

# Mile High Down Syndrome Association DOWN'S UPDATE

*Serving Colorado and the Front Range Since 1981*

## PATRYCIA HATTEN JOINS MHDSA

We are very pleased to introduce the newest member of the MHDSA staff, Patrycia Hatten, Director of Family/Outreach Programs. Patrycia started with MHDSA in early February and has been busy redesigning and evaluating our current Family Programs and trainings. Patrycia will also be working on expanding our Family/Outreach programs and will be leading the charge to get more volunteers trained and up to speed for our First Call Volunteers program.

Patrycia has worked with individuals with developmental disabilities for over 20 years. For 16 of those years she was employed by a Community Centered Board as a Child Development Specialist working with children and families. She is certified in assistive technology, sign language instruction, and infant/pediatric massage. For the past 15 years she has been a part of several advocacy groups involving children, victims, and individuals with developmental disabilities.

Originally from Alaska, Patrycia moved to Colorado nearly 20 years ago and has made Northern Colorado her home since then. Being a part of the northern Colorado community allows Patrycia to better serve our Northern Colorado Chapter and to better support and serve those with Down syndrome in the Fort Collins, Greeley, and Windsor areas.

With her background and experience we are confident that Patrycia will be a wonderful resource to those we serve. Patrycia has a passion for working for and with people with developmental disabilities and we are excited to have her as part of our team.

You don't want to miss MHDSA's new gift shop with all new products! T-shirts, polo shirts, bags, blankets, and much more are available in great colors and reasonable prices. Even better, a portion of the proceeds will go to support MHDSA's vital programs!



To check out the  
merchandise and place  
your order, go to  
**WWW.MHDSA.ORG**

## TEE UP FOR DOWN SYNDROME

MHDSA invites you to join us for the Max Muscle Sports Nutrition TEE UP FOR DOWN SYNDROME Golf Tournament to be held at beautiful Arrowhead Golf Club. In attendance as our guest golfer and speaker will be Brad Hennefer. Brad is from New Jersey where he and his father run Golf For Life, an organization that promotes opportunities for those living with Down syndrome through golf. Brad is 21 years old and he himself has Down syndrome.

By supporting the MHDSA Tee Up for Down Syndrome golf tournament you are ensuring that those living with Down syndrome in Colorado receive the same opportunities for success as their peers. Help us help others and help make Colorado the best place for those living with Down syndrome.

**Monday, June 28**

**1:30 p.m. Shotgun Start**

*\$225 per player prior to May 7, \$250 after May 7*

Price includes boxed lunch, all on-course food, dinner at awards ceremony, all non-alcoholic beverages and beer for the day, player gift bag, all the fun you can have in one day, and the knowledge that you supported a worthy cause.

**Makes a great FATHER'S DAY gift!**

To RSVP please call Laurie at (303) 797-1699 or email her at [laurieh@mhdsa.org](mailto:laurieh@mhdsa.org).



For more information about our title sponsor, Max Muscle Sports Nutrition, please visit them at [www.milehighmaxmuscle.com](http://www.milehighmaxmuscle.com) or [www.maxmusclefranchise.com](http://www.maxmusclefranchise.com)



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*Submissions are welcome. Please send your submission to newsletter@mhdsa.org or mail it to Down's Update, MHDSA, 2121 S. Oneida Street, Suite 600, Denver, CO 80224.*

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

# MHDSA EVENTS CALENDAR

## MHDSA Community Groups 2010

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.

**Castle Rock Area** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month from 6-8 p.m. (Birth-7)

**Denver Area – Español** – “Grupo el Cromosoma del Amor” – 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month from 1-3 p.m. – in collaboration with El Grupo VIDA and PASCO (All ages)

**Denver Area Grandparents/Extended Family** – “Kinship Circle of Love” – 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month from 10 a.m.-noon

**Evergreen/Conifer/Bailey/Idaho Springs Area** – “Foothills Community Group” – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 p.m. (Birth-18)

**Ft. Collins Area** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (Birth-5)

**Greeley Area – BILINGUAL** – 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month (Birth-5)

**Littleton Area** – 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month from 6-8 p.m. (Birth-5)

**Longmont/Boulder Area** – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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” – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (School age, 5-12)

**Montrose Area/Western Slope** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (Birth-18)

**North Metro Area/Broomfield/Thornton/Northglenn/Commerce City/Henderson/Brighton** – “Forever Buddies Linked Through Love” – 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month from 1-3 p.m. (Birth-12)

