Friends

Nancy Goodfellow

I used to save every birthday card Lily received from friends. Not because I’m the scrapbooking type and I planned to make her a beautiful keepsake of each of her birthdays. (Although I’m sure there was a day when I actually thought I’d have time to do that!) I saved them because I worried… I worried that someday, friends would stop coming to her birthday party and giving her cards. I worried that someday, Lily’s Down syndrome would make her so different from the other children that they’d move on without her, forgetting all about her.

From the time I received a prenatal diagnosis, I worried about relationships. Of course, first I worried about heart defects and health concerns. But when I started to think about Down syndrome, I worried about friends. Would she have any? Would other kids be kind to her in school? Would they acknowledge her outside of school? Would she experience playdates, birthday parties, sleepovers, school dances?

Fortunately, from the day Lily started kindergarten, the other children treated her as a peer. They didn’t treat her differently because she wore glasses or had to sit in a special chair. They didn’t exclude her because she had an assistant and needed extra help to complete her work. They didn’t tease her for being the slowest player on the soccer team. And they didn’t ignore her because she was hard to understand.

Instead, they hugged her when she arrived at school, cheered her on in gym, passed the ball to her in soccer, and invited her to birthday parties. The kids at school and in our neighborhood were wonderful with her… but I still worried. I still saved the birthday cards.

I worried that as the kids got older, things would change. I worried that as they progressed in school, they’d lose patience with trying to understand her. That as they all improved at soccer, they’d leave her behind. That as their interests changed, they’d find her favorite books or TV shows ‘babyish.’ That they’d go off to middle school and high school and wouldn’t save her a spot at lunch or stick up for her if someone new was unkind.

But Lily is now in middle school. And I’m beginning to worry a little less. Lily has been blessed to have a group of girls who love her. They have stuck by her since kindergarten, encouraging her when she struggles, and celebrating with her when she succeeds. They save her a seat every day at lunch, drop off cards when she is sick, attend the Fashion Show and other Down syndrome fundraisers, and cheer her on at sporting events.

It is a sort of tradition in middle school and high school that friends decorate each other’s lockers for their birthdays. I remember doing it for my friends when I was younger, and I know that Lily’s friends have done it for each other in sixth grade. As Lily’s birthday approached this spring, I realized that it fell on the day after Memorial Day. So if anyone was going to decorate her locker, it would have to be done after school on Friday before the long weekend. I didn’t want to ask any of her friends or their moms about it, and up until the Wednesday prior no one had mentioned it. I knew that it would be easy for her friends to miss the

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Friends
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opportunity to decorate since it involved a weekend as well as a holiday. I figured I would just have to find a way to sneak back to school after pickup that Friday and put up some quick decorations myself.

But then Thursday came and I received a text. “Hi Mrs. Goodfellow. A group of us are going to decorate Lily’s locker tomorrow. Can we please have her combination so we can put cards and signs inside her locker too?” I had to reread the text twice. My vision was blurred from the tears in my eyes. They’d remembered her birthday. They hadn’t forgotten her.

A month later they all showed up at my front door. While Lily was inside working with her occupational therapist, the girls painted the windows of our car and hung signs and streamers all over the front of the house. They wanted to surprise her and wish her good luck in the Special Olympics Summer Games. It was lucky that one of the other moms had called to give me a heads up. I had time to cry before the girls arrived, so I could just smile when I watched Lily’s reaction.

Although I still worry, I’m beginning to understand that these girls are different than what I expected. When I grew up, I didn’t have kids with special needs in my classes. I didn’t have the opportunity to grow up with and get to know anyone with special needs as a friend. Lily and her friends have always been together. They understand that she has Down syndrome, but they don’t see how that could affect or impact their friendship. While they were decorating her locker, many teachers stopped and commented on how sweet it was and how nice they were to do that for Lily. The girls were confused. They didn’t understand why it was such a big deal, stating “they never say that when we decorate anyone else’s locker.” Lily’s friends see her as nothing other than Lily, a friend who has been on their soccer and swim teams, in their classes, and at their birthday parties. They see Down syndrome as just another one of their differences, like hair color, size, shape, or personal interests. They know Lily needs extra help at times, and they are always quick to give it. But they also know that she is capable, and they encourage her to always do her best.

