

TWP CONNECTS

SUMMER 2017 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 7

Connecting people with disabilities to the resources they need

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The Inaugural Night of Independence Gala

The inaugural Night of Independence Awards Gala will honor individuals and organizations that are working to further The Whole Person's mission to assist people with disabilities to live independently. The evening will feature dinner, dancing, an auction, and a "balloon pop."

The honorary chairs for this event are Fred and Jami Pryor. Jami and Fred are long-time Kansas Citians who have years of involvement in helping many great causes in Kansas City. Together, they share an interest in serving the needs of people with disabilities because they have friends and family members with disabilities. Jami and Fred became aware of The Whole Person a few years ago while researching options for services for their granddaughter.

They state: *"We were amazed at the variety of services that The Whole Person offers. We remain particularly impressed that a large percentage of their staff and board are people who have disabilities, and are excited to serve as the Honorary Chairs for the Inaugural Night of Independence Awards Gala."*

Nyle DiMarco – an actor, model and activist – will serve as our honored guest for the evening. Nyle is a native New Yorker and was born into a large multi-generational Deaf family. He was taught sign language, as well as English, from birth. He has over twenty-five Deaf family members. Nyle is the first Deaf

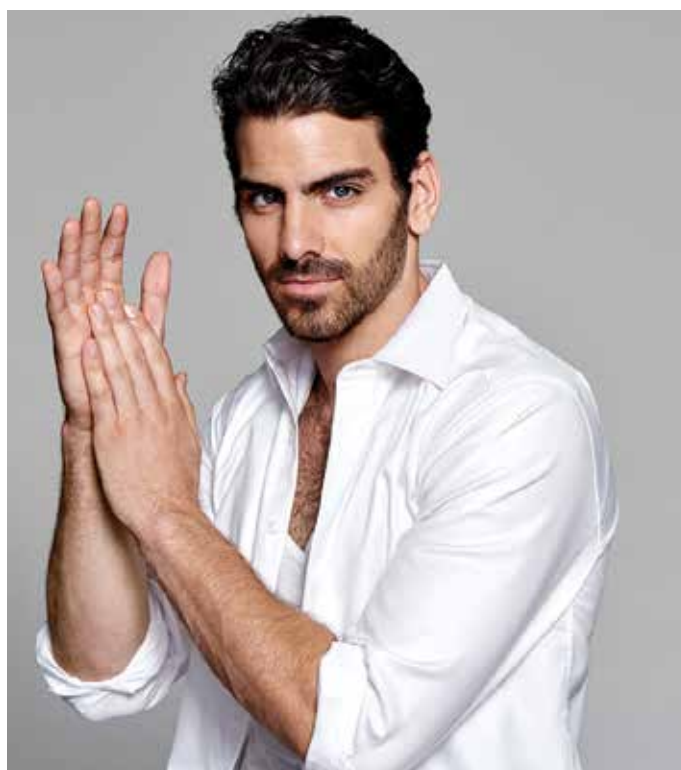
person to win either *America's Next Top Model* or *Dancing With the Stars* (and he won both!).

Nyle uses American Sign Language, which requires the use of facial expressions and body movements. His Deafness amplifies his natural talent and he sees his Deafness as an asset, not a limitation. As a founder of the Nyle DiMarco Foundation and an honorary spokesperson for Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K), Nyle is passionate about language, literacy and advocacy within the Deaf community.

Nyle is a signer and creative collaborator on The ASL App (by Ink & Salt), an app created by native Deaf signers to teach conversational American Sign Language (ASL).

The Night of Independence Gala will also feature an awards ceremony. Our annual awards categories are:

- **Individual Award**
- **Corporate/Organization Award**
- **Civic Leader Award**
- **Volunteer of the Year Award**



Nyle DiMarco will be the keynote speaker at the Night of Independence Gala in September.

- **Organization/Corporate Volunteer Group of the Year Award**
- **Paul H. Levy Founders Award**

Visit our website at www.thewholeperson.org/gala to fill out a nomination form, sign up to sponsor the event or buy tickets.