**\*\* NEW GROUP\*\* Northwest Colorado Chapter** – Serving Routt, Moffat, Grand and Jackson counties – Meets quarterly (Birth-18)

**South Metro Area/Littleton** – 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month, time varies (School age, 5-12)

**West Metro Area/Arvada/Westminster/Wheat Ridge/Lakewood Area** – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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)

**Aging issues Action group** – Upcoming meetings are on 5/24, 7/26, 9/27, and 11/22. Contact director@denverdsclinic.org for more information.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

<b>Washington Park Fun Day for 18 and up</b> Sunday, May 2 1-4 p.m. Washington Park Denver	<b>DS-Autism Connection Family Night</b> Saturday, May 25 6:00 p.m. Beau Jo's Pizza Arvada	<b>DS-Autism Connection Family Night</b> Saturday, May 25 6:00 p.m. Beau Jo's Pizza Arvada
<b>Grupo Vida Fundraiser and Brunch</b> Saturday, June 5 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Mi Casa Resource Center	<b>SUDS Walk Team Captain Kick Off Meeting</b> Tuesday, June 15 6:30-7:30 p.m. Daniels Fund Denver	<b>Max Muscle Tee Up for Down Syndrome</b> Monday, June 28 1:30 p.m. Arrowhead Golf Club Littleton
<b>Get Down/Throw Down Dance</b> Thursday, June 17 6:30-8:30 p.m. Christ the King Church Denver	<b>Lose The Training Wheels™</b> June 28-July 2 Westridge Recreation Center Highlands Ranch	
<b>Denver Adult Down Syndrome Clinic Dancing with the Stars Fundraiser</b> Saturday, July 24	<b>National Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention</b> July 16-July 18 Orlando, Florida	<b>Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk</b> Sunday, September 26

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## “A National Movement”



A couple of weeks ago I attended the Affiliates in Action (AIA) conference in Kansas City. AIA is an opportunity for Executive Directors, Board members, and interested stakeholders in various Down syndrome affiliate groups from around the country to share best practices and ideas. This year the conference had a bit more of an international feel as there were speakers from the United Kingdom and a very special guest, Bala Mohammed from Nigeria. Bala is the Director for the Garkuwa Down Syndrome Foundation in Kano, Nigeria.

Bala, who appears to be around 40 years old, traveled to the United States for the first time in his life just to attend this conference. Bala had learned of the conference on the web and was amazed that there was a community in the United States that appreciates those living with Down syndrome and is taking an active role in making the lives of those living with Down syndrome better. His perspective was altered when he came to Kansas City. So, what is the big deal, you might ask?

In speaking with Bala, it became evident very quickly just how good we have it here in the U.S. when it comes to the services and resources to address the needs of those we love living with Down syndrome. “But Mac, I have been fighting with the school system to have my child included in mainstream classes at our community school. I am frustrated!” Bala’s sister has a daughter, now 7 years old, with Down syndrome. She is not allowed to take her child to any school because her daughter is “cursed.” You may say “Mac, we have been on a waiting list for years trying to get services for our child.” Bala’s niece will never be on a list. She is entitled to no services. Sometimes I hear people say, “Why aren’t there more job opportunities for my son/daughter? What is being done to provide opportunities for them when they get older?” Bala’s niece will be fortunate to live through her teens due to a lack of medical care for those with disabilities.

Bala is the strongest illustration of just how lucky we are here in the U.S. to be raising children with special needs in a country where they have access to an education, where there are services that can make their lives better, and where they have the opportunity to grow and thrive. Are the services easy to come by? Not always. Can the school system be difficult to navigate and understand? As a former classroom teacher and a parent, I will agree that it is. Are there obstacles to our loved ones finding meaningful employment later in life? Too many to count, but at least we have opportunities.

In speaking with Bala over the course of three days, I was constantly struck by just how lucky Guion, my son, is to be living in 2010 in the United States. We only need travel back a short 30-35 years to a time when Guion, and those like him, would have been treated much like Bala’s niece. Cast out, not from a classroom, but from an entire society simply for having a genetic disorder that few took the time to understand. In 2010, we as Americans have come a long way in the acceptance and treatment of those living with developmental disabilities. We have seen the passage of IDEA, the end of formalized institutionalization, the mainstreaming of our children into classrooms across the country, and the broader acceptance of our children in the community. The challenge is only beginning for us, this next generation of parents and loved ones. We must pick up the torch from those who came before us (locally, nationally, and internationally) if we are to accomplish as much as our predecessors. But we must also have a sense of perspective as we continue on this journey. Ours is not a perfect world here in Colorado or the U.S., for that matter. We have legitimate concerns and grievances. Having said that, we owe it to Bala and his niece not to take for granted what we do have. We need to approach the next 30 years with a sense of perspective that will allow us to help our loved ones accomplish all that they dream. Let’s begin...

Sincerely,

Mac Macsovits



## Lose the Training Wheels™

Lose The Training Wheels™ is more than just a bike-riding program. For many children with disabilities, riding a bike is seemingly impossible. Yet often it can be mastered in less than a week. Within days of learning to ride, many children exhibit independent behaviors for the first time. This achievement creates a gateway of opportunity, helping children gain assurance and self-reliance in many other aspects of their lives. For ages 8 & up.

**When:** Monday–Friday, June 28–July 2  
75-minute daily sessions available at different times:  
8:15 a.m. • 9:50 a.m. • 11:25 a.m. • 1:45 p.m. • 3:20 p.m.  
**Cost:** \$200 for Highlands Ranch Residents/\$250 for non-residents  
**Location:** Highlands Ranch Recreation Center Westridge Gym

**To register:** Call (303) 471-7020 or register online at [www.HRCAonline.org/tr](http://www.HRCAonline.org/tr)  
For more information call (303) 471-7043 or email [saden@HRCAonline.org](mailto:saden@HRCAonline.org). Check out the national program at [losethetrainingwheels.org](http://losethetrainingwheels.org).



# Volunteer Corner

May/June 2010

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Skye Pawlik and Megan Ryan, Juniors at East High School in Denver and co-chairs of "Throw Down," a group of students who engage in fundraising activities and use the funds to underwrite social events such as "Get Down" dances. These young ladies collectively contributed more than 60 hours of volunteer time to coordinate the Get Down dance that took place on Saturday, March 6. They planned, scheduled and attended meetings that led to the event, found and negotiated the venue, coordinated details such as music, decorations, signage, and refreshments; organized the preparation and cleaning of the facility, and participated in the event itself. They were inspired to choose MHDSA as one of their beneficiaries because they have a friend who has a brother with Down syndrome.

Skye and Megan are role models in the community and we greatly appreciate these civic-minded young ladies who took the initiative to organize a social event of this magnitude.

For more information on the Get Down/Throw Down dance, please see the article on page 6.



## Step Up for Down Syndrome Team Captain Kickoff Meeting

Tuesday, June 15, 2010 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
Daniels Fund Building, 101 Monroe St., Denver  
RSVP (required) by Friday, June 11  
(303) 797-1699

This is a chance for all Team Captains, including prospective Team Captains, to gather information and share ideas. Details about the 2010 walk will be provided as well as posters, brochures, and other tips to advertise the event and your fundraising goals.

## World Down Syndrome Day—Volunteers for Veterans

MHDSA extends a heartfelt thank you to the following self-advocates who celebrated World Down Syndrome Day on March 21 by assisting veterans during chapel services: Conor Buddeke, Lillian Chazin, Laurin Gilmour, Peter Naffah and P.J. Bernardis.

As Brad Paisley said, "Anytime you do something from the heart, people just know it." The veterans at the VA Hospital just knew it, as did Chaplain Matthews and Father Freeman.

Lillian took care of a special assignment during the Protestant chapel service, and Conor, Laurin, Peter, and P.J. greeted veterans for the Roman Catholic service and served refreshments afterward. The VA Hospital personnel were very enthusiastic and complimentary of our group's participation and hope we will return. Self-advocate volunteer Conor Buddeke expressed his sentiment, "I had fun! I would like to do it again." Peter Naffah also enjoyed the opportunity. He said, "The people were really nice. I liked serving the coffee and treats!" Evidently it was a win-win.

Our self-advocate volunteers definitely shared the message of inclusion with the other volunteers and veterans alike and gave back to the community, to an important population—United States veterans. Thank you again for celebrating World Down Syndrome Day in such a significant fashion.

### Grupo Vida

Saturday, June 5  
10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Mi Casa Resource Center

You will not want to miss this fabulous fundraiser for El Grupo Vida with brunch, silent auction and fashion show and a special tribute to Ellie Valdez Honeyman '08. For more information contact [www.elgrupovida.org](http://www.elgrupovida.org)



### MHDSA 2010 Matching Grant Campaign

We reached (and exceeded) our goal of \$10,000 in donations. Thanks to the Anschutz Family Foundation for their initial grant of \$5,000 and the anonymous donor who also pledged \$5,000. We would also like to thank all of you who donated and helped MHDSA receive the matching gift of \$10,000. This equates to more than \$20,000 for our vital programs. Thank you all for your generosity!

MHDSA and the Denver Adult Down Syndrome Clinic invite all of those 18 years or older to join us at Washington Park (entrance of S. Franklin street and Mississippi) for a fun day of activities, food, and games on Sunday, May 2, from 1-4 p.m. Please bring a healthy side dish for 7-10 people to share. Drinks, chicken, and burgers will be provided. Come dressed to play kickball, croquet, and other fun activities. Contact Laurie Herrera at [laurieh@mhdsa.org](mailto:laurieh@mhdsa.org) or (303) 797-1699 to RSVP. On May 2, you may contact Susan Lubbers (DADSC) at (917) 355-3436 or Mac Macsoviets (MHDSA) at (303) 506-6564.

# BRUXISM IN CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

By Dr. Jonathan Sierk

As a pediatric dentist who works with many children with Down syndrome, I would guess that 25% of parents of all children with Down syndrome ages 3-6 complain of hearing their child grind their teeth when sleeping, usually when they share a hotel room on a vacation. The baby teeth tend to be very flat compared to the adult teeth and make an easy surface to grind.

The good news is that most kids outgrow this when the permanent teeth start to come in around ages 6-8 or so. Children and adults with Down syndrome do seem to grind their teeth more than others, both while sleeping and when awake. It can be a kind of subconscious, self-stimulating behavior. In the baby teeth it really isn't much of a concern, unless the bruxism (tooth grinding) causes

pain to either the teeth from grinding close to the nerve of the teeth, or to the muscles that chew from fatigue. These symptoms rarely develop in the primary teeth.

Dentists and parents should be concerned if significant wear develops on the permanent teeth. Unfortunately, most children and young adults with Down syndrome will not tolerate wearing a bite guard at night or the process of making one to prevent the grinding if it continues past early childhood.

If I see significant wear on the permanent teeth of one of my patients I consider placing sealants of white filling material on the biting surfaces of the back teeth so the patient can grind the filling instead of the teeth. We all wear our teeth down throughout

life--you will see 7- and 8-year olds with nice bumps on their new front teeth but usually after a couple years those bumps are gone. It is really only a concern with significant wear that something should be done. Orthodontic treatment is another possible solution. It just depends on the patient and how their mouth looks.

*Dr. Sierk is a pediatric dentist in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, who treats many children with Down syndrome and focuses on the unique medical concerns of these patients. He is on staff at the Children's Hospital of Denver where he is an adjunct clinical professor. He can be reached with further questions or comments at (303) 865-4066 or by email at Jon@SierkPediatricDentistry.com.*

## A CASE FOR INCLUSION

By Sarah Hartway

In the world of developmental disabilities, few topics evoke as much emotion as the topic of inclusion. Inclusion means different things to different people. Opinions vary widely about the way inclusion might look or work in various contexts: education, recreation, employment, and the community at large. Opinions also vary about the desired level of inclusion for people with developmental disabilities in each of these contexts.

As the mother of a young man with a developmental disability, I've always tried to look at all the options. In some situations, I have selected options for my son, Adam, that were not fully inclusive. For example, due to his significant hearing loss, we selected a center-based deaf/hard of hearing program for him for elementary school, valuing the language-intensive, total communication approach used. In other situations, we have selected inclusive community options such as participation in a typical Cub Scout troop.

For middle school, we selected to have Adam attend Deer Creek Middle School where he participates in most of the typical seventh grade classes. We liked this option because the school was close to home, was equipped to meet Adam's various needs well and was adept at individualizing education for the students with IEPs. Just as important to us was the school's established peer mentoring program that guides specially-selected eighth graders to provide unobtrusive support and guidance to students who may need a little extra help.



*Adam Hartway loves basketball.*

The culture we have experienced at the school has been one of warmth, inclusion and appreciation of the contributions of all students. