

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2014

DSAF ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC AND POOL PARTY

On July 27th, 2014, the DSAF of NE hosted its annual DSAF Family Picnic for our extended DSAF family.

Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins enjoyed playing at the park, eating hot dogs, brats and hamburgers, and sampling all the yummy potluck foods. The highlight of the night, of course, was the swimming. It was such fun watching all the cute kiddos having a blast in the pool. There are a lot of talented swimmers in our group. Thank you to everyone who came and brought food items to share at the DSAF family picnic.



DSAF TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK

National Inclusive Schools Week is December 1 - 5, 2014. Do you know a teacher or paraprofessional who promotes inclusion of your loved one with Down syndrome at school? Do you know school staff who work towards including your student in activities with peers? DSAF would like to recognize them!

Examples are staff who modify regular curriculum or activities to allow your student to be included with peers throughout the school day. It can also include staff who are willing to listen, learn, and action on suggestions to make school more inclusive for your student.

If you would like DSAF to recognize your school staff, please e-mail or mail us the following information by November 15, 2014:

- Teacher/staff person's name (please limit to no more than four individuals)
- Name of school, complete mailing address for school, Principal's name
- Your student's name and grade

DSAF will send a gift and certificate to honor the teachers/staff.

This is open to students and schools across the state, but the nominating family or individual must be a DSAF member. DSAF membership is only \$10 per year and you can obtain membership through the DSAF website or by mail. *Note: Recognition is not offered in greater Omaha area as the Down Syndrome Alliance of the Midlands covers Inclusive Schools Week in the greater Omaha area.

PARENTS' NIGHT WITH DR. WILLIAM MOBLEY



Dr. William Mobley (pictured far left), Department Chair and Professor of Neurosciences at UC San Diego Department of Neurosciences and renowned in the field of Down syndrome neuroscience, recently visited Lincoln, Nebraska, where he was honored with the Pius X High School Outstanding Alumni award. DSAF was pleased to have Dr. Mobley in attendance at its Parents' Night on August 2, 2014.

DSAF TO HOLD EDUCATION CONFERENCE

November 15, 2014, 8 am - 4 pm

Country Inn and Suites

5353 N 27th Street, Lincoln, NE

For parents, college students, educators, and administrators

Registration includes continental breakfast and lunch

Registration details: www.dsafnebraska.org

Registration deadline: November 3rd

DSAF is committed to providing parents and educators the best tools and resources to support and teach children with special needs. Our educational conference will include multiple top speakers presenting topics on math, literacy, behavior and technology for educators, administrators and parents.

CAROLINE'S CORNER

TIPS & QUIPS FOR YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE

Class is in session: How do you stay connected and show your appreciation to all the teachers and staff who work with your child? Focus on a different teacher or staff member each month. Write a thank you letter, deliver treats, or honor them with a homemade craft. 9 months = 9 honorees = showing appreciation without overwhelming yourself!

Do you ever wonder what exactly your child is working on during therapy sessions? Ask the therapist to take video of session and e-mail or text the video to you. Now you know and you can continue their efforts at home.

UPCOMING DSAF EVENTS

Teen/Young Adult Group - **Third Tuesday of each month at 6 pm.** Contact Janette Johnson at janettej@windstream.net for more information and to get signed up for the monthly reminder list.

6th Annual DSAF Pumpkin Patch - **Oct. 11, 2014**, at Roca Berry Farm in Roca. Check-in from 9:30-10:30 am. You are welcome to stay the entire day. When you arrive between this time, we can pay for your admission. We will meet at 11:00 by the tractors for a group picture. See Events web page for details and to register.

Mom's Night Out - **Oct. 21, 2014.** Save the date. Location and time to be announced.

Education Conference - **Nov. 15, 2014**, beginning at 8 am at Country Inn & Suites, 5353 N. 27th Street, Lincoln. DSAF will host a number of national and local specialists presented in a multi-track format so you can tailor your conference experience to your current interests.

Smart Start Series - **Nov. 8, 2014**, 8:30 to 11:00 am. **School Smart:** For families of children with Down syndrome ages 4 to 12 who want to build healthy relationships with school professionals. Application forms available on the DSAF website. Sessions are held on UNL's East Campus. Free to DSAF members (annual membership is \$10).

Annual Christmas Party and Brunch - **Dec. 6, 2014**, 9:30-11:30 am, at St. Luke's Church, 1601 Superior St., Lincoln.

