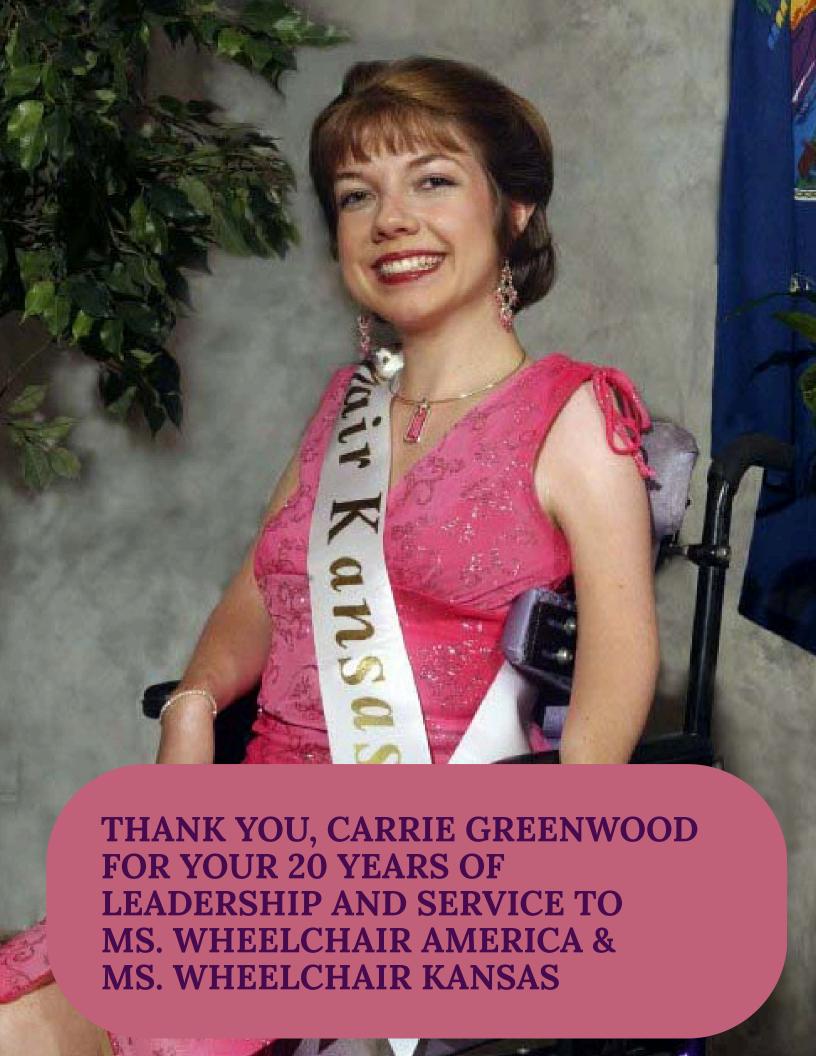






Combined, our State Coordinators have volunteered more than 100 years of passionate advocacy work for their state programs. This is a true testament to their dedication and commitment to the mission of Ms. Wheelchair America!

Ms. Wheelchair America extends heartfelt gratitude to our State Coordinators for their dedication and tireless efforts on their state programs throughout the year!!





Remembering DENISE DINOTO

October 1973 - June 2025



In 2018, Denise posted this on her blog. It gives a glimpse of what Ms. Wheelchair America.

Facebook showed me this photo this morning and reminded me that seven years ago, my best friend and I were having fun in Grand Rapids, Michigan, during the week of the 2011 Ms. Wheelchair America competition. It was a timely reminder, since the contestants are gathered in Grand Rapids again right now. They are getting ready for the second day of judging as I type this.

MWA has been a part of my life since I was Ms. Wheelchair NY 2001. As a state titleholder seventeen years ago, I could not predict all the ways MWA would impact my life. I made some of my best friends at my first national pageant as a participant in MWA. Maintaining a state program; mentoring state titleholders; serving on the MWA Board of Directors; traveling to other state pageants – all adventures gained by my volunteer involvement and things that likely would not have happened if I had been crowned Ms. Wheelchair America (I was first runner-up).

Most important to me is the peer support group I have cultivated through my involvement with MWA. In my opinion, this is the best aspect of the MWA organization. At any moment, I know I can reach out to women who have experiences similar to mine. They are creative, resourceful, smart, and generous. If I have a probilem or quandary, they will have insight and will offer it freely. If I need support or understanding, they are empathetic and encouraging. This sisterhood is a valuable source of energy for me when I am feeling bogged down by the continual need to advocate for access in a world which is often not designed for our needs.

This year's titleholders are waking up to a new day. It is mid-week so they still have energy. I hope they realize they are participating in a week which will change them. To all of them, I say best of luck and enjoy this opportunity. This week is not about who goes home with the crown on Sunday. It's about who you connect with on the way and how you put that into practice in your everyday life when you go back home to your individual states.

MS. WHEELCHAIR NEW YORK 2001

Denise DiNoto was an extraordinary advocate whose legacy will live on through her advocacy within the many organizations she worked with and the individuals that had the privilege of knowing her.

Ms. Wheelchair America was blessed by Denise's passion and drive to make positive changes for people with disabilities. Denise was Ms. Wheelchair New York 2001, she built the current New York program. She serve as the State Coordinator and held various positions on the National Board of Directors for many years. Her dedication and example lives on with each state titleholder she encouraged.



Ms. Wheelchair America Creed

As Ms. Wheelchair America, I promise...

- 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.

























MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA NATIONAL TITLEHOLDERS

1973 - Patricia Nevins of Michigan

1974 - Caryl Jane Robinson of Texas

1975 - Diana Kenderian of New Jersey

1976 - Dixie Lee Etheridge of Mississippi

1977 - Beverly Chapman of Florida

1978 - Margie Sloan of Georgia

1979 - Marge Chmielewski of Michigan

1980 - Nancy Pudvin of Georgia

1981 - Vivienne Thompson of Massachusetts

1982 - Marian Schooling-Vessels of Maryland

1983 - Barbara Crozier of Alabama

1984 - Lori Cottam of Utah

1985 - Gaynell Colburn of Maryland

1986 - Donna Cline of Nevada

1987 - Sandra Honbaier of North Carolina

1988 - Peggy Simpson of Alabama

1989 - Jewell Massey of Georgia

1990 - Kathy Garcia-Farnsworth of Utah

1991 – Mercedes Rodriguez-Fowler of Florida

1992 - Deanna Greene-VanHook of Texas

1993 - Kim Mensi of Alabama

1994 - Dawn Blodgett of California

1995 - Wendy Petzold of Wisconsin

1996 - Amy Baxter-Ley of Texas

1997 - Elaine Stefanowicz of Washington

998 - Terri Cecil of Kentucky

1999 - Christina Gilmore of Wisconsin

2000 - Tracy Charlton-O'Connor of South Dakota

2001 - Nicki Ard of South Carolina

2002 - Candy Marsh of Colorado

2003 - Catherine Gugala of Wisconsin

2004 - Cinda Hughes of Oklahoma

2005 - Juliette Rizzo of Maryland

2006 - Kristen Connors of Rhode Island

2007 - Autumn Grant of Massachusetts

2008 - Kristen McCosh of Massachusetts

2009 - Michelle Colvard of Texas

2010 - Erika Bogan of North Carolina

2011 - Alexandra McArthur of North Carolina

2012 - Josie Badger of Pennsylvania

2013 - Mariah Kilbourne of Texas

2015 - Samantha Schroth of Wisconsin

2016 - Allette Coble-Temple of California

2017 - Eliza McIntosh-Stauffer of Utah

2018 - Sheri Melander-Smith of Minneosta

2019 - Karen Roy of Louisiana

2020 - 2021 - Hilary Meuhlenberger of Missouri

2022 - Christina Burke of California

2023 - Ali Ingersol of North Carolina

2024 - Chandra Smith of Maryland

2025 - Tamara Blackwell of Kansas

















Ms Wheelchair America 2025



Tamara Blackwell

affectionately known as **Tam**, is a 41-year-old powerhouse of purpose, passion, and faith. Originally from **Kansas City, Missouri**, she moved to **Wichita**, **Kansas** at the age of 11 and now resides in **Bel Aire** with her family. She has been married to her high school sweetheart, **Jonathan Blackwell Sr.**, for over 23 years. Together, they are the proud parents of three children — **Jon Jr.**, **Ja-Lynn**, and **Jeremiah** — and three dogs with big names and even bigger personalities: **Winston Theodore**, **Sir Hamilton Steve**, and **Mr. Duke DuBois**.

Tamara is an ambitious and determined woman who lives to change the world in a beautiful way — through spreading the Gospel, sharing inspiration, and encouraging others. In 2010, after studying Early Childhood Education at Walden University and working for three years as a preschool teacher, she founded Tammy's Tots Home Daycare, now in its 14th year. Her daughter Ja'Lynn now manages the day-to-day operations, while Tamara oversees the administrative side of the business.

Her ministry is deeply woven into everything she does. Tamara has served as a **missionary for over a decade** and stepped into the role of **First Lady of New Philadelphia Church of God in Christ** in July 2024. She preaches, teaches, sings in the choir and praise team, and uses every opportunity to share the word of God. She is also a passionate content creator who focuses on **disability education, awareness, and faith-based encouragement**. She is the founder of the

yaGirlTam.com, her blog and resource hub, and ICUGrace.com, a faith-based platform. She also launched two powerful initiatives: Wheels or No Wheels and The FIT Forums, both designed to equip and uplift individuals through advocacy and education.

Tamara wears many hats, but she credits **the grace of God** for carrying her through each role with strength and purpose

Tamara S. Roberts-Blackwell was born visually impaired. Doctors warned her mother early on that Tamara would likely face significant challenges throughout life — particularly in school - and that she would struggle to keep up. But Tamara quickly proved those predictions wrong. Though she did face obstacles, she met each one head-on and excelled, showing from an early age a grit and drive that would define her future.



Around the age of 17, Tamara began to notice that her body wasn't functioning the way it used to. Every day movements — like standing on her tiptoes or climbing stairs — became difficult. She was constantly fatigued, even after completing simple tasks. What followed was a long and exhausting journey through medical tests and doctor visits, lasting over a decade, before finally receiving a diagnosis: **Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy Type 2B**, a rare, progressive neuromuscular disorder. This condition causes muscle weakness

and wasting, particularly in the shoulders, hips, and upper legs, which eventually limits mobility and increases fatigue over time. As her condition progressed, Tamara adapted — first using a cane, then a walker, and ultimately transitioning to using a wheelchair full time in 2020, after a serious fall and a broken foot in 2017 forced her to prioritize her safety. Today, she uses her wheelchair both at home and in the community, navigating the world from a seated position — but never from a place of defeat.

Becoming a woman, wife, and mother living with a progressive disability — while also being a business owner and faith leader — has been a journey filled with both pain and resilience. Tamara openly shares that adjusting to life in a wheelchair wasn't easy. There were tears, there were hard days, and

there were moments of doubt. But through it all, **God's grace remained sufficient.** It is that grace, combined with her unwavering belief in purpose, that gives her the strength to keep moving forward.

Tamara's story is a testament to the truth that there can be purpose woven into the limitations of the body. She hopes that both disabled and non-disabled individuals see disability for what it truly is: **complex**, not simple, but full of possibilities. Her condition is exhausting and ever-changing, but she doesn't want pity. What she asks for is grace, empathy, and above all — **respect**. She wants the world to understand that needing rest doesn't make her lazy, and using mobility aids doesn't diminish her ability to contribute, lead, or inspire.

Her message is clear: "Don't measure me by what you think I can't do. Watch what I've done despite it." Tamara reminds us that ignorance around disability is forgivable — but staying ignorant is not. Through her life and platform, she continues to educate, advocate, and break barriers, so that others might see the humanity and power in every voice with a disability.

Before becoming Ms. Wheelchair Kansas, Tamara was already sharing her world online — creating content that highlighted her life as a disabled woman of faith, a mother, and an advocate. But deep down, she felt the call to do more. After a season of prayer and reflection, she discovered the Ms. Wheelchair Kansas organization. She entered the competition with her platform: "Am I Going to Fit? Navigating Accessibility Through Personal Experience."



The weekend of the competition was filled with connection, empowerment, and purpose. Tamara met other incredible women who used wheelchairs, delivered her platform speech before a panel of judges, and left it all on the stage. When her name was called as the winner, it was a powerful and affirming moment, not just of recognition, but of calling.

"I remember feeling proud," Tamara recalls, "that I was seen as fit to take on the task of advocating for the disability community in Kansas." In that moment, she had what she describes as an "aha moment" with God, not about being a pageant winner, but about understanding the deeper purpose of her voice, her story, and her advocacy.

Tamara's platform focused on the everyday question disabled people silently carry: Am I going to fit? — physically, socially, professionally, spiritually. She knew from personal experience what it felt like to live in a world not designed with her in mind. That truth ignited her mission: to challenge and change the standards of accessibility in both physical and societal spaces.

Her reign as Ms. Wheelchair Kansas opened countless doors. She met with **Governor Laura Kelly**, mayors across Kansas, and key local leaders. Her story and mission were featured on **television**, in **newspapers**, **magazines**, and across **social media**, and she received awards and recognition for her advocacy. But for Tamara, it was never about titles or press.

The most meaningful moments were the ones spent face-to-face with children, inside classrooms, at city meetings, and in community spaces — where she could educate, raise awareness, and help others see the power, worth, and complexity of the disability experience.

It was in those moments — up close and personal — that Tamara felt it all come full circle. "That's when it made sense," she says. "That's when I understood who I am and who God created me to be."

Winning the title of Ms. Wheelchair America 2025 was both humbling and affirming for Tamara S. Roberts-Blackwell. The competition was a week filled with workshops,



advocacy, connection, and joy where women from across the country, all powerful in their own right, came together not just to compete, but to learn from and uplift one another.

Tamara didn't enter the national competition with the mindset that she had to win.

As Ms. Wheelchair America, Tamara's reach became national. She physically traveled the country — from the North to the South, from the East Coast to the West — meeting with communities, working with major organizations, and spreading awareness about The importance of accessibility and inclusion. She helped initiate meaningful conversations about topics such as sidewalk improvements, the installation of inclusive playground equipment, and building infrastructure that accommodates everyone.

Instead, she came with the quiet confidence that she could win — and that she was walking in alignment with her purpose. During interviews and on stage, she remained authentically herself, grounded in her truth and fueled by her mission. When her name was called for the **Top 5**, then the **final 2**, and finally as the **new national titleholder**, it was not a shock, but a sacred, humbling moment of clarity. It confirmed what Tamara already felt in her spirit: she was exactly where **God** wanted her to be, for **such a time as this**.