I will continue to worry that someday this will all change. But in the meantime, I will have faith in the friendships that they share, and I will recycle the cards from last year’s birthday.

Tips:
My family is incredibly lucky to live in an area where the neighbors all spend time together and the children are mostly kind, considerate, well-mannered kids. I know – it sounds like we’re living in a TV sitcom. But we’ve also put effort into getting to know the neighbors, finding activities where Lily could participate and be included, and building relationships that would help Lily. She has her IEP at school, and we came up with a sort of IIP for home – an Individual Inclusion Plan. Just as our kids need individual plans at school, each will have a different plan for helping them socially. Below are suggestions from parts of our plan that we’ve used over the years.

Seek Advice: Talk to parents who have older children with Down syndrome. Ask LOTS of questions – about what they did to help their child with therapy, school, and friends. Ask what worked and what didn’t, and then tailor the advice to fit your child and situation.

Annual Halloween Parties:
One of the best suggestions we received from another parent was to have a Halloween party each year for the kids in Lily’s class. It is far enough into the school year to give kids the opportunity to get to know your child, and still early enough to help encourage some new friendships. You’ll
be able to observe how the kids treat your child and recognize which kids would make good friends, and which to possibly avoid. We invited the parents to stay and socialize while the kids were engaged in the party. Over the years, our party evolved to include kids from the neighborhood and other classes, along with siblings. We always have it before the kids set out to trick-or-treat and everyone brings a snack to share. Not only has this become a fun tradition for all, it also guarantees that Lily always has friends to trick-or-treat with and that her house is associated with fun.

**Monthly Friday Pizza Nights:** Once you know which kids would make good friends, encourage the friendships by hosting pizza nights with the families. We typically have two families over at a time, splitting the cost of the pizza and sharing the other courses like appetizers, fruit/salad, and dessert. By having more than one friend there, if Lily becomes disinterested or needs a break, the other kids can play with each other.

**Moms:** Too often, mothers are consumed by the amount of work that needs to be done, both inside and outside of the home. We sacrifice ourselves for our children, rarely taking a break to be with our own friends. Take the time to be a friend yourself, not only to model friendships for your child, but to ensure that you have the support system you will need as your child grows. It really does take a village to raise children, so we shouldn’t try to do it alone. Tell your friends what your hopes and dreams are for your child and see how they can help. Other moms are going to be your child’s Scout leader, field trip chaperone, or just the parent who is hosting the birthday party. If they know what you want for your child, they may be able to assist in helping your child reach their social goals.

**Peer Group:** In order to encourage friendships with other children with special needs, as well as provide opportunities to practice conversational skills, work on handling money, etc., find a group of children who are similar in age and functioning level to your child. We created a “Girls’ Group” for Lily and three other girls with Down syndrome. Lily’s resource teacher from grade school takes the girls on outings one or two times a month. She was very excited about the opportunity to work with the girls, and we all feel confident knowing that a professional with special education experience is taking care of them. The girls discuss what they would like to do on future outings, and they have chances to work on money, conversation skills, ordering off a menu, etc.

**Small “Friends Only” Lunches:** The cafeteria in middle school can be very loud and overwhelming. Lily’s friends save her a spot and sit with her, but she doesn’t engage much in the conversations. It can be hard for her to hear them, as well as try to keep up with the rapid, ever-changing conversations of 12-year old girls. To give them tools to know how to engage her, and give her opportunities to practice, they meet once a week in a conference room to eat lunch. The school social worker is there to help guide conversations and play games with the girls, and they all seem to enjoy the break from the chaotic cafeteria.