Make plans now to attend this festive and fun event.

Contact Terri Goddard for sponsorship benefits at 816-627-2220 or tgoddard@thewholeperson.org.

MISSION

The Whole Person connects people with disabilities to the resources they need by supporting independent choice and advocating for positive change in the community.

VISION

The Whole Person envisions a fully accessible community where opportunities and choices are not limited by disability.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rick O'Neal, President

Genny Manly-Klocek,

Vice President

Debbie Housh, Secretary

James Geary

Marcia Klostermann

Joseph Matovu

Mike McCord

Ben McLean

Patrick Pruitt

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An accessible PDF, screen reader compatible file, is available in the newsletter archive on our website.

From the CEO

Just like the new growth of spring, The Whole Person has been unfolding several new developments that are important for the future of our organization.

- For the past five years, In-Home Care Solutions has been a separate organization housed in TWP's building. TWP has been instrumental in providing the resources necessary to help In-Home Care Solutions grow. The Boards of both organizations decided eight months ago to move the in-home program fully into the TWP organization in order to combine the resources and efficiencies of both organizations. We are happy to report that the Missouri Department of Social Services approved The Whole Person's In-Home Care program and authorized us to begin providing services on March 13, 2017. All consumers and staff are now under the TWP umbrella of programs.
- As of April 8, 2017, TWP has become the proud owner of a home health agency through a change of ownership purchase agreement. The Whole Person's Home Health Care program is currently located in Saint Joseph, Missouri, with a plan for expansion into the Kansas City area sometime next year. Combining home health care services with our consumer directed services program – as well as the in-home care services that we added in March – has created a full array of community healthcare programs that will better serve all our consumers while ensuring independent living in their homes.



- TWP's strategic planning process has led to our decision to seek the development of social enterprise businesses. This allows the organization to continue to diversify funding streams while at the same time creating opportunities to enhance current programs such as TWP's Employment Services. The business we create will allow our employment consumers to experience different job training opportunities. We hope to announce our new enterprise soon. Stay tuned!

Julie DeJean, CEO

TWP Programs and Services

- Independent Living Services
- Consumer Directed Services
- Employment Services
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Individual and Systems Advocacy
- Telecommunications Access Program (TAP)
- Mental Health Services
- Transition Services
- The Whole Family Project
- Blindness Low Vision Experience
- Youth and Adult Services

July Jubilee

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. The law was a culmination of decades of work and advocacy by hundreds of people with disabilities. The law has been instrumental in improving the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities. TWP celebrates this landmark law every year by hosting our July Jubilee. This year the event will be held on Saturday, July 29th and Monday, July 31st.

On Saturday from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm at TWP headquarters, we will welcome everyone from the community to come celebrate. DJ Chad Slader will play tunes throughout the day. Chris Cakes will offer their famous pancakes 9:00 am to noon, and later in the day, local food trucks will sell their delicious fare to hungry shoppers at our Makers Fair and Flea Market. There will be activities for the entire family.

Monday's event starts at 10:00 am and continues to 2:00 pm as we celebrate the

ADA with consumers and neighbors. The Whole Person will invite elected officials or legislators and advocates to share information about what is going on in local and state government and discuss ways people with disabilities can continue to advocate for better accessibility and inclusion. Conga Jim and the Coconuts will be in the parking lot to entertain people while they check out vendors who serve people with disabilities. We will offer an all-American lunch of hot dogs and fixin's at no charge to those who attend Monday's celebration.

Whether you are a supporter, a neighbor or a TWP consumer, we want you to enjoy the July Jubilee and celebrate how far we have come in fighting for the rights of people with disabilities.

Be sure to mark your calendar to celebrate the 27th anniversary of the ADA with The Whole Person.

For vendor information, visit
www.thewholeperson.org/jubilee or
contact Lea Klepees at
lklepees@thewholeperson.org

Roll on Capitol Hill

United Spinal Association, a national organization that supports and advocates for people with spinal cord injury and diseases, is hosting their annual Roll on Capitol Hill in June. Adam Lane, Development and Community Relations Specialist for TWP, will be representing TWP and will be one of three people representing The Greater Kansas City Spinal Cord Injury Association at the event. Members of United Spinal Association from all over the country will converge on Washington D.C. June 11-14.