Her voice was heard through **TV interviews**, **radio spots**, **podcasts**, **magazines**, and **blogs**, both in person and virtually. But for Tamara, the highlight of her reign was never the spotlight — it was **the people**.

She visited **children's hospitals** like Bethany in Oklahoma and the **Ronald McDonald House in Missouri**, bringing joy and hope to children and families facing unimaginable challenges. She **hung wreaths** on the graves of fallen soldiers, stood proudly on **Capitol Hill** shaking hands with lawmakers, danced the night away at **Night to Shine**— the Tim Tebow Foundation's prom event for people with disabilities — and even skied down the snowy peaks of the **Black Hills of South Dakota during Ski for Light.**

Her year was packed with unforgettable moments, but the ones that touched her the most were the simplest: **hugging children**, **high-fiving new friends**, and **seeing smiles light up faces** as she showed up, fully herself — in a crown and sash, yes, but also in compassion, truth, and love.

"This year has been one of the most amazing experiences of my life,"
Tamara says. "It wasn't about being seen. It was about making others feel
seen — and that's exactly what I got to do."



For Tamara S. Roberts-Blackwell, this year has been nothing short of transformational — a **catapult into the journey of a lifetime**, and a divine reminder that she is exactly where God wants her to be. Her reign has confirmed a powerful truth: **with God, the limits are removed,** and shooting for the stars — even from a wheelchair — is not only possible, but purposeful.

This disease is not for nothing," she often says — a profound reflection of her belief that every challenge has meaning, and every obstacle can be turned into a ministry. Her diagnosis is not her identity, but it has become the stepping stone to a greater work.

To the woman who will wear the crown next, Tamara offers this: "Know that it is an honor to hold this title. Carry it with pride, but also with humility and purpose. You represent not just yourself, but millions of people across this country who deserve to be seen, heard, and included. God will carry you through every step — and I'll be here cheering you on, uplifting you, and reminding you that you were chosen for a reason."

Tamara's goal as Ms. Wheelchair America was never about personal glory. It was about **elevating the platform**, **amplifying unheard voices**, and giving people with disabilities the representation they deserve. She wanted able-bodied allies to understand that being part of the change is possible, necessary, and welcomed. And she wanted the disability community to hear her message loud and clear: **We deserve to fit.**"

As she reflects on her reign, Tamara hopes that everyone who reads her story is nspired to leave the world better than they found it — by choosing kindness, showing love, and living out the commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself."



Tamara Blackwell



Ms. Wheelchair Arizona 2025, Latrice Anderson

Latrice lives in Phoenix, Arizona, and works as a Victim Advocate at Arizona Coalition. Believing that God has granted her a second chance, Latrice channels her energy into campaigning for those who have been traumatized by abuse. She studied at Arizona State University. She enjoys spending time with my family and friends and experiencing new adventures. Latrice is a proud advocate for wheelchair users, a role she has embraced since acquiring her disability due to a Spinal Cord Injury. Her platform, Empowerment Beyond Barriers, aims to make domestic violence resources more accessible to the disabled community. By raising awareness about domestic violence and its impact on differently-abled individuals, she believes society can start to dismantle the stigma surrounding these issues. Latrice describes herself as empathetic, resilient, and hopeful.

Ms. Wheelchair California 2025, Aly Corvin
Aly lives in Santa Barbara, California, and is a professional dancer, adaptive athlete, and passionate disability advocate. She pioneered adaptive dance techniques in California's Central Valley and continues to advance inclusive choreography in Santa Barbara. Aly studied dance and photography and is a proud alumnus of the Fresno City College Dance Department. Aly is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she embraces after being born with multiple rare genetic mutations and sustaining a traumatic brain injury at the age of 27. She uses a wheelchair full-time, home except at home. She is committed to normalizing adventure, challenging societal limits, and expanding access across the board. Her platform, Access to Adventure, empowers people with disabilities to pursue bold goals in sports, travel, and creative expression. She believes that integration through access is the future and that everyone's definition of adventure is different. Nobody should be left out simply because they can't get through the door; instead, Aly believes diversity should be celebrated. Aly describes herself as fearless, unrelenting, and a visionary.





Ms. Wheelchair Florida 2025, Schuyler Arakawa

Schuyler lives in Tampa, Florida, and volunteers throughout her community. She received a Bachelor of Arts from Yale University. Schuyler enjoys dancing, reading, and outdoor activities. Schuyler is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she embraces following a traumatic brain injury caused by a falling boulder. This event significantly affected her balance, vision, and speech. Her platform focuses on Unlocking Potential Through Communication. Schuyler describes herself as enthusiastic, hardworking, and passionate.



Ms. Wheelchair Georgia 2025, Dana Lee Harp
Dana Lee resides in Lawrenceville, Georgia, where she volunteers with the United Spinal Association of Georgia Chapter in Atlanta. She is also a member of six advocacy working groups that are part of United Spinal Association's National Advocacy Network. In addition to her advocacy work, she creates natural, handmade products. Dana earned an Associate of Science degree in Applied Sciences and Entrepreneurship, as well as an Associate of General Studies degree, from the Community College of Beaver County in Monaca, Pennsylvania. In 2012, she received the Mother Caregiver of the Year Award from Beaver County, Pennsylvania. Dana enjoys spending quality time with her young adult children and two grandchildren. She is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she embraced after being diagnosed with multiple chronic autoimmune diseases at the age of 20. Her conditions include Rheumatoid Arthritis, Degenerative Disk Disease, Lupus, Fibromyalgia,

Degenerative Joint Disease, and Osteoarthritis, which have led to a spinal cord injury. Dana's mission is to create a supportive community that empowers individuals to believe in themselves, pursue their passions, and embark on their entrepreneurial journeys. As a disability advocate, she is dedicated to supporting those who have faced trauma or significant life changes due to spinal cord injuries and other

disabilities. Dana describes herself as innovative, attentive, and collaborative.

Ms. Wheelchair Iowa 2025, Lisa Campbell
Lisa lives in Tama, Iowa, and spends her free time at Sunny Hill Care Center, where she currently resides. She is a proud graduate of South Tama County High School, where she received her high school diploma. Lisa enjoys diamond art, pen palling, and reading. Lisa is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced since birth when she was diagnosed with Spina Bifida. Her platform is dedicated to enhancing accessibility in theme parks for wheelchair users, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy these experiences. Lisa describes herself as Determined, compassionate, and dedicated.





Ms. Wheelchair Kansas 2025, Autumn Green

Autumn, a resident of Mulvane, KS, is a passionate advocate for accessibility in higher education. She recently earned her Bachelor of Science in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology from the University of Kansas. She is recently married and she enjoys art, reading, and playing video games with loved ones. Autumn is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced after sustaining a complete T3 spinal cord injury in a car accident at age 8. Through her platform, she works to create more inclusive learning environments and inspire others to pursue their goals without barriers. She describes herself as fiery, resilient, and confident.



Ms. Wheelchair Kentucky 2025, Deborah Renee Robbins
Deborah lives in West Liberty, KY. She volunteers at Wells Union Church, local food pantries, and a camp for children with chronic pain, where she crochets stuffed animals for these children. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education (with honors) and a Master of Arts in Educational Technology, both from Morehead State University. Deborah enjoys painting, crocheting/knitting, and playing the guitar. Deborah is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced since she was 15 years old when she was diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome. Her platform focuses on Improving Accessibility and Normalizing Wheelchair Usage. She is resilient, dependable, and hardworking.

Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana 2025, Holly Sloat

Holly lives in Denham Springs, Louisiana, and actively volunteers in her community. She holds an associate's degree in auto collision. She is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in Art and Digital Media, with a focus on Art and Technology, at Louisiana State University. In her free time, Holly enjoys adaptive water skiing, photography, cruising in her car, and creating art. Since her diagnosis with a spinal cord injury after a serious car ccident in 2019, she has become a proud advocate for people with disabilities. Her advocacy platform emphasizes the importance of accessible transportation and a education for everyone. Holly describes herself as creative, resilient, and empathetic





Ms. Wheelchair Maryland 2025 Carla Cobbs
Carla was born and raised in Baltimore, MD, and currently resides in Glen Burnie, MD. Her family background includes African American and Atlantic Creole. Carla graduated from the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy. She now works as a pharmacist, educating the public about medications and the healthcare system. In her free time, Carla enjoys attending festivals, listening to music, and visiting wineries. Carla is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced since birth when she was born with Arthrogryposis, which affects all limbs, thus requiring her to utilize a power wheelchair for mobility. She was inspired to write her book titled Coping and Thriving with a Chronic Condition. This motivation led her to create her platform, Inclusive Education (Outside of the Classroom): No Mind Left Behind. Her platform addresses the inaccessibility of education for individuals, focusing on community resources that promote the independence of people with disabilities. It also emphasizes employment and leisure opportunities within the disabled community. Carla describes herself as courageous, empathetic, and innovative.



Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2025, Rynita McGuire
Rynita lives in Kalamazoo, MI. She serves as a fine arts professor at both Kendall College of Art and Design and Kalamazoo Valley Community College, making her the first wheelchair-using professor to teach at both institutions. Rynita earned her MFA from Kendall College of Art and Design and holds multiple degrees in art and design. Rynita is not only an artist and designer but also a dedicated mother and electronic music DJ, known as DJ Short-e. Despite facing incredibly challenging circumstances, she has always risen to every challenge, working hard to improve her life. Rynita is a proud advocate disabilities, a role she has embraced since birthfor people with when she was born with Arthrogryposis, a rare disability that limits the range of motion in her arms and legs. Rynita taught herself to perform most tasks using her mouth, including drawing, painting, and DJing. She is the only professional DJ in the world who can spin records with her mouth, consistently proving her doubters wrong since birth. Her platform focuses on educating, empowering, and encouraging people with disabilities to believe in themselves and strive for their dreams. Rynita describes herself as resilient, talented, and driven.

Ms. Wheelchair Mississippi 2025, Kimberly Butler

Kimberly lives in Petal, Mississippi, and works at Butler Cultivation and Improvise Ability. She volunteers at United Spinal Association and the Mississippi Paralysis Association. She received a Bachelor of Science from The University of Southern Mississippi and a Master's of Science Degree in Counseling Psychology from William Carey University. Kimberly enjoys cooking, traveling, and outdoor activities i.e. gardening. Kimberly is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she embraces following a SCI due to a vehicle accident in 1992; T5-T6 Complete Spinal Cord Injury; Paraplegia. Her platform focuses on Universal Design: Creating Equitable and Accessible Solutions for All. Kimberly describes herself as resilient, innovative, and empowering.



If You Can't Stand Up STAND OUT

-Angela Rockwood



Ms. Wheelchair New Jersey 2025, Marianne Middlebrook
Marianne lives in New Providence, New Jersey, and works as a psychologist at Summit Psychological Services, a local private psychotherapy practice. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Psychology from Drew University, a Master's degree in Social Work from Columbia University, and a Doctorate in counseling psychology from Saint Elizabeth University. She enjoys frequenting new coffee shops and restaurants, getting her nails done, and spending time outdoors in the warm weather. Marianne is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced since being diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy at 11 months. Her platform focuses on the importance Spinal Muscular Atrophy at 11 months. Her platform focuses on the importance of quality mental health care for the disability community. Marianne describes

Ms. Wheelchair New York 2025, Latavia Sturdivant
Latavia resides in Yonkers, New York and was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Spastic Quadriplegia at 12 months old. She holds a Master of Science degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Columbia University. Currently, Latavia works as a Licensed Speech-Language Pathologist in both New York and Maine. Additionally, she serves as an Adjunct Professor at Lehman College and a Certified Lead Advocate for the Amputee Coalition. In her free time, Latavia enjoys building Lego models, attending concerts, and playing video games. As a proud advocate for people with disabilities, her platform focuses on breaking down barriers in education and leadership, seeking to challenge and overcome systemic obstacles that hinder equal access to learning and leadership opportunities. Latavia describes herself as empathetic, tenacious, and honest.





Ms. Wheelchair North Dakota 2025, Stacy Lee Johnson
Stacy resides in Grand Forks, North Dakota. She graduated from Vineland High School in Vineland, New Jersey, with a high school diploma. Currently, Stacy works full-time at Altru Cancer Center and part-time at the University of North Dakota during the hockey season. She is also involved with the nonprofit Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association. In her free time, Stacy enjoys shopping, playing with her son, and watching reality TV shows. A proud advocate for people with disabilities, her advocacy journey began after she became a quadriplegic following a motorcycle accident in 2023. Her platform, "There Is Help, Guidance, and Hope," focuses on helping others find resources and peer support as they navigate the challenges of their first years after experiencing a traumatic injury. This initiative aims to establish a mentorship program that provides valuable resources for individuals struggling to manage their disabilities or seeking support. Stacy describes herself as determined, nurturing, and sincere.



Ms. Wheelchair Ohio 2025, Alexandra Martinez
Alexandra was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She earned an Associate of the Arts degree from Cuyahoga Community College. Passionate about dance, she trained with The Dancing Wheels School and Company from childhood through young adulthood. As an adaptive athlete, she is dedicated to working out every day and competes in Boccia with the organization Youth Challenge Sports. Alexandra is also a strong advocate for disability rights, actively organizing Disability Pride events, marching in parades, and speaking out against ableism online. Her journey as an advocate for people with disabilities began 29 years ago when she was born with Spina Bifida. Inspired by her experience with Dancing Wheels, she created her platform, "Dancing Through Disability" which highlights the thorogenic benefits of dense for Through Disability," which highlights the therapeutic benefits of dance for people with disabilities. Alexandra loves sharing her passion for dance on social media. She describes herself as creative, joyful, determined, thoughtful, and loving.

Ms. Wheelchair Oregon 2025, Alice Diehl

Alice lives in Grants Pass, Oregon. She volunteers for the unhoused at Newman's United Methodist church in Grants Pass. At 16, she was awarded an acting scholarship in honor of John Ritter and performers with disabilities. Shortly after, she received another scholarship to study at the Howard Fine Acting Studio in 2005. She enjoys being on film and television, as well as puppetry and volunteering at her church. Alice has been a proud advocate for people with disabilities since she was 10 months old, due to her diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy. Her platform focuses on creating hope and safe spaces for our most vulnerable communities. Alice describes herself as compassionate, creative, and goofy.





Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania 2025, Kelly Barrett
Kelly lives in Erie, Pennsylvania, and works at Voices for Independence. She received a Master of Social Work degree from Edinboro University. Kelly enjoys adaptive surfing, going to concerts, and playing Sudoku and other puzzle games. Kelly is a proud advocate for people with disabilities, a role she has embraced since birth due to a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy Quadriplegia. Her platform focuses on access to and improvement of home and community services for all. Kelly describes herself as funloving, articulate, and driven.



Ms. Wheelchair South Carolina 2025, Chasity Miles

Chasity lives in Sumter, South Carolina. She works as an ER trauma nurse at Medical University of South Carolina. When she's not advocating for change, she enjoys embracing life to the fullest, creating memories with loved ones, seeking thrills, and making every moment meaningful. Her journey as an advocate for people with disabilities began in August 2022, when her life changed forever after she was shot with an AR-15 and left paralyzed. Rather than allowing tragedy to define her, Chasity turned her adversity into advocacy. She founded "People of Determination," a platform dedicated to educating medical professionals, advocating for better healthcare for the disabled community, promoting genuine accessibility, and raising awareness about mental health. Chasity describes herself as a devoted mother, vibrant adventurer, and resilient survivor of gun violence.

Ms. Wheelchair Washington 2025, Jayla Saintclaire
Jayla resides in the Western part of Washington. She is a content creator with a passion for dancing. Since becoming a wheelchair user in 2021, Jayla has become a proud advocate for people with disabilities. Her platform, "Unapologetically Surviving," aims to help others reclaim their names, voices, and identities through dance, Jayla has taken control of her life and describes herself as positive, creative, and open-minded.





Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin 2025, Karyn Burrow

Karyn lives in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Although she was born in Nicaragua, she was raised in Wisconsin. Growing up in this state presented her with unique challenges, but with the support of her family and community, she developed a strong sense of self and purpose. Karyn works as a Behavioral Health Specialist and earned her bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. In her free time, Karyn enjoys spending time with her family—she is the youngest of six siblings—hanging out with friends, listening to music, and going on spontaneous adventures. As a proud advocate for people with disabilities, her advocacy journey began at birth, as she has navigated life with a physical disability due to Cerebral Palsy. Karyn's platform, "Disability Inclusivity in Society," focuses on advocating for those who are underrepresented. She has demonstrated her commitment to this cause by receiving the Employee Recognition Award from the Centers for Independence. Karyn is honored to share her voice and experiences in hopes of inspiring others and educating society on the importance of disability inclusivity. She describes her life as an individual with a physical disability as resilient, adaptable, and fiercely independent.

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA CLASS OF 2026 AUTOGRAPHS

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA CLASS OF 2026 AUTOGRAPHS

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA CLASS PHOTOS THROUGH THE YEARS...







MASTER OF CEREMONIES

David Weinandy



David Weinandy, Ph.D., is a Professor of Communication at Aquinas College (AQ) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. For five years, he also supervised the Campus Life area at the college. Dr. Weinandy has been honored three times as The Outstanding Faculty Member by the AQ Student Senate and Alumni Association. Additionally, he received the Distinguished Service Award from AQ. A memorable moment in his career was when his former students initiated and funded an endowed leadership scholarship at AQ in his name. Before becoming a professor, Dr. Weinandy worked in Student Affairs at Bowling Green State University and Kent State University. Additionally, David received the Bowling Green State University Outstanding Alumni Service Award. David has earned a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Counseling, a Master of Arts in College Student Personnel, and a Ph.D. in Interpersonal Communication. David's expertise in the communication discipline

includes: group communication, public speaking, and interpersonal relationship development.

Dr. Weinandy is an in-demand consultant and trainer conducting hundreds of seminars and workshops on such topics as listening skill development, creating a positive attitude, customer service, conflict management, public presentation, and successful interpersonal relationships. The Michigan Hospice and Palliative Care Association named Dr. Weinandy the Educator of the Year.

David serves as a personal communication coach for high-profile individuals. Additionally, David has been very involved in the West Michigan community as a volunteer and board member for numerous organizations including Community Circle Theatre, where he received the Norma Brink Service Award, the Bowling Green State University Alumni Association, Spectrum/Corewell Health, The Grand Rapids Ballet, The Van Andel Institute Purple Community, Lake Michigan Academy, Vox GR, and the Ms. Wheelchair America, Miss Michigan and Miss Michigan Outstanding Teen Programs.

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM DAVID...

WE ARE ALL GOOD ENOUGH



YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON
YOU WILL EVER TALK TO

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA JUDGES

The judging panel is comprised of five distinguished individuals and a judge coordinator/timer. This week, each judge has had the privilege of engaging with every titleholder, gaining insight into their personal journeys and advocacy efforts. These discussions focus on the advocates' platforms, plans, and aspirations.

Ms. Wheelchair America employs thoughtfully established criteria when selecting the judging panel. Each judge contributes unique expertise, and we are committed to ensuring a diverse panel that reflects a range of genders, ages, ethnic backgrounds, and connections to disability.

In the interest of maintaining objectivity and fairness, judges are kindly asked to refrain from having individual conversations with contestants, their companions, family members, or friends.



Christine Burke

For as long as she's been able to talk, Christine has never been afraid to speak her mind; a passion that quickly morphed into advocating for the disability community. She received her bachelor's in communications from the University of the Pacific in 2012 and achieved her master's in leadership from Capella University in 2020. For over twenty years Christine has fought to help people discover the strength of their voice through the conduits of education, performance and public speaking. She is beyond humbled to have served the disability community as Ms. Wheelchair America 2022, working to put disability back in diversity.

Today, Christine is continuing to help people find and use their voice as an Independent Living Specialist at Independent Living Respurces. Outside of work, you are apt to find Christine on or near a stagevisiting my Cast Member brother at The Happiest Place on Earth, reading the newest romance on my Kindle, writing away and attending various musical theater and sci-fi conventions from California to New York.

Dr. Mike Cottingham

Dr. Mike Cottingham is a Professor at the University of Houston and serves as the director of Adaptive Athletics at UH. This program conducts innovative academic research, provides community and institutional programming, and engages in impactful service learning for students. He has conducted research in eight countries, published over 60 peer-reviewed articles, and presented at 100 conferences. His work has been funded by prestigious organizations, including the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the Craig T. Nielson Foundation, the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. In 2024, he received the Brad Parks Award from the United States Tennis Association and



the Community Leadership Award from the President's Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition.

Dr. Cottingham's research focuses on societal perceptions of disability and the functioning of the disability community through an intersectional lens. His passion lies in using research to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and addressing the unique dynamics within this community.

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA JUDGES



Elaine Stefanowicz

Elaine Stefanowicz has been using a wheelchair for the past 43 years due to a car accident when she was in high school.In 1997, as Washington State's first representative, Elaine won the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant. During her reign, she visited President and Mrs. Clinton at the White House and met actor Christopher Reeve. She also won a women's downhill skiing competition that year (amazingly because she's not athletic!). Elaine went on to win a full-ride scholarship to earn her bachelor's degree. In 2003, she was chosen asa Woman of Distinction by the Girl Scouts Pacific Peaks Council. In May 2025, she graduated with a Master of Science degree in Human

Resources at Chapman University with a 4.00 grade point average. Elaine is currently a Program Coordinator with the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment and has held previous positions as an adjunct faculty member, career counselor, and educational planner. Elaine has a 26-year-old son, and a 16-year-old dog named Benny. Next year, she plans on starting a doctoral program.

Desmeon Thomas

Desmeon Thomas is a dedicated Community Liaison at the Center for Independent Living: Living Independence for Everyone of Mississippi. With a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Entrepreneurship from Jackson State University—earned in 2022—and an Associate Degree from Hinds Community College, Desmeon is committed to lifelong learning and growth. He also completed the basic ADA training through the Southeast ADA Center, reflecting his deep commitment to advocating for accessibility and inclusion. Driven by a passion to create meaningful change, Desmeon has spent the past eighteen years advocating for individuals with disabilities, empowering them to pursue independence and live fulfilling lives within their communities. His work embodies the spirit of resilience, inclusion, and hope.



