

THE DSG News

PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME - VALUED AND INCLUDED

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E D O W N S Y N D R O M E G U I L D O F D A L L A S

January/February 2017

Affiliate of the National
Down Syndrome Congress
and the National Down
Syndrome Society



Monday, May 22, 2017

Dallas Athletic Club

4111 Dallas Athletic Club Drive

Dallas, TX 75228

12:30 pm shotgun start

\$175 individual player fee / \$600 for a team of four players

*(includes cart and green fee, driving range, lunch/dinner,
goodie bag and refreshments on course)*

Join Herb's Paint & Body in supporting the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas at the 2017 Herb's Paint & Body/DSG Golf Classic! The Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas and Herb's Paint & Body are partnering once again to raise funds that will allow the Down Syndrome Guild to carry out its mission of providing accurate and current information, resources, and support for people with Down syndrome, their families, and the community. The DSG will receive all proceeds of the tournament which will be used to fund the programs and long-term growth of the organization.

Don't wait; register your team today by downloading a packet at <http://downsyndromedallas.org/golf-tournament>. There are also many sponsorship opportunities available for companies as well as individuals. For example, families can honor their child by becoming a hole sponsor for only \$500. Drawing tickets will also be available for purchase soon with your chance to win great prizes such as sporting event tickets, sports memorabilia, travel packages, and much more.

For additional information about the 2017 tournament, please visit our website at <http://downsyndromedallas.org/golf-tournament> or contact Jennifer Ford at jennifer@downsyndromedallas.org or (214) 267-1374.

NDSC Convention Scholarship Opportunity

Thursday, July 20 - Sunday,
July 23, 2017; Sacramento,
California

The DSG is now accepting scholarship applications to attend the 45th Annual National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) Convention at the Sacramento Convention Center in Sacramento, California.

Each year, thousands of people from across the globe attend the NDSC Convention. For most, it's to hear the latest information from world-renowned experts. For others, it's a great vacation. But, for nearly all, there's the one-of-a-kind family reunion feeling that permeates the convention weekend. Complete details about this year's convention can be found on the NDSC website at <http://www.ndscenter.org/the-convention/>.

If you are interested in applying for a scholarship to this year's convention, please visit our website at <http://downsyndromedallas.org/membership> for more details and to download an application. **Applications must be received no later than Friday, February 10, 2017, for consideration.**

GREAT WAY TO HONOR LOVED ONES

Club 21

is a Down Syndrome Guild program to honor a loved one: matching the numeral of the important chromosome that affects our children.

Happy Birthday Kellie Barrett; in honor of Dylan Taylor.

From: Wayne & Judy Lebleu

Merry Christmas Avery Cunningham! I love you and hope you have an amazing Christmas!

From: Aunt Christine

Jonathan McGill, keep up the good work in school. We're proud of you!

From: Barbara Blonz

In memory of Kim Boucher.

From: Milagros Estella

In loving memory of Lisa Kay Welton.

From: Jessica Welton

In loving memory of Kenneth Webb.

From: Susn Ranspot

Merry Christmas to Melanie Jensen.

From: Susan Castellow

Interested in making a Club 21 donation? Contact Jennifer Ford at (214) 267-1374 or e-mail jennifer@downsyndromedallas.org.

President's Message *By Lynn Campbell*

We have just said goodbye to 2016 and are looking ahead to the new year. Before moving forward and getting busy in the planning and activities of 2017, it's a good idea to allow you and your loved ones some rest and rejuvenation time. The winter holidays, while fun, can leave us exhausted. Our routines have been off for much of the last month. It's time to rest, re-group and then get back on track.

The DSG staff, committees, and Board have been busy working on programs, events, resources, and ways to continue strong with our mission to provide accurate and current information, resources and support for people with Down syndrome, their families, and the community. We have a diverse membership with varied needs. What brings us together is our vision of valuing and including people with Down

syndrome.