**Clubs/Teams/Other:** Find what interests your child and then seek out programs that are inclusive. If your child likes to dance, find a studio that welcomes kids with special needs and then recruit some neighborhood or school friends so they can all take a class together. Most park districts have a Special Recreation Association (SRA) affiliated with them. Some SRAs will provide an assistant for any park district class or sport, free of charge. Many park district soccer teams are organized by neighborhood and start practicing before school starts or shortly after. T-ball is also organized by neighborhood and would provide an opportunity for a child to get to know classmates over the summer. We try to reassess Lily’s interests every year and research ways to keep her involved in the community. She has participated in choir and intramurals at school, as well as Girl Scouts, a local theater group, a neighborhood book club, and the neighborhood and YMCA swim teams. Because every child’s interests and abilities are different, it’s just a matter of finding what works for your child.

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**Nancy Goodfellow** is a NADS Public Speaker and has also served in NADS' Parent Support Program and on the NADS Board. One of her articles about Lily will be appearing in the next Chicken Soup for the Soul book: Think Possible: 101 Stories about Using a Positive Attitude to Improve Your Life. The collection will be released October 6, just in time for Down Syndrome Awareness Month!

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**October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month**

October provides a special opportunity to educate others in our communities about Down syndrome. Looking for ideas of how to celebrate? Here are a few:

- **Speak to your child’s class**
- **Display a Down Syndrome Awareness sign**
- **Distribute some of our new Down syndrome bookmarks within your community**
- **Donate books about Down syndrome to your local library**
- **Arrange a special Down syndrome awareness event**

- **Arrange for a NADS speaker to present at your local school, church, or place of employment**
- **Contact your legislators and ask them to join the newly formed Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome (see www.nads.org/programs/governmental-affairs for more details).**

We would love to hear what you are doing to promote Down syndrome awareness in October. Send us your ideas or write about your experiences, and we will share them with others.
PAC Kick-Off

Our new service leadership program for adults with Down syndrome, the Partnership Advocacy Council, will be launching this fall. If you are interested in finding out more about this program or if you would like details about the PAC Kick-Off event, please contact the NADS office at 630-325-9112 or durhausen@nads.org.

BOOK REVIEW

Old Heart

Peter Ferry
Unbridledbooks.com (2015); $16.00
Reviewed by Ann and Charlie Jonaitis

It all began in the grocery store. Our son David works at the Jewel Food Store in Plaza del Lago, Wilmette, IL. One day he brought home a letter from a customer. Peter Ferry introduced himself as a Lake Forest High School English teacher and an Evanston writer. He was working on a novel with a minor character with Down Syndrome. He didn’t know anyone with Down syndrome, but when he spotted David, he wanted to get to know him. Could he take him out for lunch? We checked out the references he provided and said yes. This was the beginning of a wonderful friendship!

Peter took David out for lunch several times. We lent him books about Down syndrome, such as The Guide for Good Health for Teens and Adults with Down Syndrome by Brian Chicoine, MD and Dennis McGuire, PhD; Mental Wellness in Adults with Down Syndrome by Dennis McGuire, PhD and Brian Chicoine, MD; Laying Community Foundations for Your Child with a Disability by Linda J. Stengle. There were phone calls, “Can he do ____?” Peter wanted to “get it right.” And he did!

Recently David was invited to the standing room only Launch Party for the book where he was introduced as the inspiration for Tony Johnson and signed autographs in the name of his character. The party was entertaining and successful. All the books there were sold out and a buyers list was begun for those not quick enough to buy one then.

The story line is that an 85 year old man’s wife and oldest son have died recently. His 2 remaining children want to put him in a nursing home. But he has other dreams and “runs away” to Holland. There he looks up his first love, a woman from his days as a soldier in WWII. Complications are many. Of course when I first read the book, I was on the lookout for all of the Tony Johnson parts. Then I reread it and enjoyed its many and varied layers. The story moves back and forth in decades and from the European continent to life in a lake front home in IL.