Lil' Stars (ages 0-5) - **Dec. 13, 2014**, 3:30 pm (3 to 5 years old) and 4:30 (0 to 3 years old), Kindermusik with Shawna Gordon, at East Lincoln Christian Church, 7001 Edenton.

Smart Start Series - **Jan. 10, 2014**, 8:30 to 11:00 am. **Friend Smart:** For families of children with Down syndrome ages 4 to 21 who want to encourage and support their children's friendships and active social life. Application forms available on the DSAF website. Sessions are held on UNL's East Campus. Free to DSAF members (annual membership is \$10).

Lil' Stars (ages 0-5) - **Jan. 21, 2015**, Theatre Event at the Lied Center, Lincoln. Jim Henson's Dinosaur Train Live! This is a Lied "Fam Fest" event so come early for free food and games, show starts at 7 pm. Limited number of tickets (including proximity near stage seating) on sale for \$5 each. Contact Kathryn Brockmeier at kathryn.brockmeier@gmail.com to order your tickets.

Smart Start Series - **Feb. 28, 2015**, 8:30 to 11:00 am. **IEP Smart:** For families of children with Down syndrome ages 3 to 12 who want to understand the assessment requirements for eligibility and school performance in special education and inclusive programs and how to contribute to development of meaningful Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Sessions are held on UNL's East Campus. Free to DSAF members (annual membership is \$10).

Registration is recommended for most of these events and is made available on the DSAF website, www.dsafnebraska.org (click on the Events tab).

DSAF LIL' STARS TO HOST FAMILY THEATRE EVENT

Sponsored by Harding & Shultz, PC, LLO

Jim Henson's Dinosaur Train Live! Buddy's Big Adventure (based on hit PBS series)

When: January 21, 2015 at 7pm.

This is a FamFest event! Come early for free food and fun activities for the kids.

Where: Lied Center, Lincoln

Cost: \$5 per ticket, all ages

A limited number of orchestra row seating is available, order your tickets today!

Contact: kathryn.brockmeier@gmail.com or 402-937-5048 to order your tickets

SNAPSHOTS FROM RECENT EVENTS

Meet Me at the Park - July 12, 2014



Ager Play Center - August 18, 2014



PROGRAM DIRECTOR UPDATE AND SPECIAL THANKS

As many of you know, Lori Prange recently resigned from her position as DSAF Program Director. DSAF thanks Lori for her dedicated work and for continuing to volunteer on the Board as Secretary and on the planning committee for the Annual DSAF Education Conference (Nov. 15, 2015). She really knows how to keep us on track!

DSAF received a number of applications for the open Program Director position but ultimately determined it was in the membership's best interests to reopen the search. We are excited about the growth and member opportunities this future Program Director will bring to our organization in enriching the lives of individuals with Down syndrome. Stay tuned for future job postings and updates on the process.

Charlotte Liggett, Vice President of Strategy for Catholic Health Initiatives, Nebraska, graciously gave her time to help DSAF with its search for a new Program Director. Ms. Liggett, who was previously involved with the DSAF Board's strategic planning, was a tremendous asset to the search process. Thank you Ms. Liggett and thank you to all of the members of the Search Committee who worked hard on this important task.

DSAF GOVERNANCE

The continued success of DSAF depends on parents and other volunteers. Each year, the DSAF Board of Directors must fill new vacancies to fill the positions of board members who have served their term. Please contact Kelly at kekeler@hslegalfirm or 402-217-2907 or Chris Marvin at cmarvin1@unl.edu if you are interested in serving on the Board or if you know someone whom you would recommend as a board member .

CONTACTS

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DSAF
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Return Service Requested

Down Syndrome Association
for Families

Mission Statement: The Down Syndrome Association for Families is a Lincoln based non-profit organization that provides support for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, friends, educators and professionals who share in their lives.

Every person with Down syndrome is an individual who has a unique purpose and abilities. DSAF provides networking and a positive vision for the future.

Website: www.dsafnebraska.org

Telephone: 402-421-1338

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CAPITAL CITY STEP UP FOR DOWN SYNDROME WALK – OCT. 4, 2014

Estimates — Raised: \$85,000+ Teams: 77 Walkers: 1,800+



It was a beautiful day! A big thanks to all the families, friends, and volunteers who participated! Look for additional information and results in upcoming DSAF publications.