

*The Whole Person assists people with disabilities to live independently and encourages change within the community to expand opportunities for independent living.*



## ***Celebrating the Life of Michelle Krajewski***

The National Council on Independent Living mourns the loss of one of our finest advocates and favorite people. Michelle Krajewski served on the NCIL Board of Directors as Region VII Representative for the past three years. NCIL is receiving an outpouring of sadness from advocates across the United States who knew her for her work in Missouri and on the national level. From these many expressions of grief and loss, it is clear that Michelle was not only a dedicated colleague and respected advocate, but also a true friend.

For those of us who were lucky enough to know Michelle, her passion and personality exuded. She was not known for politeness in advocacy, rather for giving hell to anyone standing in the way of progress. She was known for her energy, talent, and strength of character.

We will miss our dear friend and colleague immensely. Even though we knew of her battle with cancer, her passing comes as a surprise to most. There was something about Michelle that made everyone feel as though she could beat anything. For those of us left to remember her,

it is hard to accept that someone so young and full of life could ever leave us so soon. NCIL members and staff are devastated and completely heartbroken, but look forward to celebrating the life and legacy of a woman that will not be forgotten. Her picture will now hang at NCIL headquarters in Washington, D.C. forever as a reminder of what makes this organization great. We will cherish her legacy and use it to inspire advocates to action in a way that befits her memory.

Michelle stands today as an example of how our business should be done, with fire, dedication, and courage. We are not likely to find another person like Michelle Krajewski in this lifetime, but we will remember our friend and continue her life's work in a way that we hope would make her proud.

Words cannot convey the sorrow and loss that is felt with her passing. However, knowing Michelle, she would likely want us to celebrate instead of grieve, and share stories about her remarkable life and incredible sense of humor.

Michelle we love you, we will miss you, and you have made us all better for knowing you. Our thoughts and support are with your husband Jim, who remarked, "Today, the world lost a strong woman, but gained a precious angel."

## **Honoring Michelle Krajewski**

*"It is with great sadness that we bring you the news that Michelle Krajewski, Director of Public Policy at The Whole Person, passed away on August 31, 2012, following a year-long battle with cancer. Michelle started work with TWP in 2002 as a paralegal reporting to our staff attorney, later became our lobbyist and, in 2008, our Director of Public Policy.*

*Michelle was a passionate advocate for people with disabilities. Her passing is mourned not only by her Kansas City colleagues but also those who she worked with on the state-wide and national levels fighting for the rights of all people with disabilities.*

*We'd like to share with you these kind words from the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), and dedicate this issue of our newsletter to Michelle Krajewski."*

- David Robinson  
Chief Executive Officer, The Whole Person

**This newsletter is dedicated to Michelle Krajewski.**  
**To make a gift in her honor,  
please use the enclosed envelope.**

## **Inside this issue:**

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## Upcoming Events:

### Disability Mentoring Day

October 18, 8:30-2:00 pm  
MidAmerica Nazarene University  
Bell Cultural Events Center  
2030 College Way, Olathe, Ks.

October 29, 8:30-2:00 pm  
Ewing Marion Kauffman  
Foundation Conference Center  
4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo.

A FREE Event for Job Seekers with Disabilities. Greater Kansas City Disability Mentoring Day promotes employment opportunities for all job seekers with disabilities through information and career exploration. Register at [www.dmdkc.org](http://www.dmdkc.org).



### Hamburger Mary's Charity Bingo Night

October 27, 5:00-7:00 pm  
Hamburger Mary's Bar/Grille  
101 Southwest Blvd., Kansas City, Mo.

Join us for ten rounds of "grown-up" Bingo for \$1 per Bingo Game Card with all proceeds benefitting TWP and our LGBT Support Group. Hamburger Mary's Bingo Night is adult-oriented and lots of fun.

### Ribbon Cutting and Reception at 3710 Main

February 1, 2013, 5:00 pm  
3710 Main St., Kansas City, Mo.

The Whole Person will hold a reception to celebrate the completion of renovations at our new location. Join us for a ribbon cutting, building tours, and refreshments as we settle into our new home. This event is free and open to the public.

## Building Update

Renovations on The Whole Person's new home at 3710 Main are progressing nicely, with completion scheduled for the end of 2012. In the last six months, workers on the building have completed the installation of the historic windows, brick facade restoration, the new roof, new HVAC equipment and screens, and all of the access flooring, which will provide all air, electricity and water distribution inside the building. Soon to come will be all of the site work, including parking lot and landscaping, the storefront windows along Main Street, two new elevators, and all of the building finishes. Visit the TWP Facebook page to view videos of the progress.