This a wonderful novel by an accomplished writer. Peter Ferry was an editor of text books for Rand McNally. He writes travel pieces for the Chicago Tribune and the WorldHum.com. His short stories have appeared in the IL Story Quarterly, the New Review of Literature, and McSweeney's. He won the IL Council Award for Short Fiction. His two novels (so far) are Travel Writing (2008) and Old Heart (2015).

NADS Website

Our website underwent some maintenance earlier this summer. If you are having trouble connecting to www.nads.org, try clearing your browser history. If you still encounter difficulties, please call the NADS office at 630-325-9112, and we would be happy to assist you.

New Down Syndrome Laws

Governor Rauner recently signed the Illinois ABLE Act and the Illinois Down Syndrome Information and Awareness Act into law. For more information about these 2 new laws, go to our website: www.nads.org.
Kristen & Special Olympics

Corinne Zollars

Kristen McInerney began participating in Special Olympics when she was in the fifth grade. “I knew it would impact my life in so many ways,” she says. Fourteen years later, McInerney has literally become the poster-child for the organization, completely immersing herself in Special Olympics. She has served on the Board of Directors, is a Global Messenger for the organization, and participates in several Special Olympics events. She holds down a part-time job at Jewel, and last year, was the athlete featured in the Change For Champions campaign at all the Illinois stores during the month of July. In addition, she is very involved in community theater and just had the lead role in Fiddler on the Roof.

“Shes just a tremendous individual,” Jim Corrigan, Chairman of the Board of Directors, says. “She would be what we hope every Olympic athlete could attain.”

She has hundreds of medals, some stored safely in a box under her bed, others displayed prominently among pictures of her friends and family. But McInerney says it’s not the medals she cherishes most. “I realized things that I never knew I could do before,” she says. “I never knew that I could dive or swim up until I was ready and had courage and was ready to push myself. And mentally, with making new friends and working as a team and getting along with my teammates.”

McInerney’s mother, Karen, says she’s seen Kristen grow as an athlete, teammate and leader. “As a parent, you’re proud,” she says. “You’re just very, very proud.”

For now, Kristen will continue winning medals, working hard and spreading the message of Special Olympics. She encourages others to be as active as they can. “If you don’t do anything, you’re not going to get anywhere in life,” she says. “If you get up and be active, go swimming, go on a hike, it’s giving yourself courage but it’s also confidence. Your confidence to say … ‘I never knew I could do this but I did it and it’s incredible.’”

Incredible, indeed.

Editor’s Note: Corinne Zollars is the Senior Director of Marketing and Communications at Special Olympics Illinois. For more information about their programs, go to www.soill.org.

Notre Dame Impact Partners Program

Geoff Colgan

The National Association for Down Syndrome is excited to announce a partnership with the University of Notre Dame through its ND Impact Partners program. This program pairs Notre Dame alumni with non-profit organizations looking for strategic advice and assistance. This year NADS qualified to participate, and we have a team of six Chicago-area ND alumni who have committed six months of their volunteer time to support NADS. We kicked off in the spring, and for the past few months the team has been working with Diane Urhausen, Steve Connors, and Patrick Crawford, and we have reviewed all the great work previously completed by our team, Board, and our wonderful volunteers. The early results of our analysis has identified three primary areas of focus for the next phase of our ND Impact program 1) Prioritize our services, 2) Personalize the NADS experience, and 3) Expand our volunteer base. To help answer these questions, the ND Impact team would like to collect input and ideas from the broader NADS community, including our volunteers and members. In the coming weeks you may get a phone call or an email from us as part of this program, and I hope that you can find the time to give some open and honest feedback. Our services should meet your needs, so please help us enhance the value we bring to the Down Syndrome community.

Let me introduce the ND Impact team: Lauren Elliott, Colleen Day, Roxanne Head, Matt Gilbert, Michael Hurley, and Geoff Colgan.