Regardless of the age of your loved one, friend, or student with Down syndrome, we have something for you. Our 2017 SPRING series sessions include information regarding reading and literacy, advocating for your child, parental rights in the IEP/ARD process, IEP planning, and more. This year we've added to our SPRING series a full day seminar in April with Julie Harmon, Inclusion Coordinator at the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs and mom of two sons with Down syndrome. You won't want to miss these sessions. Look for emails and on the DSG website for up-to-date information about events for new and expectant parents, preschoolers, youth, teens, adults, as well as Dads and Moms.

I look forward to seeing you at DSG events in 2017. Happy New Year!

Important Newsletter Information

You may have already noticed that this edition of The DSG News is titled January/February 2017. Beginning in January, the DSG will now be producing a bi-monthly newsletter instead of monthly. You will enjoy the same informational articles, event notifications, and updates from our staff and Board of Directors as in previous newsletters; however, you will now be receiving your issue of The DSG News in the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November. We encourage you to update your e-mail address with Samantha Escherich

at (214) 267-1374 or samantha@downsyndromedallas.org if you are not currently receiving our ongoing e-mail reminders and notifications as well. We often share various articles, event photos, and opportunities in the community that may not meet the time sensitivities of the newsletter. All DSG upcoming activities and events, DSG Ambassador spotlights, and other community offerings will also always be posted on our website at www.downsyndromedallas.org and also highlighted on our official Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/DallasDSG.



Early Literacy Instruction

Saturday, January 21, 2017

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas

1702 N. Collins Blvd. Suite 170

Richardson, TX 75080

Cost: \$0 (Registration is required at <http://downsyndromedallas.org/spring-education-series>.)

Registration closes January 18 or until max attendance has been reached.)

Presented by Stephanie Al Otaiba, Francesca Jones, and Miriam Ortiz, Southern Methodist University

This seminar will focus on early literacy instruction for students with intellectual disabilities. We will give an update of the research we are conducting to teach reading to students with ID including some examples of our books, materials, and the assessments we have used. We will also discuss more broadly some of the critical features that we have identified for success in early reading instruction and provide some information and ideas about what parents and teachers can do to support their beginning reader.

Understanding Your Child's Educational Rights

Saturday, February 18, 2017

9:00 am - 1:00 pm (Boxed lunch will be provided)

Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas

1702 N. Collins Blvd. Suite 170

Richardson, TX 75080

Cost: \$0 (Registration is required at <http://downsyndromedallas.org/spring-education-series>.)

Registration closes February 14 or until max attendance has been reached.)

Presented by Roy Atwood, Special Education Law attorney at Atwood Gameraos LLP

After 14 years as a Trial Practice partner at Jones Day, one of the ten largest law firms in the world, Mr. Atwood retired and opened Atwood Gameraos LLP with the intent of providing clients with efficient and high quality service at reasonable rates. Drawing upon experiences learned as the parent of a child with special needs, Roy began representing students and their caregivers in their efforts to obtain the free and appropriate public education promised them under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Since 2013, Roy has represented clients in numerous Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee meetings, 504 plan meetings, special education due process hearings, and federal court.

During the seminar, Mr. Atwood will discuss the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) process, the components of a effective Individualized Education Plan (IEP), understanding your legal rights, and how to effectively advocate for your student. Attendees will also have the opportunity to learn from members of our parent panel and ask questions of our parents and experts.