Each year, United Spinal Association picks two or three legislative issues that require urgent attention in order for their members to advocate for people with disabilities. Members arrive on Sunday and there is a welcome reception that evening. Monday morning, everyone meets for an all-day training to prepare for visits with their representatives on Tuesday. Topics covered range from ways to be effective telling your story, current

legislative issues effecting people with disabilities, and talking points each person may want to share with their representatives. Although there are several points that could be discussed, the last couple of years, the focus has been on keeping and improving access to the equipment needed to live with paralysis. Recent years have brought cuts and changes to Medicare and access to custom wheelchairs. United Spinal Association and their members have been fighting to make sure that people living with paralysis have access to the equipment needed to live healthy, independent lives.

Prior to the event, the United Spinal Association makes contact with each participant's senators and congressperson, and sets up appointments for the member to either talk to the participant's representative or their legislative aid. Tuesday, the membership participants Roll on Capitol Hill and make their voices heard. In years past, participants have shared that they felt like they were contributing to democracy in

a way they never thought possible, and that, although they may not see immediate results, they were advancing accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities in their community.



Adam and Graham from The Whole Person will be attending the Roll on Capital Hill in June.

TWP Wish List

**New or gently used tools for yardwork:
rakes, loppers, hand pruners, yard waste bags, gloves, and twine for our fall yard cleanup event.**

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- Music Stands
- 1-inch black binders
- Digital Keyboard/Piano for the Tota Voces choir

■ ■ ■

To donate, please contact
Terri Goddard at
816-627-2220 or
tgoddard@thewholeperson.org

FACES OF TWP



1. Cathleen sits with Camille at the #TWPGETTINGSOCIAL event that happens the first Tuesday of each month from 2:00-4:00 pm at TWP. **2.** TWP staff Beverly, Angie, Kelly and Allycia volunteered to make dinner for families at Ronald McDonald House in April. **3.** (From left) Graham, Adam, Sheila, Paxton, Callie and Elf welcome visitors to The Whole Person. **4.** Wayne (left) and Twintenia attend the Fair Housing & Universal Design Seminar hosted by TWP and Kansas City Regional Association of Realtors in March. **5.** Jeremy volunteers every month to help us with our shredding. Thanks, Jeremy! **6.** Letiah poses with students in the Youth Transition program.

FACES OF TWP



7. Christian (left) and Martin attend the Expressions Art Exhibition to Kansas City Young Audiences on April 7. **8.** Clark (left) Bruce Harvey, JCCC and Jacob attend Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day in Topeka. **9.** Staff of TWP and consumers attend Disability Rights Legislative Day in Jefferson City and discuss concerns with Rep. Jason Holsman. **10.** Heather is the director of the newly formed "Tota Voces" inclusive choir at TWP. **11.** Jason teaches staff at TWP to cook healthy in a Friday cooking class. **12.** (From left) Adam, Bonnie, Lea and Laurie attend the SCI/D Peer Group held at the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art in April.

EVENT CALENDAR

For specific locations and times of the events listed, visit our calendar at thewholeperson.org.

JUNE 6

TWP Getting Social trip to KC Zoo

JUNE 7, 21

What is your Story?

JUNE 8:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group

JUNE 13:

Life With Spinal Cord Injuries or Related Disabilities (SCI/D) BBQ

JUNE 14 & 28:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

JUNE 20:

Deaf Peer Social and Support Group

JUNE 27:

Consumer Advocacy Group

JULY 4:

Closed for Independence Day Holiday

JULY 6:

SCI/D at The Whole Person

JULY 12 & 26:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

JULY 13:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group

JULY 25:

Consumer Advocacy Group

JULY 29 & 31:

July Jubilee

AUGUST 1

TWP Getting Social Cooking Class

AUGUST 9 & 23:

Mental Health Peer Mentoring Group

AUGUST 10:

Brain Injury Peer Support Group

AUGUST 22:

Consumer Advocacy Group

Do you like to sing?

