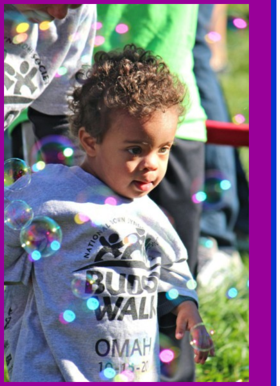
Down Syndrome Alliance of the Midlands

2011 Annual Report


Henry


Andrew


Jamie


Lucas

Letter from the President

Friends,

2011 was truly an amazing year for our organization, and I'm very proud to have been a part of it. At a very fundamental level, we kicked off a new phase in our evolution and growth by rebranding ourselves and building a brand new web site. We continued the DSA activities that our families hold dear such as our annual Parents Night Out, the Pool Party, and the Buddy Walk, but we also added several new activities like laser tag and movie nights! Our Moms, Dads, and Grands organizations grew with renewed vigor and expanded their activities this year as well! We held our very first annual Medical Outreach Conference to help our families learn more about everything from health concerns to behavioral issues to assistive technology devices. It really has been an awesome (and very busy) year.

Your Board of Directors is thrilled with our progress, but we continue our introspection as well to be sure that we are always growing and changing and getting better every year. It can sometimes feel like a thankless job, but the individuals that volunteer their time to sit on the board and chair various committees are truly indispensable and are so greatly appreciated. After a change in bylaws in 2011, the Board is now structured so that each member serves 1-2 three-year terms before rolling off the roster in a staggered fashion. This means that every year, DSA will need 3-4 new volunteers to step up and play a part in the success of our organization. I hope you will consider donating some of your time to keep the momentum going and to help us keep a constant infusion of fresh ideas and talent moving onto the Board.

As always, we love to hear your suggestions and feedback. Please feel free to email info@dsamidlands.org or call 402-991-1800 to leave a message for us. 2011 has been great, but I look forward to an even better 2012!

Allison Machamer, President
DSA Board

Down
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OF THE MIDLANDS

6805 Grover Street • Omaha, NE 68106 • DSAMidlands.org • info@dsamidlands.org • 402-991-1800

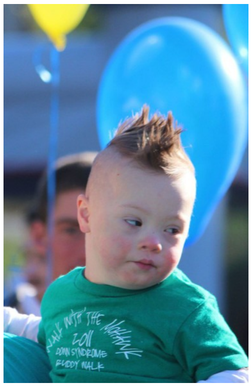
Na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na na ...Daniel!

2011 Board

Allison Machamer, President
Buffy Beightol, Vice President
Steve Kudlacek, Treasurer
Kalyn Kimminau, Secretary
Ayman Sharif, Webmaster
Dan Kline, Fundraising
Casie Schlueter, Parent Outreach
Roberta Tonjes, Medical Outreach
Jen Shannon, Member at Large
Rob Church, Member at Large
Andrew Kloeckner, Legal Advisor
Gary Lerner, Medical Advisor
Anne Mancini, Communications Director

DSA Tweets

DSA made a foray into social media. DSA has used an online fundraising site for several years and spent time in 2011 learning how to work with a new web hosting system, Facebook pages and even Twitter. While our tweets have been tentative, we are happy to be poised at the edge of the proverbial nest.



Vollen Rawkin' his Hawk

Parent Outreach

In 2011 DSA purchased copies of *Gifts* and *Bebés con síndrome de Down* to include in the new parents packets placed in area hospitals. The committee also made a regular practice of supporting families whose children experienced hospital stays and those going through other difficult times.

The Down Syndrome Super Moms (DSSM) secured a permanent meeting place to hold a monthly coffee, Paradise Bakery in Village Pointe, and established an informal Tuesday evening coffee. Speakers and self-advocates are often invited to the meetings. DSSM also created a closed group on the DSA Facebook page. The privacy afforded to a closed group allows the moms to ask any question and address any topic that arises. Any DSA mom is welcome to apply for membership.

The G.R.A.N.D.S. group continued to hold regular meetings, host family events, and participate in community workshops. DSA would like to thank Teri Schulte and Lisa Mercier for their efforts to establish and grow the group over the last two years!

D.A.D.S. continues to support the Buddy Walk and are involved in Young Athletes, a Special Olympics program for the littlest runners, jumpers, and ballplayers.

Brian Skotko, M.D.

Medical Outreach

In April, DSA brought Dr. Brian Skotko to Omaha. Dr. Skotko addressed health care professionals at both Bergan Mercy and Methodist Women's Hospitals to review the latest advances in prenatal testing and the evidence-based research on how physicians can effectively deliver a prenatal or postnatal diagnosis of Down syndrome.

Dr. Skotko also gave a presentation to nurses and social workers as part of a continuing education seminar. That seminar provided information on Down syndrome as well as on DSA as a resource for families and health care providers. It also featured a panel of parents of children diagnosed with Down syndrome prenatally as well as at birth.

Dr. Skotko gave two more presentations to an audience of parents and educators at the first annual Advocacy in the Midlands conference.

Other speakers at the conference were Libby Kumin, Leslie Walker-Hirsch, and Sean Smith.

Other medical outreach included DSA presentations at Grand Rounds at both Creighton and UNMC.

Buddy Walk

What a Buddy Walk! Saturday, October 15th was a fantastic day for our 10th Annual Buddy Walk. Beautiful weather, carnival, and well over 2,000 participants contributed to this wonderful event. Volunteers from Offutt Air Force Base, Westside and Millard High Schools, the Girl Scouts, and many others contributed to our success. Nebraska Representative Lee Terry and Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle were on hand to cheer everyone on. Being our premiere fund raising event we were very happy to have raised approximately $90,000 through generous families, donors and corporate sponsors. We are looking forward to our 2012 event!