- Richard Wetzel, Centric Projects

To give to the Building Dreams Campaign you may use the enclosed envelope or call Christi Campos at 816-627-2220 for more information on pledge opportunities.



## TWP Supports Anti-Bullying Education with "Bully Bot"

On January 21, The Whole Person, in partnership with Theatre for Young America and VSA Missouri, hosted a reception and a performance of the play "Bully Bot the Robot and the Gang of Geeks" at H&R Block City Stage in Kansas City's Union Station. More than 140 guests mingled before the play while enjoying wine, refreshments and art from VSA artist David Kontra.

After the play, SuEllen Fried (nationally known author and speaker) facilitated a discussion with the audience on the bullying and harassment of youth with disabilities, pictured above. TWP staff members with disabilities led similar discussions, spreading the anti-bullying message at additional performances of the play, including traveling performances at eleven local schools.





DaVita teammates, along with their friends and families, came from as far as Colorado and Oklahoma to contribute over 900 volunteer hours to DaVita's "Community First" day for TWP. One consumer said, "they were like friends coming together to have a good time."

## DaVita Makes a Difference

On Saturday, June 9th, more than 100 employees of DaVita, Inc., a leading kidney care company, partnered with The Whole Person for "Community First," a day of volunteer service, making accessibility improvements to the homes of people with disabilities. Volunteers built ramps, painted, removed fallen trees, cleaned yards and performed other light construction using their own tools as well as materials supplied by Miller Building Services and funding from DaVita and their partners.

*"The work provided by these generous volunteers directly supports our mission, keeping people with disabilities living independently in the home of their choice," says David Robinson, CEO of The Whole Person. "It's heartwarming that these DaVita volunteers cared enough to give their Saturday to help those living with disabilities to be more independent."*

Corporate volunteerism at TWP is growing thanks to friends like DaVita. TWP is extremely grateful for this community support and looks forward to a continuing partnership. If you or your organization would like to volunteer with TWP, contact Mary Pat Mahoney, (816) 561-0304, MMahoney@TheWholePerson.org.

### Volunteer - Be a Part of the Heart of The Whole Person!

Here are a few ways where we need your help:

- Help with yard care/snow removal\*
- Volunteer to build ramps at homes of people with disabilities\*
- Help with filing or updating resources
- Join one of our event committees
- Help tutor math or English\*
- Help us with our outreach by participating in health and advocacy fairs

\*denotes background check required



After a kick-off event with remarks by Kansas City Council Members Jim Glover and Jan Marcason, DaVita's volunteers broke into groups of 3 to 20 and traveled to 16 sites across the Greater Kansas City area.

Pictured (left to right): Jim Glover, TWP Volunteer Coordinator Mary Mahoney, Jan Marcason, DaVita Volunteers Colleen Kasson and Cheryl Matlack.



Volunteers went above and beyond their expected duties, developing ongoing relations with the consumers they worked with. Pictured (Left to Right, Back Row): Chuck Curry, Jose Lopez, Linda Zimmerman, Charlie Curry, (Front Row) Kelly Kolb, Blanca Baca.

# Thank You Donors!

We would like to thank the following individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations for their generous donations to The Whole Person from January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012. Thanks to support from friends like you, TWP is able to provide services for people with disabilities and promote empowerment, independence, self-reliance, and integration in the community.

