

Mile High Down Syndrome Association DOWN'S UPDATE

Serving Colorado and the Front Range Since 1981

2nd Annual Tee Up for Down Syndrome Golf Tournament Thursday, June 23, 1 p.m. - The Inverness Golf Club



Special guest Brad Hennefer impresses fellow players with his golf skills at the 2010 Tee Up tournament.

What could be better than spending the afternoon golfing on a beautiful course for a great cause? If this sounds like the perfect day to you, then you won't want to miss Mile High Down Syndrome Association's (MHDSA) second annual Tee Up for Down Syndrome golf tournament at The Inverness Golf Club on Thursday, June 23.

Last year's tournament was a phenomenal success, with over 120 participants helping to raise \$30,000 for

MHDSA. This year MHDSA aims to beat those numbers, with a goal of \$60,000 to fund MHDSA's vital programs to help individuals with Down syndrome in Colorado.

Besides playing golf, participants will have the pleasure of socializing with several special guests. MHDSA will be welcoming back Brad Hennefer, self-advocate and golf aficionado whose organization, The Brad Hennefer Golf for Life Foundation, teaches people

continued on page 4

Brad Hennefer

MHDSA's special guest at the Tee Up for Down Syndrome is Brad Hennefer. Brad was the first person with Down syndrome to graduate from his high school in Cherry Hills, NJ. At a young age, Brad followed his older brother Bobby around on the golf course. Brad started playing as well, showing considerable talent. When his brother went to college, Brad began to play with a local professional and developed enough talent and endurance to play a full 18 holes of golf.

In addition to playing golf, Brad works part-time for Aramark and Wegman's Supermarket. Like any other young adult, Brad likes

music, movies, hanging out with friends and playing sports. He has won several gold and silver Special Olympics medals in basketball, golf, and



continued on page 4



3515 S. TAMARAC DR.
SUITE 320
DENVER, CO 80237
PHONE: 303-797-1699
FAX: 303-756-6144
INFO@MHDSA.ORG
WWW.MHDSA.ORG

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LLOYD LEWIS, *PRESIDENT*
MARIAN MASON, *PAST-PRESIDENT*
MATT YEINGST, *VICE PRESIDENT*
BETH LEON, *TREASURER*
DAVID AARESTAD, *SECRETARY*
BETH BURCZYK
ANCA CALL
HUGH DICKEY
JACK DORWART
JOHN HERRICK
DR. SHARMAN REED
MATT TRONE
HAL WRIGHT

STAFF

MAC MACSOVITS, *EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*
LAURIE HERRERA, *FAMILY OUTREACH MANAGER*
BROOKE OVARD, *EVENT AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR*

Mile High Down Syndrome Association does not promote or recommend any therapy, treatment, institution, etc. and does not espouse any particular political, educational or religious view. Inclusion of one item does not necessarily imply promotion or recommendation of its sponsors.

Submissions are welcome. Please send your submission to newsletter@mhdsa.org or mail it to Down's Update, MHDSA, 3515 S. Tamarac Drive, Suite 320, Denver, CO 80237.

The editor reserves the right to make corrections as appropriate and in accord with established editorial practice in material submitted for publication. Original items may be used if properly credited. Copyrighted items must have the permission of the originating author.

Down's Update is published six times per year by the Mile High Down Syndrome Association.

Community Groups

MHDSA Community Groups provide families with the opportunity to connect with other families in their area, form strong and encouraging friendships, plan outings and share information and resources. Call (303) 797-1699 to get information and locate a group in your community.