JOIN THE TWP CHOIR!!



Rehearsals

6-8:00 pm at

The Whole Person

Every other Weds.

(May 10, May 24, June 7, June 21, July 5, July 19)

"WHOLE VOICES"
AN INCLUSIVE CHOIR
FROM THE WHOLE PERSON

Open to EVERYONE at ANY singing level,
12 years and up!

Learn more, or sign up here:

thewholeperson.org/choir

Questions? Call Heather at 816-853-3434

Youth Services

One of the responsibilities of The Whole Person's Youth Services staff is to provide direct one-on-one assistance for young people with personal mental health and wellness needs, from those with mental or emotional disability diagnoses to students with other disabilities who experienced anxiety, depression or other impediments to coping with challenges. Advocates also work one-on-one with youth whose parent or guardian requests shorter-term assistance through TWP's Information & Referral call center.

High school students with mental health challenges are provided with advocacy services that include onsite counseling at their schools. For example:

The mother of a high school student with mental health disabilities was referred to TWP by the Mayor's office for assistance with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and "504 advocacy*" for her daughter,

whose mental health issues were contributing to behavioral problems in school including elopement and aggression.

Initially, the school did not provide the supports needed by the student to keep her safe at school, such as a paraprofessional and harness for the school bus. The result of TWP's advocacy meetings was that the school agreed to provide the school bus harness, a paraprofessional who accompanies the student at all times, and some goldfish for her to care for in the classroom. At the mother's request, the TWP Advocate also attended one of the student's therapy sessions to advocate for a psychological medical evaluation to clarify her mental health diagnosis.

Another example concerns a family in crisis that needed someone to understand the full background of the children's behavioral issues at school, including previous incidents of domestic

violence and sexual assaults. With permission from the children's mother, TWP was able to divulge nominal details about the children's trauma and provide clarity for the school board. With this information, the school board was able to see the connection between the diagnoses and the behavior; expulsion was averted and evaluations have been scheduled for all of the children. The children's mother, a former gang member, whose strength, intelligence and persistence got her into college, said, "If I can be the one voice in the wilderness to inspire others, that's what I want." Here's to continuing the journey of self-sufficiency and advocacy. Thank you for inspiring us to continue to do the work we do!

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was created to prevent discrimination in the classroom due to a disability. A **504 plan** specifies **accommodations** that will help the student *succeed in school*.

Planting Independence One Yard at a Time

Helping people with disabilities get their yards cleaned up for spring was how over 150 volunteers spent their morning on Saturday, April 22nd. When TWP first started the semi-annual *Planting Independence* project, we were only able to complete yard work for 17 consumers. In the short time since its inception, the project has already grown to 30 homes. This year, for the first time, we had a waiting list of people wanting help to get their yard in order.

Yard maintenance can be difficult for people with disabilities to manage, and TWP had volunteers looking for projects to help, so we put the two groups together in spring 2016. "We were able to take care of 17 homes last spring, 25 last fall, and now we're up to 30 homes! We hope we can help more and more people and grow the event each time we do it," said Terri Goddard, Resource Development Manager.

wanted to continue to work, contacted TWP staff and were sent to help teams that were working on yards that needed a little extra attention. The teams mowed lawns, raked leaves, pulled weeds, cleaned growth off fences, and any other light yardwork that needed to be done. *"I couldn't think of a better way to spend a Saturday morning! A group of friends working together, helping others, and enjoying being outside – it just doesn't get any better than that,"* said Kevin Delaney when asked what he thought of the event.

Keep an eye out: We will be *Planting Independence One Yard at a Time* once again this fall. We will need volunteers, tools, and clean-up supplies.



Volunteers Barry, Sandi, Erin, Lisa and Kelly were excited to help our consumers with yard work!

If you are interested in volunteering with TWP, or have questions, please contact Kelly Grooms at kgrooms@thewholeperson.org or visit us on the web at www.thewholeperson.org to find out more information.