AC Printing Co., Inc.	Theresa Cain	Kristi Eggleston	Shelley Hildreth	Meghan Leary	City of Raytown	Wendy Shields	Ashlee Trotter
Able Hands	Cake Crafts	Deborah Eldridge	Gloria B. Hill	Heather Lemon	Jennifer Patel	Show-Me	Shira Truitt
Interpreting	Cake Structure	Brian Ellefson	Michael Hill	Peggy Leslie	Donia Patterson	Presentation	Leacy Tucker
Lanette Abraham	CakePlay LLC	Laura Emmerson	Kenneth Hillyard	Liberty Exposition	Michelle Patton	Resources	Melissa Turner
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Productions	by Ximena	Regina Esteban	Debbie Hilvitz	Mark Lie	Paul Denzer and Sue	Cristi Simmons	UMB
Rachel Adams	CalJava International	European Cake	Peter Hoang	Cathy Liem	Bernstein Fund	Stephanie Simms	UMKC Institute
Adventures with Tea	Lisa Call	Galleries	Tera Hoffman	Kristin Liska	Wanda Paver	Faye Skidmore	for Human
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Jeanette Alexander	Amanda Casey	Fiesta Cake	Sean Houlihan	Lucks Food	Michael Peters	Vicki Smith	Vegas Limousine
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Hannah Beauchamp	Kansas City	Sherry Gold	Kansas City T-Bones	Nancy Miller	Jaresha Rhone	Nicole Sunaryo	Wilks Broadcasting
Beauty Brands, Inc.	Curry Curtis	Gold n Designs	Baseball Club	Jasper Mirabile, Jr.	Karen Richardson	Amanda Sutcliffe	Group
Stephanie Bechtel	Tobi Daiss	Michele Golden	Kansas City Zoo	Missouri Gas Energy	Dana Riegel	Rachel Sweeney	Lee Williams
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Phylliss Bernstein	Darker Violet Designs	Aaron Greene	Comedy Club	Kerrie Mooney	Gary Tannen	Gary Tannen	Windstream
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Jennifer Bertrand	Ashley Davis	Karen Gridley	Lisa Kelley	Laurie Morano	Tastefully Simple	Tastefully Simple	Yelp
Ronald Bibbs	Kyle Davis	Penny Guss	Brooke Keltner	Susan Moreno	Charla Tatom	Charla Tatom	Charley Young
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Terry Blankinship	Steven Davis	Sarrisa Haley	Zubia Khan	Kathy Morrison	Debra Taylor	Debra Taylor	Trina Young
Blue Bell Creameries	Heather Davison	Angela Hall	Emily Kiefer	Nicole Morrow	Melinda Taylor	Melinda Taylor	
Blue Cross Blue Shield	Cassandra Decker	Sarah Hanna	Debbie King	Curtis Mueller	Andrew Rosenbarger	Andrew Rosenbarger	
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Carla Boring	Decorate the Cake	Debbie Harper	Jen Kiper	Napoleon Bakery	Tiffany Ryan	Tiffany Ryan	
Jason Boster	Joy Deisher	Matthew Harre	Rachel Kirby	Erik Nelson	Andrea Samons	Andrea Samons	
Jessica Botello	Sarah Demasters	Debbie Harris	Lee Knox	Meredith Nelson	Pamela Sanders	Pamela Sanders	
Denise Bowie	Tom Demasters	Jenny Harris	Lyn Knox	New Horizons	Tim Sandusky	Tim Sandusky	
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Marselle Bredemeyer	Initiatives, Inc.	Alyssa Harvey	Susan Koettters	Minh Yen Nguyen	Scentsy	Scentsy	
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Karla Bronaugh	Poppy Dockray	Heavenly Cake Pops	Kutak Rock LLP	Clari Olsen	Aleta Schnitzer	Aleta Schnitzer	
Heather Brosch	Kimberly Douglas	Chris Hedlund	Chris Lafferty	Sherrie Ortiz	School of Cakeology	School of Cakeology	
Amanda Brown	Jackie Dryden	Helzberg Helps	Cindy Lamb	Emily Owens	Karen Scobbie	Karen Scobbie	
Debby Brown	Cheryl Duffy	Julie Heng	Karlynn Landen Hakan	Nora Palitz	Screenland	Screenland	
Elizabeth Brown	EA Bride	Susan Herrin	Emily Lansford	Kayati Pantachar	Una Scruggs	Una Scruggs	
Rachelle Bryson	Earlene's Cakes	Claudia Hessa	Paige Lauri	Paradise Park	Shatto Milk	Shatto Milk	
Jeffrey Bunch	Cindy Easton	Deborah Hickman	Brian Lawrence	Annette Parker	Tristan Sherman	Tristan Sherman	
Morgana Burke	Jessica Eckert	Andrea Higdon	Christina Lawrence	Parks and Recreation,	Sherrie's Cake Magic	Sherrie's Cake Magic	

*This list includes all individuals and organizations that made cash or in-kind contributions from January 1 through June 30, 2012. Every attempt has been made to reflect accurately and completely the names of our generous contributors. We apologize for any errors or omissions.*





## Give Independence!

Independent living is about making one's own choices, being fully integrated into society, and having equal opportunities. The Whole Person doesn't just promote this philosophy: we live it. In addition to the over 4,000 individuals we serve annually, over 50% of TWP's board, staff, and volunteers are people with disabilities. We understand the challenges; you can join us as we empower others to lead their lives with self-determination. We are people with disabilities, living independently, and we want your support.