- ** NEW GROUP**** - Aurora Community Group – Dates and times fluctuate. Please call the MHDSA office for information. (Birth-18).
- Castle Rock Area** – 2nd Friday of each month from 6-8 p.m. (Birth-7)
- Denver Area – Español** – “Grupo el Cromosoma del Amor” – 4th Saturday of each month from 1-3 p.m. – in collaboration with El Grupo VIDA and PASCO (All ages)
- Denver Area Grandparents/Extended Family** – 3rd Saturday of each month from 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- Ft. Collins Area** – 3rd Friday of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Birth-5)
- Greeley Area – BILINGUAL** – 1st Friday of each month (Birth-5)
- Littleton Area** – 1st Friday of each month from 6-8 p.m. (Birth-5)
- Longmont/Boulder Area** – 3rd Friday of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Birth-18)
- Longmont Area Grandparents/Extended Family** – Meets quarterly (Grandparents, aunts, uncles and family friends)
- Loveland/Ft. Collins Area** – “Northern Colorado Circle of Friends” – 2nd Saturday of each month from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (School age, 5-12)
- Montrose Area/Western Slope** – 2nd Saturday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (Birth-18)
- North Metro Area/Broomfield/Thornton/Northglenn/Commerce City/Henderson/Brighton** – 1st Saturday of each month from 1-3 p.m. (Birth-12)
- Northwest Colorado Chapter** – Serving Routt, Moffat, Grand and Jackson counties – Meets quarterly (Birth-18).
- Northeast Colorado Chapter** – Serving Sterling, Twin Buttes, Wray, Brush, Crook, Atwood, Akron, Otis, Ovid, Sedgwick, Julesburg, Merino – Meets on the second Saturday of each month from September-May (except December) from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Sterling (Birth - 18)
- South Metro Area/Littleton** – 4th Saturday of each month, time varies (School age, 5-12)
- West Metro Area/Arvada/Westminster/Wheat Ridge/Lakewood Area** – 3rd Saturday of each month from 2-4 p.m. (Birth-18)
- DS-Autism Connection** – Please email familyprograms@mhdsa.org to be invited to join our new listserv for families and providers (All ages)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DS-Autism Connection Pizza Nights Wed., May 4 and Wed., June 1 5:30-7:30 p.m. Beau Jo's Pizza Arvada and Denver locations	Cinco de Mayo Open House Thursday, May 5 5-7:30 p.m. MHDSA Office Denver	DS-Autism Connection Coffee Connections Fri., May 27 and Fri., June 24 10-11:30 a.m. Autism Society of Colorado Lakewood
McCarthy's Pub Poker Run Sunday, June 5 10 a.m. Longmont	Dads and Donuts Saturday, June 18 9-11 a.m. City Park Denver	Tee Up for Down Syndrome Golf Tournament Thursday, June 23 1 p.m. Inverness Golf Club Englewood
International Mosaic Down Syndrome Conference July 8-10 Walt Disney World, FL	Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk Sunday, September 25 City Park Denver	DS-Autism Connection Fall Conference Friday, Oct. 7 Anschutz Medical Campus Aurora

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Full Steam Ahead



With spring around the corner and warm weather giving birth to new leaves and flowers, I wanted to bring to light what has been happening here at MHDSA over the past several winter months. And as most of you know, there is quite a lot happening, I am proud to report.

First, we have added four new board members to our ranks. What does this mean for MHDSA and our work? Quite a lot. With the addition of these new directors we gain experience and knowledge in the medical community, communications/marketing, legal, fundraising, relationship building, etc. Of course, we had a little of each of these skills previously, but now we have a full complement of skills and experience to bring to bear on our work. This has already translated into more media exposure for our Tee Up for Down Syndrome golf tournament, access to new medical reports/relationships, increased funding for our general work and for the Tee Up for Down Syndrome tournament with corporate sponsorships from Chevron, Brownstein/Hyatt/Farber/Schreck and Kiewit Infrastructure Group. We have also benefited greatly from having a wealth of experience at the table as we look to evaluate our programs and what we are doing well, where we need to focus more attention, and what we have not paid much attention to at all, to be honest.

We have also been busy adding to our programs. While the Meal Voucher program was started last year, we have been doing a better job of promoting it to our constituents as well as the medical community resulting in an increased number of people served by this program. True to our word, we are also using our new, larger, and more convenient office space for more direct programming. We recently hosted a "Birthday Party" where MHDSA self-advocates along with several Glendale Raptors rugby players spent an evening making birthday cards that we will begin sending out at the start of each month to all of our self-advocates. We are planning an "open house" to showcase our new space as well as "dinner and a movie" nights for self-advocates of all ages. Historically we have not had a solid focus on teenagers with Down syndrome and their needs (social outlets, recreational opportunities, transitional issues, employment training, etc.). This was driven home the night of the Birthday Party when several of the parents said that it was nice to see MHDSA offering events for their young adults. This theme of getting back in front of those we are charged with serving has also been driven home by many families participating in and benefiting from our Parents and Schools in Partnership (PSP) program. "To be honest, we haven't been engaged with Mile High for over six years. You didn't really offer anything for us. Now, we are so excited to be a part of the organization again and see you more" was the comment I heard from one parent in the PSP program.