Beyond his role at the center, Desmeon actively contributes to his community through service on the JATRAN Paratransit Advisory Committee and the ADA Advisory Council for the City of Jackson, where he champions accessible transportation and inclusive policies. He is also adedicated board member of the City of Jackson's Office of Violence Prevention and trauma Recovery Program, where he passionately fights against gun violence, seeking to build safer, stronger communities. Desmeon's unwavering commitment and compassion inspire those around him to believe in the possibilities of a more inclusive and equitable future.

EVERY PERSON
MATTERS
EVERY STORY DESERVES TO BE
HEARD

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA JUDGES

Wendy Stock



Wendy Stock has been a resident of Grand Rapids, MI, for over five decades. Here she has dedicated 36 years of her professional life to JPMorgan Chase where she served as a Wealth Advisor/Vice President in their Private Bank. Her professional journey was grounded in trusted client relationships, strategic thinking and helping clients navigate complex financial landscapes. In retirement, she remains passionate about giving back to the community that has given her so much, continuing to serve on a wide-variety of non-profits. Her education includes a BBA from Western Michigan University and a degree from the University of Michigan's Graduate School of Bank Management.

For the past ten years, Wendy has been involved with Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, serving as a guild member, Guild Board of Directors and Trustee of the Hospital. This experience has enriched her life beyond what she could have imagined. Focus on and service to the physically disabled community has been a true blessing and reflects her deep belief in service, compassion and long-term stewardship.

As a widow and mother of an accomplished adult daughter, these roles have given her strength and perspective.

Wendy is honored to participate as a judge in Ms. Wheelchair America 2026 and look has enjoyed spending the week learning about and from these amazing women.

There is no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more.'



MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA JUDGE COORDINATOR AND OFFICIAL ACCOUNTANT



<u>Judge Coordinator - Stephanie Deible</u>

Stephanie Deible is a disability services professional and nonprofit leader. She has a deep rooted passion for creating pathways that lead to and elevate belonging and accessibility.

Currently, Stephanie is serving as the Program and Partnership Manager for Michigan Nonprofit Association where she is integral to the design, management, and evolution of MNA programs. Her work solidifies the organization's dedication to elevating the voice and leadership of the nonprofit sector.

In addition to her work with MNA, Stephanie was appointed to the Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council in 2020. As a member of the council, she collaborates with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, the Bureau of Services to Blind Persons, Michigan's Centers for Independent Living, and other partner organizations to work to ensure that people with disabilities are valued and their rights are inherent in all aspects of life.

Previously, Stephanie served as a Community Inclusion Specialist for Disability Network West Michigan where she promoted and supported inclusion efforts to remove barriers and increase accessibility. One of her primary roles included facilitating transportation services for people with disabilities in rural communities.

Stephanie has also been involved with the Ms. Wheelchair America organization in varying capacities over the last 13 years. In March of 2012, she was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Michigan. She also previously served as the Executive Director of Ms Wheelchair America, Inc. from 2015 to 2021.

As a proud alumnus of Grand Valley State University, Stephanie holds dual degrees – a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, and a Master's in Education focusing on student affairs and leadership.

Outside her professional sphere, Stephanie is an avid adventurer. She finds joy in traveling, swimming, skiing, and spending quality time with her loved ones.

MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA ACCOUNTANT JOSEPH MARTIN

Joseph Martin serves as a Senior Data Architect at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation, where he is dedicated to providing essential data solutions and enterprise reporting for the hospital. As the leader of the data analytics team, he plays a crucial role in managing the official scorekeeping for the Ms. Wheelchair America Competition. For the past four years, Joseph has generously volunteered his time to collect and analyze scores for this meaningful event.

Ms. Wheelchair America is deeply grateful for the partnership with Mary Free Bed and appreciates the ongoing support. Together, both organizations are committed to inspiring hope and uplifting communities across the nation.



HOW IS MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA 2026 SELECTED

The selection process for the Top Five advocates of Ms. Wheelchair America 2026 was conducted with great care and attention to detail, utilizing the following criteria:

Application (10 points) – Judges thoughtfully evaluated each contestant's application, placing emphasis on the professionalism reflected in their submissions.

Essay (15 points) – Contestants were asked to write a 1½ to 2-page essay, submitted to the judges prior to the national competition. To maintain fairness, the assessments of these essays were made without knowledge of the authorship. The prompt for the essay was: "Within the disability community, there are numerous challenges to address. If you could advocate for one specific challenge, what would it be and why? How would you envision this advocacy and leadership?"

Two Interview Sessions (25 points each) – Each contestant participated in one 10-minute panel interview session and one 15-minute panel interview session. These sessions were designed to gain insight into each contestant's background and their views on disability issues. Judges evaluated various aspects, including interview skills, self-awareness, self-perception, and engagement with relevant disability topics.

Platform Speech (25 points) – Contestants will present their platforms on August 22, 2025. The Advocates platforms are critical components of the Ms. Wheelchair America Competition. The advocates platform focuses on a disability-related topic or issue that the advocate is deeply passionate about and believes requires attention or has yet to be adequately addressed.

Furthermore, the Top Five Advocates will respond to two on-stage questions, valued at up to 10 points. The cumulative scores from these questions will determine the selection of Ms. Wheelchair America 2026 based on the highest overall score.



MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA 2026 AWARDS

Ms. Wheelchair America 2026 is chosen by the judging panel. The advocate that earns the highest total score during the judging sessions will become Ms. Wheelchair America 2026.

<u>Hope and Freedom Award</u> is chosen by the Mary Free Bed Guild and awarded to the advocate who demonstrates hope and positivity in their life, advocacy, and a committment to our mission of hope and freedom for all those living with a disability.

<u>Judy Hoit Award</u> This award is dedicated to the memory of Judy Hoit, a former Executive Team Member and Iowa State Coordinator of Ms. Wheelchair America. With over 20 years of unwavering commitment to the disabled community and the Ms. Wheelchair America Organization, Judy's extraordinary contributions and those of her supporters have left a profound impact. The award will be presented to an individual who has made a significant mark within the Ms. Wheelchair America Organization while embodying humility, selflessness, and perseverance. This award celebrates the individual whose remarkable efforts have truly transformed the lives of people with disabilities.

<u>Ms. Congeniality Award</u> is chosen by the advocates. Each advocate cast one vote for the person they feel was the kindest, friendliest, most helpful and caring throughout the week.

<u>Nicki Ard Achievement Award</u> 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 willing to serve others". The advocate receiving this award will have made an outstanding contribution to the disabled community through her talents, her efforts, and her example.

<u>Outstanding Speech Award</u> is chosen by those in attendance on speech night for the contestants that they feel delivered the most memorable speech of the evening.

<u>People's Choice Award</u> is presented to the advocate who receives most votes. Votes cost \$1.00 each and can be purchased in the weeks leading up to the National Competition until August , 2025. This year, forty percent of the funds raised will be distributed to the award recipents Ms. Wheelchair America state program while the remainding funds will be go the Ms. Wheelchair AmericaPersonal Care Fund.