In the meantime, if you have any ideas you would suggest, please email Geoff Colgan at gcolgan@attadalepartners.com. We always appreciate your input.
UPCOMING EVENTS

More Than Down Syndrome Family Retreat
September 19, 2015
Registration Information: 630-325-9112 or durhausen@nads.org

Bible Bingo Fundraiser for NADS September 26 8:00 p.m.
Royal George Theater 1641 N. Halsted Chicago, IL Purchase tickets at www.nads.org

2015 Chicagoland Buddy Walk
October 11, 2015 Bolingbrook Golf Club 201 Rodeo Drive Bolingbrook, IL chicagolandbuddywalk.org

NADS Fashion Show Sunday, October 18
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center Rosemont, IL www.nads.org

NADS Hispanic Disability Fair Saturday, October 24 Chicago, IL Please call the NADS office at 630-325-9112 for details.

2015 Illinois Statewide Transition Conference October 29-30 Hyatt Regency, McCormick Place 2233 South Martin Luther King Drive, Chicago http://goo.gl/Q7Lk3Q


Healthy Smiles - Because Every Smile Matters!
Juveria Hussain, Student, UIC College of Dentistry
Blase Brown, Assistant Clinical Professor, UIC College of Dentistry

Good oral health is an important component of the overall general health of any individual. It is founded on the ideas and practice of preventing disease and helping individuals to improve their quality of life. Oral health is of particular importance for children, adolescents, and adults with Down syndrome, and can influence their general well-being including issues such as behavior, ability to eat properly, performance in school, language articulation, and social efficacy. Finding a ‘Dental Home’ and partnering with the caring professionals there can help children, adolescents, and adults have healthy smiles and improve their self-esteem and confidence.

Oral health in individuals with Down syndrome:
Proper oral hygiene helps to maintain a healthy condition of both teeth and gums, and prevents the risk for decay and gum disease. Adult supervision and assistance can encourage individuals to perform and achieve the proper level of oral hygiene. Many adolescents and adults with Down syndrome not only learn to effectively maintain their oral health, but have a real understanding of the rationale. Creating consistency in home care practices, like brushing & flossing, proper diet, and supervision all are important factors for the attainment of life long oral hygiene.

Some Tips on Oral Health Care at Home:
Brushing Habits and Skills: Brush twice daily with fluoridated toothpaste. The use of dental floss once a day helps to prevent both tooth decay and periodontal (gum) disease. Power toothbrushes can be used as an alternative to a regular toothbrush according to an individual’s ability to master their use. Research shows that a properly used power toothbrush (Oral B Braun or Sonicare) can be more effective in removing plaque than the manual brushes most of us have used. The wider handle of the power brushes makes them more adaptable to any individual with fine motor delays, when compared to manual brushes. Most of these power brushes now have timers that make it easier for any individual to stick with a 2 minute brushing regimen.

Diet: According to the American Dental Association (ADA), foods like hard or sticky candies (mints, lollipops, taffy and caramel), cookies, cakes and muffins all contain sugar which adheres to the teeth and feeds the bacteria in the mouth. A diet rich in these foods and sugar snacks increase an individual’s risk for tooth decay (cavities). Similarly, sugar containing drinks like sodas, lemonade, sweetened tea or coffee can promote tooth decay and should be avoided. Dairy products (milk and cheese) and yogurt are good sources of calcium and other nutrients, while protein-rich foods like poultry, fish, meat, and eggs are the best sources of phosphorus. These minerals are important for our general health, but can also help strengthen the surface of mature teeth and help resist “acid attacks” from the bacteria in our mouths. Fruits and vegetables, being high in water and fiber, stimulate salivary production and help to wash out food particles from the tooth surface and protect against tooth decay. Drinking fluoridated water is recommended.