And finally we have experienced several staff changes over the last 6-8 months. My position on this topic is pretty simple: MHDSA

Cinco De Mayo MHDSA OPEN HOUSE

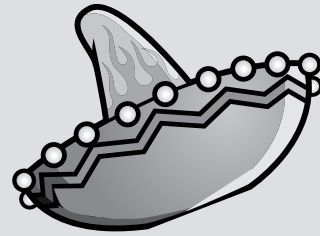
We'd like to invite the entire MHDSA community to an open house to see our new office, meet the staff, make connections with other families, and enjoy appetizers and drinks on Cinco de Mayo.

When: Thursday, May 5, from 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Where: 3515 S. Tamarac Drive, Suite 320, Denver, CO 80237.

Our phone number is (303) 797-1699.

We're located right off of Hampden Ave.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON CINCO DE MAYO!

must have the right people on the bus in the right seats if we are going to continue to offer quality programs to those we serve. With the additional programming comes an increased demand upon the staff and their skills. We have always been fortunate to have committed and dedicated staff here at MHDSA. We are now in a position to focus more resources to better serve the needs of our community and we take this responsibility very seriously.

MHDSA is poised for success and it is full steam ahead for the staff, Board of Directors, self-advocates, volunteers, and YOU!

Mac Macsovits

More Changes at MHDSA!

After moving to a new office earlier this year, MHDSA has also had some staffing changes.



Laurie Herrera takes on the role of Family Outreach Manager.

Many of you have walked into our office to be greeted by the smiling face of Laurie Herrera, who has been our Office Manager since October 2002. You will still have the chance to see Laurie, but you'll have to go to her office because she is now MHDSA's Family Outreach Manager. Laurie is excited to take on this new position where she will be able to work directly with new families through the First Call Program and interact

with existing families as she oversees the Community Groups, Sophia's Closet, and the Meal Voucher program, among other responsibilities.



Brooke Ovard is MHDSA's new Event and Volunteer Coordinator.

There is a new face at MHDSA and that's Brooke Ovard. Brooke has taken the position of Event and Volunteer Coordinator. Among Brooke's responsibilities is the upcoming Tee Up for Down Syndrome golf tournament and MHDSA's premier fundraising and awareness event, the Step Up for Down Syndrome walk. Brooke has experience in both the non-profit and business sectors and is looking forward to applying her knowledge to her new position. She is the mother of two

children, Olivia (11) and Owen (3), and she is excited to join the MHDSA team.

Please stop by to congratulate Laurie on her new role and get to know Brooke. We are thrilled to have both helping us with our important programs.

Golf Tournament

continued from page 1

with Down syndrome to play golf to help them develop skills to apply in the workforce.

Other special guests include former NFL players Haven Moses, Ron Egloff, Ralph Tamm, Wade Manning, Leroy Mitchell, Steve Haggerty, Dave Reavis, Larron Jackson, and Billy Van Heusen, whose granddaughter, 2-year old Mila, happens to have Down syndrome.

The event will include a delicious box lunch, drinks on the golf course, a fabulous after-party with hors d'oeuvres, an auction, and a special program. There will also be prizes and the winning team plays for free at next year's tournament.

Cost is \$900 per foursome (or \$225 per golfer prior to May 30 and \$250 after that date) and includes all activities, food, and beverages. Registration begins at noon with a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. The event is limited to 144 golfers so sign up now!

For more information, please visit www.MHDSA.org/golf/ or call 303-797-1699.



One of the 120 participants in the 2010 Tee Up tournaments gets ready to hit the ball.

Brad Hennefer

continued from page 1

weight lifting. He was on his high school varsity basketball and golf teams.

Brad's dream is to help other people with Down syndrome to learn how to play golf and his foundation, The Brad Hennefer Golf for Life Foundation, seeks to pair up individuals with Down syndrome with PGA professionals. The Foundation also believes that participating in sports develops the type of skills and drive that help people with Down syndrome be productive members of the workforce.

Don't miss this chance to golf with Brad!



MHDSA friend and supporter Lida Citroen embraces one of the golfers in the 2010 Tee Up tournament.

MHDSA is also proud to have Brownstein/Hyatt/Farber/Schreck, Chevron, and Kiewit Infrastructure Group as three new sponsors for this tournament. Sponsorship opportunities are still available, so contact MHDSA if you or your company is interested in supporting the 2011 Tee Up for Down Syndrome Golf Tournament and our work.