<u>The Spirit of Advocacy Award</u> in honor of our Wheel Sisters who continue to roll in our hearts and have left a lasting legacy that we will always remember. The recipient is someone who speaks truth with passion and purpose, embodies determination, and is dedicated to sisterhood and systemic change

<u>The Unshakeable Voice Award</u> This award is presented by the MWA Executive Team in heartfelt honor to David Weinandy. He is a remarkable communicator who connects with everyone he meets, and he exemplifies the true essence of treating others with compassion, kindness, and empowerment. His influence has deeply impacted us all, and we are grateful for the invaluable lessons he shares.

MS. WHEELCHAIR ARIZONA 2025 **LATRICE JACKSON-ANDERSON**

- Devoted Guardian Home Care
- United Access (Phoenix Location)
- Vista Print
- Abilities 360
- Sojourner Center
- New Life Center (DV Shelter)
- UMOM (Homeless Shelter)
- Southwest Indigenous • (SWIWC) Women's Coalition
- Arizona State University TOMS (Engineering
- Arizona State University Devil's Adapt
- Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic
- Celina Meadows (CSSJ Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice

MS. WHEELCHAIR CALIFORNIA 2025 **ALY CORVIN**

- Erik Blain Corvin LMNT
- Julienne Dallera
- ABC30 Margaret Musante Aadra Lee
- Accessible Off Road Comfy Go
- Sheryl Huynh
- Cassidy Huff
- Clovis/Fresno EDS
 - Alli Ham
- City of Long Beach Crafted by Bea and Viv
- Spread Good Shop
- Mobility Service Dogs
- Live To Roll
- Grace Fischer Foundation
- Cristal Tiscsreno Fresno City College Dance Department
- Los Angeles Dysautonomia Network (LADN)

MS. WHEELCHAIR FLORIDA 2025 **SCHUYLER ARAKAWA**

- Vince Mee
- Shari Wilson
- Producers Inc.
- Michelle Hurst
- NextStep Orlando
- The Delicious Tiki Docks Ms Wheelchair Florida. Inc.
- Craig and Kathy Hankenson
- Peacemaker Paddlers Family
- Glen & Loida of Chair the
- Backon2Feet Trust Angel
- Beth Mancini
- Bill, Wendy, and Shelly at Removing the Barriers
- New Tampa Dance Theater - Dyanne and Troy!
- Pat Julian & members of the PAC community
- All the amazing contributors to my Circle of Angels Flag! Sister Saya, "Sherpa" on this
- trek to Nationals

- Global Family" followers of Schuy is the limit who are the wind beneath my wings
- The people who believe in me and help me achieve my "I'm Possible"
- Yale Class of 2015 Saybrook, Pi Phi
- The Souza, Hall, Maddox, Garcia, and Ford Families
- Adam Abelson & family
- Fishhawk Rotary Club
- Incredible Family
- My mom for being the "dynamic" in this

MS. WHEELCHAIR GEORGIA 2025 DANA LEE HARP

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- Samantha Edwards State Coordinator
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- Gals of Grace
- Friends University
- Davis Green
- Ron, Brenda and Danielle Bertels
- Michael and Chris Green
- Mizuki Azuma
- Shuai Sun
- Penny LinscottDon and Ann Funk
- Joetta and Carl Weishaar
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- Casebolt Broadcasting and Marketing,
- DD and KK, LLC. Donnie and Karen Pack

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- Skii-Dawgs Adaptive Water Ski OrganizationThe Local Car Community of the Baton Rouge, LA. area
- Justina Plowden Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana State Coordinator
- Carrie Bradshaw & Peers Louisiana State University (LSU)

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- The League for People with Disabilities
- Made Up Face and Body Art
- Youth Resliency Institure
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- Advoca-Say
- Seafarers Yacht Club
- Betty Bland Thomas
- The Sheriff Family
- Chesapeake Regional Accessible Boating

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- Mike Shehadi Pharma Script of Michigan
- Kim Nolan Progressive Alternatives
- Misfit Creations
- Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College
- Mary Free Bed Hospital
- University of Michigan Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Ms. Wheelchair Michigan, Inc.
- Shanta Favors
- Dahlia Swanson
- Shelly Loose
- DisArt Grand Rapids
- Chris Mills

MS. WHEELCHAIR MISSISSIPPI 2025 KIMBERLY BUTLER

- Forrest General Hospital
- Forrest County Board of Supervisors
- Brain Injury Association of Mississippi
- United Spinal Association (Mississippi Chapter)
- Mississippi Paralysis Association
- Peggy Answorth
- Kaelee Answorth
- Patricia Butler
- Jesse Answorth
- Danarius Gosha Kimberly Calvert
- Evelyn Lewis
- Ms. Wheelchair Mississippi Foundation

MS. WHEELCHAIR NEW JERSEY 2025 MARIANNE MIDDLEBROOK

- Mom & Dad
- Mane Salon
- Mobility Works
- Drive Master
- The Middlebrook Family
- Quantum Rehab
- Wecan't2wecan
- Matheny SchoolZipped Brand Shoes

- Directions Magazine
 Autumn Lake Nursing Home
 All who generously donated to my journey

 • Bergen County Transitions Fair

 • Children's Specialized Hospital

 • Delicious Heights Berkeley Heights

- Hackensack Meridian Health
- NY/NJ/CT Abilities ExpoMs. Wheelchair New Jersey
- Make-A-Wish Foundation

MS. WHEELCHAIR NEW YORK 2025 LATAVIA STURDIVANT

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- Adina LegareDina Salmeron
- Curtis Sturdivant
- Tim Thomas
- Melvin Moore
- Shameka Andrews
- Luis Candelario
- Lehman CollegeValerie Blanding
- Katrina McMillan
- Tyrone McMillan

MS. WHEELCHAIR NORTH DAKOTA 2025

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Patricia Motl

Hope, Inc.

Tyler Okerlund

Jessie and Amanda Schuler

Thomas Krabbenholf

Miriah Kliner

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- Diane DeAngelis and Robert Gonzalez Veterans

MS. WHEELCHAIR OHIO 2025 ALEXANDRA MARTINEZ

- Shiny Penny Studios
- Cleveland Dance Project
- North Point Ballet
- Youth Challenge
- AMF Bruns of America
- Ms. Wheelchair Ohio
- Laura Sykes

MS. WHEELCHAIR OREGON 2025 **ALICE DEIHL**

- The Shaeffer Family
- The Deihl Family
- Sarah Griffiths
- Bob Ferguson
- Jessica Quadrato
- Ms. Wheelchair Oregon
- Leslie Keller

MS. WHEELCHAIR PENNSYLVANIA 2025 **KELLY BARRETT**

Kelly and Trish Rowe

Grams and PapPap

The Burnett Family

Heather Courson

Cindy Fox & Family

Marquis Wallace

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- Christine Vasui
- Voices of Independence Laurel Medical Soultions
- Dress for Success Pittsburgh
- Carole, Marty, and Cara Barrett
- Melanie Liesener & Team Surfgimp
- Pennsylvania Representative, Bob
- Pennsylvania Representative, Ryan Bizzarro

MS. WHEELCHAIR WASHINGTON 2025 JAYLA SAINTCLAIRE

- Nuquo
- Body Point

MS. WHEELCHAIR SOUTH CAROLINA

CHASITY MILES - ANDERSON

- My Son
- Fiance ErnieMom Lynn & Stepdad Melvin
- Friends & Family
- South Carolina Spinal Cord Injury Association
- Wheelchair Traveling

MS. WHEELCHAIR WISCONSIN 2025 **KARYN BURROWS**

- Nicolle M. Work Colleague
- Sarah Braker Best Friend
- Morgan Pelon Best Friend
- Kayla Petrie Best Friend
- Evan B. Best Friend
- Karin/Rick Burrow
- Jenny Addis Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin State Coordinator
- Annie Heathcote Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin
- Autumn Neugent Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin
- Byron Riesch President of Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation
- Rayquetta Lawrence Ms. Wheelchair Wisconsin 2024

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- Kathy Domsic
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Special Thanks to Libbie Tacia, Ms. Michigan's Teen 2025 for helping crown Ms. Wheelchair America 2026



GOOD LUCK FROM THE MS WHEELCHAIR CALIFORNIA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

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GO OUT AND SHARE YOUR



Congratulations Deborah Robbins



Thankful and grateful is not worthy of defining the gift of God seeing fit to allow us to be an inside witness to your journey. No the journey has not always been easy but to watch you tackle each obstacle and keep going has been such an inspiration to us and many more than you could ever know!!