Regular Visits to a Dentist: Finding a dental home helps to provide the appropriate preventive and routine setting for receiving oral health care for anyone. The first visit to the dentist should be within the first 6 months of life, following the eruption of the first tooth. Since many infants with Down syndrome do not see their first erupted tooth until after their first birthday, this first visit might be more flexible in terms of the timing. Introducing children to preventive dental care by visits to a pediatric or general dentist will help them gradually learn and understand oral hygiene habits, and help them make it a part of their daily life. These visits can also help young children to adapt and develop coping skills so that the experience of “going to the dentist” can become a life skill.

Remember – Every smile is special, and together we can make a difference!

Editor’s Note: This is the first in a series of short articles on dental care for individuals with Down syndrome.
Brittany Corder Wins Prom Queen!

Nancy and John Corder

For graduating Senior Brittany Corder, the 2015 Bartlett High School Prom was very special. Brittany, who is a very popular, special needs student with Down syndrome, won Prom Queen by an overwhelming number of votes from her classmates. This is the first time in her school history that a special needs co-ed was elected Prom Queen. The selection of the King and Queen were done by secret ballot when the students arrived at the prom, which was at the Belvedere Banquet Hall in Elk Grove Village, IL. The Coronation Ceremony to honor the new King and Queen was scheduled at 8 PM in the main ballroom. The crowd screamed with excitement when they announced, by almost a unanimous vote, “Brittany Corder as Prom Queen for 2015!” Chicago’s ABC-7 TV News and many internet sites have featured her to report this momentous event!

In March, Brittany received the school’s “Distinguished Hawk Award,” which is given to only 10 selected students for their service to others and the community. She was nominated for the award by her teacher, Kim Kaminski, who praised Miss Corder as a person who is “always the most kind and so helpful to those in need.”

Brittany was escorted to the Bartlett High School Senior Prom by another special needs student, Jimmy Rinchiuso, who also has Down Syndrome. Both young people are excellent dancers and had a night to remember.

Anna’s Baptism

Anna and Beth Gunther

My name is Anna, and I am 23 years old. I have been a part of the College Church family in Wheaton since I was born. Every week I attend Sunday School and Church and I also sing in the choir and play in the Praise in Action music program. Being part of this church family has given me many special activities – camps, overnights, talent shows, Friday night social times, as well as chances to serve others. Our church believes that being baptized is a way to show others that we want to follow Jesus and I have known for a long time that this was something I wanted to do. My family wanted me to wait until I could fully understand what an important step this would be for me. My teacher, Julie, planned a class just for a few of us who wanted to be baptized and at the end of that class I knew that I should take this important step in my walk with Jesus. On a Sunday morning in June, my Pastor Todd baptized me in front of my family, my Sunday School class and the whole congregation of College Church. It was a thrilling day and everyone there clapped and cheered for me.

I am very busy every day going to Rec and Roll and working at three different jobs during the week. I want the people I meet to know that I am serious about following Jesus, not just on Sundays but as I do my jobs and go to WDSRA. I also love almost all sports so I do as many as I have time for. Right now I am playing Bocce Ball and last year I did win a gold medal at the Special Olympics.
Life After Transition
Karen Neville, Adult Matters Committee Chair

I am often asked what we are doing with our time now that Kelly has exited the school system. It can be an abrupt change from getting up and heading off to your school’s Transition Program Monday through Friday to having just a few things on the calendar for the week. The social part of school and transition is what is missed the most and the key to keeping our family members’ social lives full is a phone call away. Literally! Before Kelly even exited school I was aware of who was living nearby and shared the same interests. I exchanged emails and phone numbers and talked to parents about my desire to keep in touch. Over the past two years we have taken turns to form activities that our adult children could participate in and have met new friends so our circle of friends has grown!

We have participated in a bowling group where a day and time are picked and anyone can come and join in and bowl for a couple of hours. For this event I suggest talking with your local bowling alley to pick a time when they are not busy so that you are assured to get enough space for your group. Over the years the group has grown and since you only pay if you come it has been greatly received.