MHDSA Hosts Birthday Card Making Event



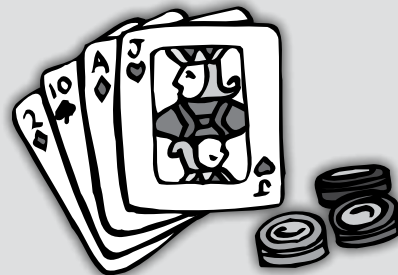
Members of the Glendale Raptors rugby team joined with MHDSA self-advocates for a fun night of card-making and socializing.

MHDSA is excited to announce our new community partner, The Glendale Raptors. The Glendale Raptors is a local men's and women's rugby team. On March 23, Keith, DeWon, Liz, and Nina of the Raptors joined Self-Advocates to help create dozens of birthday cards that will be sent to self-advocates celebrating their birthdays in the coming months. The evening was a great success! Self-Advocate Steve Widener said, "Making birthday cards is fun...and everyone was funny." The evening was highlighted by many laughs and good food provided by Lenny's Sub Shop. New relationships and friendships were made. Special thanks to Suzanne Naylor, Olivia Ovard, and Safeway for donating supplies. More information to come on our next Birthday Card Making Event. You won't want to miss it.



Glendale Raptors players Keith Dauper (left) and DeWon Reed (right) share a laugh with Laurin Gilmour.

12th Annual McCarthy's Pub Poker Run and Benefit for MHDSA



Sunday, June 5

Sign up: 10-11 a.m. at Aunt Alice's Kitchen, 1805 Main Street, Longmont

Cost: \$15/single or \$20/couple
All Vehicles Welcome!
Live and Silent Auctions.
Door Prizes and Raffle Tickets
Live Music
Prizes for Best/Worst Hands

For more information, contact:
Erik Davidson - (303) 995-2187
McCarthy's Pub - (303) 772-9797
Rick Johnson - (720) 366-7883

Sponsored by CJ's Liquor and AAa Rental Center

Dads and Donuts

Sunday, June 18

9 - 11 a.m.

City Park, Denver

MHDSA will be hosting our first "Dads & Donuts" event at City Park (exact location TBD) on June 18 from 10 a.m.-noon.

Dads, grab your kids (all are welcome) and come out to City Park for a morning filled with fun, games, and donuts. MHDSA will supply the donuts and equipment; you are responsible for bringing the kids! Please RSVP to (303) 797-1699 to let us know how many kids you will be bringing and their ages. There is NO COST for this day of fun!

Correction

In the March-April issue of Down's Update, we incorrectly identified the facilitator of the Aurora Community Group as Jeannie Eastman. In fact, Jeannie's last name is Easton. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.



Volunteer Corner

Volunteer Needs

We at MHDSA depend on many generous volunteers to help make our programs a success. We have several events coming up and could use your assistance!

Cinco de Mayo Open House **Thursday, May 5, 5-7:30 p.m.**

We need several people to help set up and serve drinks and food for our Cinco de Mayo open house.

Tee Up for Down Syndrome **Thursday, June 23, 1 p.m.**

We'll be needing several self-advocates and others to help with the golf tournament.

Dads and Donuts **Saturday, June 18, 9 - 11 a.m.**

We would like to have a few people join us to set up, serve the food, and organize and play games.

If you are interested in having fun and contributing to a great cause, then give Event and Volunteer Coordinator Brooke Ovard a call at (303) 797-1699 or e-mail her at brookeo@mhdsa.org.

Recession Takes Toll on Special Education

As many who have children in the public school system can attest, school districts have been hard hit by the recession. A new study by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) confirms parents' impressions and provides hard numbers.

Some of the statistics from the 701 respondents:

- ✓ 92% said that they have either experienced or expect to experience financial strains on services for students with disabilities.
- ✓ 91% reported their caseload had increased.
- ✓ 91% said class size increased.
- ✓ 90% reported cuts to special education programs in their districts.
- ✓ 81% said that there had been layoffs in special education staff.

To read the CEC/CASE study in its entirety, please go to <http://www.cec.sped.org>.

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is an exciting school-to-work employment training program for students nearing the completion of special education services through their school districts. Most students apply the spring before their last year of transition. It is a collaboration between Aurora Public Schools, The Children's Hospital, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Pathways, and the Arc of Aurora.