Please Note: *Childcare is NOT provided for this particular seminar series, and parents are encouraged to make other arrangements for childcare out of respect for all our attendees. Should you have any further questions or need assistance with registration, please contact Jennifer Ford at (214) 267-1374 or jennifer@downsyndromedallas.org.*

Pottery Painting for Teens Ages 13-17

Saturday, January 28, 2017
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Quiggly's Clayhouse
1344 E. Belt Line Rd
Richardson, Texas 75081

Teens ages 13-17 are invited to join peers for an afternoon of meeting new friends, catching up and painting their own beautiful pottery piece. Teens will choose a piece of pottery, their paint colors, and decorate as they wish. Pottery will be available for pick-up at the DSG office 2 weeks after the event. Please RSVP with the name of the teen joining to Samantha Escherich at samantha@downsyndromedallas.org or (214) 267-1374 **no later than Wednesday, January 18, 2017.**

Ambassador Spotlight - Chase



Chase has a smile that could light up any room, or park for that matter. When the Down Syndrome Guild met Chase at Klyde Warren Park this fall for his photo shoot, one of the first things we noticed was a warm smile that widened even more when he met a furry friend named Ramona. Chase loves dogs, so he and Ramona became fast friends. Chase enjoyed playing fetch at the dog park and showering Ramona with lots of hugs and even a few kisses.

In Chase's hometown of Rockwall, his sweet personality shines through not only at home with his family, but also at school and in the community. Chase's mom, Christie, describes her son as someone who is always trying to help out and make someone's day. These qualities are some of the many unique traits that make Chase such a great brother and a big man on his school campus as well. Chase has been described as an ambassador

for his school—he knows everyone, and everyone knows Chase. Chase attends first grade in a general education classroom, and the active seven-year-old also participates in kids Crossfit and inclusive soccer with his typically developing friends.



Chase's kind nature and sweet smile not only had an impact on us and Ramona that late fall day, but also to those in his family, school, and the community as a whole. Chase and his family truly embody the mission and vision of the Down Syndrome Guild, and we are honored to recognize him as the Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas Self Advocate Ambassador for January 2017.



Ambassador Spotlight - Sabeel



Sabeel

is a little less than two years old, but this girl and her family have already had a huge impact in their community. Ayah, Sabeel's mother, had these powerful words to say when asked how she felt Sabeel embodied the mission and vision of the DSG- "I don't know how to explain what type of joy Sabeel brings to whoever encounters her. Even at less than two years old, she embodies hope for a culture that is slowly changing its taboo ways of thinking that Down syndrome is a shame. I say this because I have seen it. When we had Sabeel, I was told to not tell anyone that she had Down syndrome because it would ruin my boy's chances to get married as well as my daughter's. I honestly scoffed at this. I was disgusted and saddened because I knew this person did not know any better."

Ayah went on to say, "From then, it was my goal to try to educate my community about Down syndrome and that it isn't the end of the world. It has been a slow process but nothing

showed more amazing improvement than the 100 people that showed up for the Buddy Walk® this past November! We created videos and a Facebook page to promote Sabeel's Superheros. Lately, besides promoting anything to do with research or the DSG on social media, I speak to youth groups and adults in our community to try to move forward in having a society that

Sabeel with her mother, Ayah



can understand Down syndrome is not a disease. It is not something that needs to be hidden from society, but something we should be aware of and that anyone with Down syndrome should be treated as an equal."

We are certain that this sweet, bright eyed toddler who loves to swim, climb, and play with her beloved wand will continue to change perceptions all over the world. We couldn't be more proud to have Sabeel represent the DSG as our Self Advocate Ambassador for February 2017.



Jesters Performance Viewing for Adult Self Advocates 18+

Saturday, February 18, 2017
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Highland Park United
Methodist Church, Wesley Hall
3300 Mockingbird Lane
Dallas, TX 75205

Adults ages 18+ are welcome to join their friends to see this years Jesters Performance. Jesters is a theater group comprised of older teens (ages 16 and up) and adults with special needs. This troupe of actors works with professional directors to write and perform a musical performance. Many of our very own DSG members will be performing and would love to see you there!

Space is limited and RSVP is required to Samantha Escherich at (214) 267-1374 or samantha@downsyndromedallas.org no later than Friday, February 3, 2017.

Parents' Night Out

Saturday, January 28, 2017
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Celebration Restaurant
4503 West Lovers Lane
Dallas, TX 75209

Time for you and your significant other to have a night out and enjoy time with other parents. Couples will join together for a fun evening at Celebration Restaurant sharing a meal together and getting to know new friends and catching up with old friends. Child care is not provided, therefore please plan accordingly. Space is limited and reserved for those who are able to attend. RSVP to Samantha Escherich at (214) 267-1374 or samantha@downsyndromedallas.org no later than Friday, January 20, 2017.

IMPCT White Elephant Gift Exchange



Teen Holiday Treats Party



New Parent Meeting for Families with Children Ages 0-2 Years Old

Sunday, January 22, 2017

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Down Syndrome Guild of Dallas

1702 N. Collins Blvd. Suite 170

Richardson, TX 75080

The Joys and Challenges of Raising a Child with Ds Parent Panel

Join other new parents (*with children ages 0-2 with Down syndrome*) as we gather information, meet new friends, and share resources. Our panel of "experts" will share their personal experiences on the joys and challenges often associated with raising a child with Down syndrome. There will be ample time for Q&A as well as opportunities to connect with other families. Light snacks and childcare will be provided. Childcare space is limited and families must RSVP to Samantha Escherich at samantha@downsyndromedallas.org or (214) 267-1374 ***no later than Friday, January 13, 2017. When making a reservation, please include the number of children needing childcare, their names, ages, and any additional information you think would be helpful to our childcare workers.***

CooCoos Play Time for Families with Child Ages 0-4

Saturday, February 25, 2017
10:00 am - 12:00am
CooCoos

6505 W Park Blvd. Suite 250
Plano, TX 75093

Families with a child ages 0-4 are welcome to join other families at CooCoos – where kids can come and have a crazy time! Siblings and children will have fun in the unique bounce house facility enjoying open play on all the bounce house equipment. Families must check-in by 10:00 am in order to have the set 2 full hours of play time. Please RSVP with the number of adults and the number of children joining to Samantha Escherich at samantha@downsyndromedallas.org or (214) 267-1374 ***no later than Friday, February 17, 2017.***

Mommy & Me for Ages 0-4

Tuesdays, January 10 -
May 9, 2017
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Jewish Community Center
7900 Northaven Road
Dallas, TX 75230

The Down Syndrome Guild invites caregivers of children with Down syndrome ages 0 to 4 years old to this fun learning experience. The class will be taught by Cynthia Casper. Cynthia is a master teacher with a degree in Early Childhood Education who has over 20

years experience teaching preschool children. Mornings will include music, art, free play, movement activities, informal parenting discussions, as well as joining together with other children for an outdoor playground experience.

There is no fee to attend; however, space is limited. Reserve your space today by contacting Samantha Escherich at (214) 267-1374 or samantha@downsyndromedallas.org.

1702 N. COLLINS BLVD.
SUITE 170
RICHARDSON, TX 75080
Return Service Requested

[\(214\) 267-1374](tel:(214)267-1374)
WWW.DOWNSYNDROMEDALLAS.ORG
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DALLASDSG

MISSION STATEMENT: THE DOWN SYNDROME GUILD OF DALLAS PROVIDES ACCURATE AND CURRENT INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY.

VISION STATEMENT: PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME - VALUED AND INCLUDED.

DOWN SYNDROME CLINIC EVERY THURSDAY AND FRIDAY AT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER.
CALL (214) 456-2357

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Down Syndrome Guild Calendar of Events



January

- January 21** - Reunion de Grupo de Familias Unidas
- January 21** - Early Literacy Instruction Seminar
- January 22** - New Parent Meeting for Families with Children Ages 0-2 Years
- January 28** - Parents' Night Out
- January 28** - Pottery Painting for Teens



February

- February 18** - Understanding Your Child's Educational Rights Seminar
- February 18** - Jesters Performance Viewing for Adult Self Advocates 18+
- February 25** - CooCoos Play Time for Families with Child Ages 0-4