You can show your support for independent living today with a gift of \$50, or any amount. From sign language instruction to peer support groups, your generous gift supports vital programs that empower people with disabilities to live, work, and enjoy their lives with independence, opportunity and dignity.

Donate now using the enclosed envelope or visit our secure website [www.thewholeperson.org](http://www.thewholeperson.org). For more information, please contact Christi Campos at (816) 561-0304 [ccampos@thewholeperson.org](mailto:ccampos@thewholeperson.org). Thank you for joining us to support independent living!

## That's Trader Joe's in Leawood!

When you visit Greg Pavlakis's apartment, one thing will be immediately evident: he is creative and skilled at working with Legos.® When TWP Employment Advocates arrived for their interview, they saw that Greg has combined those colorful interlocking plastic bricks to create vehicles, buildings, even working robots. The Advocates realized that these intricate creations indicated some transferable skills: building and arranging objects, and a keen sense of design and detail orientation.

*"These observations provided the team with valuable information that could be used to develop a good job match for Greg,"* noted Susan Herrin, Employment Services Director. Susan explained that her team interviewed Greg to learn more about his work history, preferences, skills, experience, and potential contributions that he could bring to an employer. *"Greg told us that his favorite job had been working at a record store... He liked the environment, and he liked working for a business that had a strong commitment to the community."* An idea for a job match began to emerge.

Just two months earlier, TWP had developed a relationship with the new Trader Joe's store in Leawood, Kansas. TWP had shared inclusive recruiting strategies with Trader Joe's management and had also agreed to assist them with their hiring efforts. *"We knew that Trader Joe's fun, supportive environment and their commitment to the community would be a good values-match for Greg, and their Crew Member position matched his skills,"* said Susan. *"We encouraged Greg to visit the store... he visited right away and was excited about the opportunity."*

Greg applied for the position, was hired and has been working there ever since. Greg has become a popular member of the Trader Joe's family, receiving promotions and making friends. One of his co-workers even threw a surprise birthday party for Greg complete with a "Legos®" cake.

When asked about having his story included in The Whole Person's newsletter, Greg had only one caveat: *"Please be sure that everyone knows that I am at the Trader Joe's store in Leawood."* Consider it done, Greg.



Greg Pavlakis became a participant in TWP Employment Services program in early 2011 and established a goal to attain competitive employment. Greg achieved his goal and is now a Trader Joe's Crew Member, pictured above.



Edwardo Martinez welcomes Greg to the team.



## Pam Goes Pro at KC CakeFest

Pam Sanders didn't win a single prize at KC CakeFest, but she couldn't be happier about it. That's because Pam didn't enter the cake competition to win a trophy—she entered with something to prove.

With multiple sclerosis (MS), type 1 diabetes, and vision loss, Pam just wanted to prove to herself that she could accomplish anything she put her mind to. *"So I entered the highly-competitive wedding cake category with a go-big-or-go-home attitude...and I showed everyone that you can do it, it doesn't matter if you have a disability,"* she explained.

Pam had been decorating cakes in her northwest Missouri hometown for about a year and a half when a friend told her about KC CakeFest, a benefit for TWP held on March 3-4 at the Kansas City Convention Center. *"Sometimes in small towns there is a stigma for people with disabilities. When I heard that KC CakeFest was donating all proceeds to an organization that helps people with disabilities, I knew this was the contest for me."*

Pam wasn't nervous about the tough competition or the nationally-renowned cake judges. Far from her hometown, she was worried about being out of her comfort zone. Her fears were quickly eased by the fun atmosphere and supportive volunteers at the KC CakeFest, *"Never since I've been diagnosed had I been so comfortable in a setting outside of my family! The disabilities didn't matter; it was just about the fun!"*

Pam's positive experience at KC CakeFest inspired her to turn her hobby into a career: she's now building a professional kitchen in her basement to start her own business. *"Everyone was so nice and wonderful! And I was impressed that there were so many volunteers with disabilities... my desire to go professional was triggered from KC CakeFest. It was fantastic."*



At KC CakeFest, Pam Sanders proved that her disabilities could not stop her from achieving her dreams of becoming a professional cake artist.