Groups of 6-8 people were put into teams and sent to a home. Those teams that were able to finish their yards quickly and

Expressions Art Exhibition Opening Night

On Friday, April 7, The Whole Person was proud to host the opening night celebration of Expressions Art Exhibition 2017. Expressions was started to celebrate artists' abilities and unique talents, add diversity to the Kansas City arts community, and expose audiences to art that otherwise might not be seen. The Exhibition includes the opening night, and a traveling exhibit of the art displayed throughout the Kansas City Metro area over the following year. Locations where the exhibition will be displayed include a Johnson County Library and in the classroom and event space at The Nelson-Akins Museum of Art. Besides having their work displayed, artists in the 2017 exhibition receive a stipend and professional development training. The development training will be provided by Artist INC and this year's cost of the training is covered by a grant Artist INC received.

The opening night was a great success. Kansas City Young Audiences hosted the event and welcomed almost 500 people to enjoy the works of art as well as live entertainment. Dancers from Kansas City Young Audiences, The Golden Stars, Project Access, and Pulse Performing Arts all provided performance art. Jim Conga and The Coconuts provided great music to end the night.

While enjoying all the entertainment, guests could have their photo taken at our photo booth, create their own works of art at our tile art station, purchase pieces of art in the silent auction, try to win a bottle of wine in the wine ring toss, or just relax with a beverage and a light snack. The highlight for most visitors was the ability to meet and talk with the artists while taking in their wonderful work.

Thank you to all our guests and volunteers for a great evening!

To view a photo slideshow of the Expressions Opening Night, visit www.thewholeperson.org/expressions.



Artists and performers from the Expressions Art Exhibition opening night at Kansas City Young Audiences on April 7: 1. Eric Grimes 2. John Sutton 3. Sherry Buerky 4. Kathryn Husk 5. Ryan Schwarzenberger 6. Joan Finn 7. Donald David Ford 8. Kassidee Quaranta 9. Dancers from The Pulse Performing Arts Center 10. The Golden Stars 11. Jim Conga and The Coconuts 12. Arthurine Reliford 13. Rene Leighty 14. Kaci Story

*Connecting people with disabilities
to the resources they need.*

3710 Main Street, Kansas City, MO 64111
thewholeperson.org

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Signing up for our email list is a great way to stay connected to TWP. Visit thewholeperson.org to sign up.

MEDIA CONTACTS:


For media inquiries, interviews or statements, please contact:
Terri Goddard
Resource Development Manager
816-627-2220
tgoddard@thewholeperson.org

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES


**Contributions from Individuals,
Honorariums and Memorials**

**Corporation and Foundation Gifts
Planned Giving**

For more information on planned giving, contact Terri Goddard, Resource Development Manager at tgoddard@thewholeperson.org, or call 816-627-2220.



JULY JUBILEE
CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE!

 **The Whole Person**
People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

SAVE THE DATES!
Saturday, July 29 and Monday, July 31
2-day celebration of the 27th ADA Anniversary

Saturday, July 29 • 7:00am-1:00pm
All-You-Can-Eat Pancake Breakfast by Chris Cakes and a Makers Fair and Flea Market.

Monday July 31 • 10:00am-2:00pm
Party in our parking lot with a live band, speakers, food, vendors and a whole lot of fun!

Sponsorship opportunities available!
Contact Terri Goddard at 816-627-2220, tgoddard@thewholeperson.org.

Learn more at
thewholeperson.org/jubilee



NIGHT OF INDEPENDENCE GALA

SAVE THE DATE
Friday, September 15
The Gallery Event Space
61 E 14th St, KCMO

The inaugural Night of Independence Gala will honor individuals and organizations that are working to further The Whole Person's mission to assist people with disabilities to live independently.

The evening will feature dinner, dancing, an auction, and balloon pop.

 **Tickets available NOW at**
thewholeperson.org/gala
Sponsorship opportunities available
Contact Terri Goddard, at 816-627-2220, tgoddard@thewholeperson.org.