Roll on Girl!! Roll on!!

Ms. Wheelchair

Dad & Mom

Chris & Jenny, Sallie, and Boone

Jessica & Tommy, Montana, Tommy, Emma, and Jaylin Amy & Stephen, Haley, Colton, Ivy, and Stephen

Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2025 Rynita McLuire

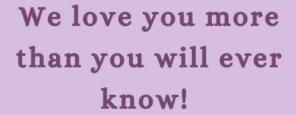


Little Miss Wheelchair Michigan 2025 Dahlia Swanson

Best Wishes, Kimberly!







Love,
Your #ChairChicks





We're really proud of you and of all the hard work you've put into representing Mississippi this year. Your advocacy efforts truly matter, and we appreciate everything you've done!





Congratulations to each advocate! We are especially proud of **Marianne Middlebrook**, Ms. Wheelchair New Jersey 2025!



Special thanks to:

Supporters, Friends & Family of Marianne
Ms. Wheelchair New Jersey
Mobility Works - Woodbury
Kathy & Chuck Ford
Lindsay & CJ Dodge
Lauren VanBlarcum
Loretta Seeley

CONGRATULATIONS MS. WHEELCHAIR NEW YORK LATAVIA STURDIVANT!



EMPOWERING ADVOCATE FOR ALL ABILITIES

Congratulations Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania 2025!



Kelly Barrett







Thank you for your service and dedication to the Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania Organization. You make Pennsylvania proud!

Love,

Toodluck Mr. Wheelchair Touth Carolina



"A true beauty queen wears her crown in her heart, rolls with courage, and radiates kindness that outshines any spotlight."

$Chasity\ Lynn\ Miles-Anderson$



If you would like to make a donation: Zelle: mswheelchairsc@gmail.com



President: Mrs. Angela Young Vice President: Ms. Kristi Walden

Contact for all questions: ms.wheelchairsouthcarolina.org

Congratulations Pynitai Short-e McGuire Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2025







DJ Short-e



Professor McGuire



Master Artist

We're all so proud of you and the well deserved recondition for all your advocacy work & accomplishments. You're a strong, brilliant, & beautiful woman. Keep shining bright, & making a difference in this world!



Thank you, Kimberly Butler!







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Ms. Wheelchair America would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Crescent Floral for generously providing beautiful flowers and arrangements for our titleholders on both Speech Night and Crowning Night.

We would also like to give a big shoutout to our Emcee, Dave, for his invaluable assistance in coordinating the beautiful flowers. Thank you for going the extra mile!





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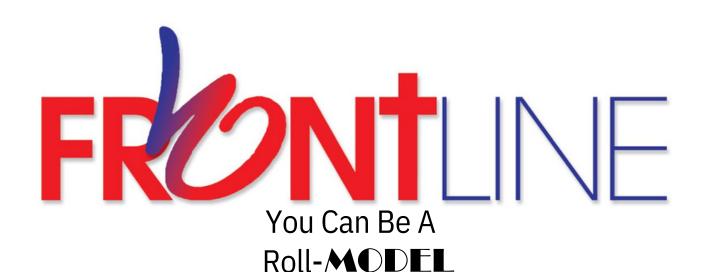
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Make up your mind!

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

LiftEach 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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Jenny Smith Rolls On

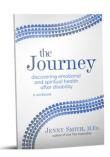
Providing education, practical solutions, resources, and hope so people can live full and productive lives.

In *Live the Impossible*, Smith shares with honesty and humor about her life with a spinal cord injury at the age of 16. Available in paperback, ebook, and audiobook.





The Journey: Discovering Emotional and Spiritual Health after Disability is an activity-based workbook with tools to cope with the emotional and spiritual impact of disability.





10 Tips for Traveling with a Disability is a FREE resource packed with practical advice, hard-won lessons, and encouragement to help you navigate your next journey—near or far.



SPEAKER TOPICS:

- Live the Impossible (Keynote)
- The Journey (Interactive workshop on the emotional impact of disability)
- What You Want to Know about Spinal Cord Injuries: The Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Spiritual Impact
- 10 Tips for Traveling with a Disability
- Room at the Table: Welcoming People with Disabilities in the Church and Missions

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Empowering Women of Achievement through Leadership, Advocacy, and Education Since 1972

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of Ms. Wheelchair America is an advocacy, education, and leadership-based organization that focuses on raising awareness about disabilities, celebrating the accomplishments of women who use wheelchairs, and educating society on archhitectural barriers tha impact the disability community.

Enter A State Competition

Many States have programs that are part of the Ms. Wheelchair Organization. Each active state program holds an annual competition to select a titleholder that will successfully advocate, educate, and empower all people on a state level.

Active State Program are:

- Arizona
- California
- Florida
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Nevada

- New Jersey
- New York
- North Dakota
- Missouri
- OregonOhio
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- WisconsinWashington
- Wyoming

<u>Become an Independent Delegate</u>

An Independent Delegate is a woman who uses a wheelchair for 100% community mobility that creates a Ms. Wheelchair America program in the state they reside in by becoming a titleholder for their state and then starting a State Program the year after their title reign.

States that need an Independent Delegate are:

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arkansas
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- <u>Deleware</u>
- Hawaii
- IdahoIllinois IllinoisIndiana
- MaineMassachusetts
- Minnesota

- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- Oklahoma
- Puerto Rico
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia •
- West Virginia

If you or someone you know are interested in competing in a state competition or becoming an independent delegate for your state please email mwa@mswheelchairamerica.org for more information.

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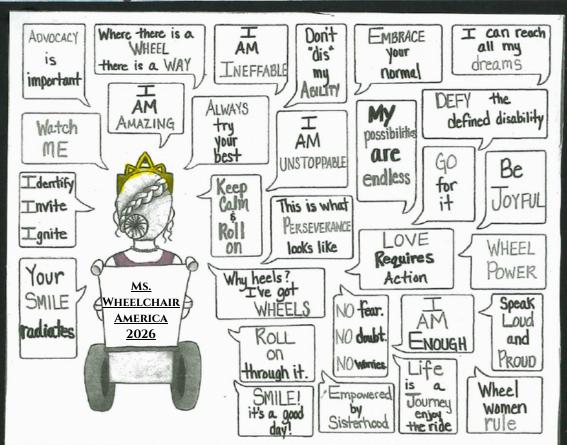
Nevertheless, she persisted.

COMPRIVET



taught me...







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For more than 130 years, the Mary Free Bed Guild has been a force for good—empowering people, transforming lives, and investing in community health since 1891.

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