Over 3,500 people joined Pam at KC CakeFest and enjoyed impressive sights like Taylor Holmes in her cupcake dress (pictured above), cupcake decorating, demonstrations, Cupcake Chuck, and a world-record setting car made of cake.



Over 20 celebrity cake artists from such shows as TLC's *Ultimate Cake Off* and WE TV's *Wedding Cake Wars*, including Megan Unverferth, Charity George, Chris Hedlund, Dianna Lopez pictured above, came to participate in three live TV-style challenges and to teach classes.

The star-studded event garnered much media attention with 3,323 media hits and brought in 661 new supporters for The Whole Person.

# Expressions Celebrates Artists with Disabilities

On May 4, nearly 500 people attended the second annual Expressions art reception at the Jones Gallery in the Crossroads Art District. Expressions featured photography, painting, drawing, mixed media and hand-made jewelry from a group of 11 local artists with a diverse range of disabilities. Guests were moved by the inspiring stories, independent living, and therapeutic art experiences of the gifted artists.



*"Displaying my pieces was one of my greatest adventures and the selling of one of my pieces was one of the best events ever,"* said featured artist Waunder Oshinbanjo.

Thanks to support from UMB and the Francis Family Foundation, Expressions was a well-received success providing a valuable opportunity to highlight the strengths, talents and abilities of people with disabilities.

UMB helped to make Expressions a success by providing wine, cheese and volunteers including (left to right) David Youngstrom, Tracy Bentley and Trevor French



Waunder Oshinbanjo makes her first sale as a professional artist to TWP Board Member Tim Urban.



## Devin Finds his Voice

This past spring, TWP was happy to celebrate Devin's graduation from The Whole Family Project (WFP). Devin's journey began in 2009, when his family was concerned that he was two years old and not able to speak or communicate. They were referred to The Whole Family Project and quickly assigned a tutor. Devin's parents and family members participated in his tutoring sessions, helping him make great progress in learning to sign his feelings, colors and food. The Whole Family Project helps nonverbal children learn to communicate well using sign so their parents can understand them. Learning to sign can also help the brain develop language connections, so that when a child like Devin is able to speak more clearly and be understood, the need for sign is reduced. *"Once those brain synapses connected with Devin, it was amazing to watch his transformation,"* said WFP Program Coordinator Vicki Walker.



Devin's family on his graduation day with Vicki Walker, The Whole Family Project Coordinator (second from right).



Devin with his parents.

## TWP Support Groups:

### LGBT Social Support Group

Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month  
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church  
4501 Walnut, Kansas City, Missouri

For more information, contact  
Shelley Rogers at 913.262.1294  
or email [srogers@thewholeperson.org](mailto:srogers@thewholeperson.org)

### Living Well - Mental Health Peer Group

Group meets twice a month  
on Wednesday evenings

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm  
The Whole Person, 7301 Mission Rd., Ste. 135,  
Prairie Village, Kansas

For more information, contact  
Faye Skidmore at 913.262.1294  
or email [fskidmore@thewholeperson.org](mailto:fskidmore@thewholeperson.org).

**For a full listing of events and support groups, click on the "News and Events" tab on our home page, then click "Event Calendar."**





3420 Broadway, Suite 105  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
thewholeperson.org

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

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## About TWP

The Whole Person is a Center for Independent Living founded in 1978. We are a private, nonresidential, nonprofit corporation providing a full range of community-based services for people with disabilities.

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### LOCATIONS:

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*Providing services at no charge  
for all people with disabilities.*

thewholeperson.org  
info@thewholeperson.org



## Why vote?

Because the disability vote really counts! Almost 20% of the U.S. population, or 1 out of every 5 citizens, is a person with a disability. If we all registered and exercised our civil right to vote, we would elect and direct politicians to govern access, health care, our employment rights and so much more.

Don't forget to vote on November 6!  
If you have questions about registration or voting, please contact Sheila Styron, Public Policy Coordinator, at [ssstyron@thewholeperson.org](mailto:ssstyron@thewholeperson.org) or by calling 816-627-2217.

There is no doubt that our disability community would be positively impacted if we all took advantage of our right to vote!



GET OUT THE VOTE

### "Like Us" on Facebook



Connect with The Whole Person on Facebook and stay up-to-date on what we are doing! Join our community online and connect with us!