Feed My Starving Children, an organization that has volunteers pack food packs for areas of the world that need assistance in feeding their citizens, is another place to create outings that bring our adult children together to have some fun and volunteer for a good cause. This is also a place where certain job skills like following directions, staying on task and working together can be practiced. We usually went out for lunch beforehand and then worked a two hour shift. There are other organizations that also would love volunteers, like the Northern Illinois Food Bank, and depending upon where you live you could check out what is available in your area.

Another idea is to form your own activities for social interaction. Game night or movie night is always well attended. We also started a Bunco group and it has been well received. We had to modify the game a little bit so that it was easier for our adults to be independent and to try and remove the parents as much as possible so that they can run the game without too much interference. The game is usually played with partners with one person keeping score at each table. We modified the game so that each player keeps his or her own score and then the two players from each table with the highest score would move to the next table. If you are not sure how to play this game you can google it and get an explanation. You can modify any game to suit your players and our group caught on to the rules right away.

The Special Recreation Association in your area offer many classes that are always more fun when they are attended with friends! We send out emails to our friends to let them know what we are signing up for. We have had a lot of fun growing our group and keeping in touch by simply sharing our information.

One thing that I have learned is that it takes some time to initiate and facilitate social activities in your area. I have touched on a few things that we have done, but I am sure we can help each other out with ideas and advice. We would love to hear about what others are doing or creating to keep their adults active and social. Let us know by emailing us at info@nads.org with your ideas or success stories. We will be sure to pass along any ideas we receive so that we keep the information flowing!
Erika Kissel’s Employment at Still Middle School

Jill Ghosn

My name is Jill and I am the manager at a middle school and employed by Aramark. Erika Kissel is my employee and has been working in our school district for more than 12 years. I have had the opportunity to work with Erika five years ago and now as her manager. She has continued to grow in both her responsibilities in the kitchen and in her knowledge of safety and practices in our kitchen environment. When I was asked to come to the middle school and manage our staff, I was told this school had a unique staff. I tell everyone that I work with the best group of people anyone could work with. I can tell you, without a doubt, that employing individuals with disabilities in our community has a positive impact on my workplace.

Erika is a joy to have in our kitchen. She is always smiling and cheerful. When things are not going quite right, she puts the situation in perspective and lets you know it is not so bad. I have challenged her this school year and asked her to do additional things, different and new things, and she has embraced every challenge, never backing away from anything I have asked. She is willing to help anyone in the kitchen who needs help and will go out of her way to make sure everyone is okay. All of our students are very understanding with Erika. If Erika is serving pizza, they are very patient and they talk to her and answer her questions, never seeing her disability, just her as a person.

I believe that Erika being in our school is having not only a positive impact on our employees but also the students who see her daily. Everyone who comes into contact with her sees her positive attitude and her huge smile, and they are contagious. Erika is also showing two of our special needs middle school students around our kitchen. The students will be going to the high school and working in the kitchen next year so we are showing them what it will be like. I was so proud of Erika when the students came in on the first day and I heard Erika tell them that in our kitchen safety comes first. She knows how important safety is at Aramark and she started out telling these new students that message. She continued by telling them they needed to wear a hairnet and how long they needed to wash their hands. She is now showing others what she has learned in the kitchen so when other students with disabilities graduate and move out into the workforce, they will understand what it will be like for them. Erika continues to amaze me and teach me something each and every day.

It is a joy to have Erika in our kitchen and she not only has a positive impact on the school community daily but she has a positive impact on all of our lives.