Students spend an entire school year immersed in The Children's Hospital, spending time both in a classroom-like setting with a special educator, working on workplace competencies, self-advocacy and independent living skills as well as time in their internships. Students will complete three ten-week-long internships over the course of the school year, where job coaches support them as they learn their new jobs. The goal of the program is to prepare students for competitive employment and a large part of the program is focused on landing employment either in the hospital or elsewhere in the community. The program saw great success last year with five out of seven of our first class of graduates employed. Project SEARCH at The Children's Hospital is currently looking for a few more applicants for the 2011-2012 school year. Do you know someone who might be interested in applying for this program?

In order to qualify, a student must

- ✓ have a strong desire to work
- ✓ be able to get to and from the hospital independently, utilizing RTD service
- ✓ still be receiving special education services (i.e. NOT gotten diploma yet)
- ✓ be under the age of 21
- ✓ qualify for Colorado Division of Vocational Rehab services
- ✓ provide documentation of their eligibility with their local Community Center Board (CCB) support services

Students who are accepted must either be in Aurora Public Schools (APS) or willing to open enroll into the Crossroads transition program through APS.

Please note: It is advised that students who are applying outside of APS complete an application for Project SEARCH, wait to hear back if they have been accepted to the program and THEN take the steps to open enroll with APS.

If you are interested, please contact Marisa Valeras, Project SEARCH Coordinator at The Children's Hospital, as soon as possible as applicants are currently being evaluated for consideration. She can be reached at (720) 777-8027.

Michael Remus Speaks at Parents and Schools in Partnership Symposium



On February 22, Michael Remus, director of special education for the Deer Valley school district in Arizona, spoke to an audience of professionals, family members, and caretakers at the first MHDSA Parents and Schools in Partnership Program symposium.

Remus is uniquely suited to speak on the subject of special education, as he is a former teacher, an administrator, and the parent of two children with special needs. He has a son with

significant special needs and another child with moderate special needs, so he has been on both sides of the fence.

Remus spoke of the importance of using appropriate language, because language determines thinking, and thinking affects actions. He is a big supporter of inclusion, which he feels benefits all children. As an example, he recounted how in his district gifted students are sometimes utilized to teach children with special needs, thus resulting in gains to all.

Check out MHDSA's website for more Parents and Schools in Partnership events!

New Website to Help Job Seekers with Disabilities

The jobless rate for individuals with disabilities was 15.6% in March 2011, about double that of people without disabilities, so a new tool to help job seekers with disabilities find work is welcome news. JobTIPS is a new website which focuses on helping people with disabilities find suitable employment. Developed with a federal grant of \$1 million, JobTIPS offers many tools to help job seekers find a position.

The website is designed to help people with every process of the job search process.

First, assessment tests and quizzes help individuals to determine their skill set and interests. The next section focuses on how to find a job and offers an overview of different methods like networking, using the Internet, and job fairs. Then comes a section on how to get a job with advice on writing a resume and cover letter and going for interviews. A final section offers advice on keeping a job, with tips on appearance, interactions with supervisors, co-workers, and customers, and how to respond to workplace bullying and harassment.

JobTIPS can be accessed for free at www.do2learn.com/JobTIPS.

iTunes App Store Launches New Special Education Section

As many parents and educators have discovered, smartphones like the iPhone and the Android and tablet computers like the iPad have many applications (commonly called apps) that can be useful and fun for teaching children and adults with special needs.

Recently, Apple's iTunes App Store debuted a Special Education section that brings together over 60 educational apps, some specifically designed to help individuals with special needs and others that are more general.

There are currently ten different sections, from communication and language development to organization and life skills. Most apps cost a few dollars each, although there are a few that are more expensive and others that are free. A useful free tool is IEP Checklist, an app that helps parents to organize for IEP meetings. Another fun app is iWriteWords, an app that allows users to trace letters, words, and numbers with their fingers. This app can be tried for free as a "lite" version and then purchased in its full version for a few dollars. User ratings help determine which apps are best.

If you are using a smartphone or tablet computer with your child or student or as a self-advocate, MHDSA would like to hear from you for a possible full-length article on this topic. Please e-mail Veronica Fratta at pisana11@yahoo.com to share your experiences.





3515 S. TAMARAC DRIVE
SUITE 320
DENVER, CO 80237

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #3306
DENVER, CO

Tee Up for Down Syndrome Golf Tournament

Thursday, June 23

Shotgun Start: 1:00 p.m.

The Inverness Golf Club

\$225 per player prior to May 30

\$250 after May 30

*Price includes boxed lunch, drinks, hors d'oeuvres
at the after party, player gift bag, all the fun you
can have in one day, and the knowledge that you
supported a worthy cause!*