Marcus tips his hat to all of the Buddy Walk supporters.

Little E Celebrates Big Time!

Education Advocacy

While the board position was vacant for most of the year, DSA is fortunate to have a very engaged Education Advocacy Committee, a group of parents who serve as liaisons between the organization and the Down Syndrome Specialists in the schools. Their efforts ensured the success of the DSS program and fulfilled a commitment to expand the program to serve students at the middle and high school levels.

21 World Down Syndrome Day

On 3/21, World Down Syndrome Day, Omaha, Nebraska was the only place in the world to watch the HBO documentary, "Monica & David." DSA partnered with Film Streams to offer the screening. This was prior to the release of the DVD, so it was a source of pride and great pleasure to screen the film and hand a microphone to several young self-advocates who told us what was going on in their lives.

In mid-summer DSA was invited to the Outdoor Market at Midtown Crossing where we used our booth to run a "Spread the Word to End the Word" campaign.

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Macy is Pretty in Pink at the DSA Swim Party

Special Events

While the board position remained vacant for the second year in a row, DSA was able to schedule many fun events for our members.

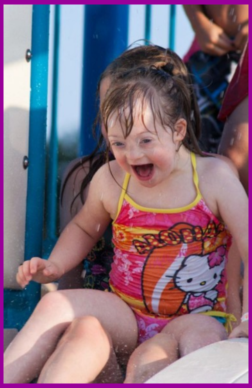
Feedback from a membership survey indicated a need for social events for older kids, which led us to schedule a Laser Tag party. We also invited 'tweens to "Zookeeper" and teens to "Captain America." These events were popular and well-attended.

Our little members enjoyed a get-together at PE101, a trip to watch the Pooh Bear movie, and a fun night at Pajamarama. For the entire family, an annual favorite is a trip to the ballpark. Members enjoyed a hot and windy afternoon at the new Wernerpark Stadium, cheering as Marcus Amua-Sekyi threw the first pitch.

Our pool party, always a big hit, was moved to a new location in 2011. DSA families gathered at Zorinsky Water Park for swimming, socializing and snacks.

Our parents enjoyed a couple of opportunities for kid-free nights. With the help of the UNO SCEC students, parents were given the opportunity to dine together in March and to enjoy their own plans one night in November.

Billy is Awesome Dancing at the Walk


Sara

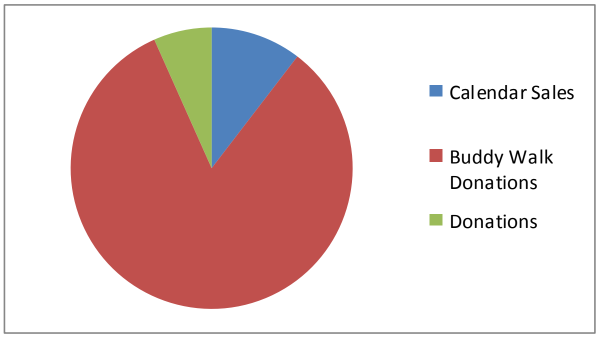

Will

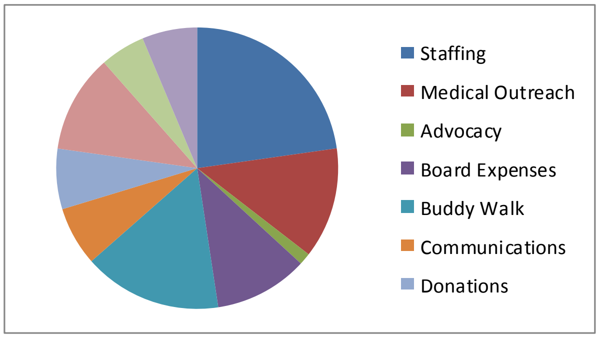

Mahinda


Corina

2011 Finances

Income	
Calendar Sales	11,250
Buddy Walk Donations	89,645
Donations	7,211
Total Income	108,106
Expense	
Staffing	19,081
Medical Outreach	10,686
Advocacy	1,142
Buddy Walk	13,332
Communications	5,695
Donations	5,824
Calendars	9,457
Parent Outreach	4,344
Special Events	5,306
Total Expense	83,893
Net Ordinary Income	24,212





What's in a Name?

From the serious to the "sounds silly," this is what it takes to change a name:

August 2010—during strategic planning, the board brainstorms for a new name to reflect the growth of the organization. The legal advisor and webmaster are tasked with researching availability of "Down Syndrome Alliance of the Midlands."

January 2011—At the board meeting the motion to change the name is approved, as is the motion to rent office space at 6805 Grover Street. IRS & bank paperwork is filed to change name and address.

February—"DSAMidlands.org" is obtained.. A logo is commissioned: it must be crisp, clear, eye-catching, and no more than 3 colors. A graphic artist volunteers his time to work with the board. The logo with 3 rings depicting the alliance of parents, medical professionals and educators is approved.

April 2011—A new banner stand is designed, printed and debuted at the conference.

Summer 2011—Labels are printed with the DSA name, logo and contact information. Volunteers "sticker" our new information onto existing medical outreach publications.

September 2011—Our new website goes live.

October 2011—A new DSA brochure is printed in English.

November 2011—first requests to verify new info for matching gifts roll in. Those requests continue throughout the winter.

December 2011—Time is devoted to creating a new edition of the New Parents Resource Guide.