Linked-In Presentation

NADS Self Advocates, Kelly Neville and Julia Smarto, along with NADS Program Coordinator, Linda Smarto, were invited to give a presentation July 17 at Linked-In as part of Linked-In’s initiative to learn more about possibilities for employing individuals with disabilities at their organization. Linked-In also made a generous donation to NADS, for which we are very grateful. Many thanks to Sean Campbell and the other members of the Linked-In team who helped to organize this event.
family album

Claire & Grace Watkin

Dale & Reegan Personal

Marcus Castaneda-Wolaver & his dad, Vicente

Charlie Yarbrough & Annie Beazley

Jake Scott... & Elvis

NADS Needs Your Photos!
Send your Family Album photos to NADS! c/o shebein@nads.org
National Association for Down Syndrome presents

SOARING WITH THE STARS

10th Annual Luncheon & Fashion Show

Sunday, October 18, 2015
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
Rosemont, IL

This event will feature children and adults with Down syndrome modeling their own style. Doors open at 10:30 AM with the Silent Auction and Choice Raffle, Reserved Luncheon Seating begins at 11:30 AM and the Fashion Show at 1:00 PM. Proceeds from this event support the programs NADS provides to children and adults with Down syndrome and their families.

NADS 10th Annual Luncheon & Fashion Show

Space is limited...RSVP by October 1, 2015

Yes, I/We will attend

Guest Names:

I would like to be seated with:

No I/We cannot attend, but would like to make a contribution as indicated:

☐ $1,000   ☐ $500   ☐ $250   ☐ $100   ☐ $50   ☐ $25   ☐ Other: ____________

Check Enclosed ☐  Credit Card* ☐

Total $ ____________ To be charged to: ☐ Visa  ☐ Mastercard  ☐ AmEx  ☐ Discover

Account No: ________________________ Exp. Date: ________________________

Code: ________________________ Signature: ________________________

Name ________________________

Address ________________________ City, State, Zip ________________________

Email Address ________________________ Phone Number ________________________

Please mail to: NADS Fashion Show, 1460 Renaissance Drive, Suite #405, Park Ridge, Illinois  60068

Reservations, sponsorship, and contributions can also be made online at www.nads.org.

Please contact NADS at 630-325-9112 for more information.

Thank you for supporting the National Association for Down Syndrome!

* Additional processing fees may apply with a credit card payment.
Membership Application

Membership dues can be paid online at www.nads.org

Name: ........................................................................................................................................
Address: ................................................................................................................................
City: .................................................................................................................................
State: ......... ZIP: ...........................................
Phone: (home) ....................................................................................................................
Phone: (work) ......................................................................................................................
Email Address: .......................................................................................................................

Please add me to the NADS e-mail alert list

Category of Membership (check one)

- Parent:  $25.00 (1 Year)  $70.00 (3 Year) Child’s birthdate ............/............/..................
- Professional*: $30.00 (1 Year)  $85.00 (3 Year)

Please indicate professional involvement....................................................................................

Donation level:

- Contributor  $100.00 (1 Year)  $300.00 (3 Year)  
- Patron  $50.00 (1 Year)  $150.00 (3 Year)
- $100 (+)  ($500 +)  ($1000 +)

Check if renewal

Make checks payable to: NADS and send to:
1460 Renaissance Drive, Suite 405, Park Ridge, IL 60068

Change Service Requested

NADS Gift Membership

Your child’s favorite teacher, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and even your child’s favorite teacher, are all great recipients of a NADS Membership as a gift! Please send a NADS gift membership to:

Name: ........................................................................................................................................
Address: ................................................................................................................................
Phone: .................................................................................................................................
Relationship: ....................................................

$20 per recipient should be enclosed and sent to:
National Association for Down Syndrome
1460 Renaissance Drive, Suite 405
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Disclaimer Policy Statement

The editor reserves the right to make any such condonations as necessary in accordance with established editorial policy in material submitted.

The editor of this newsletter writes as a non-professional. NADS does not promote any therapy, treatment, institution or professional system, etc.

Special Gift!

A NADS Membership is the perfect gift for grandparents, aunts and uncles and even your child’s favorite teacher!

A NADS Gift Membership is the perfect gift for grandparents, aunts and uncles and even your child’s favorite teacher!

www.nads.org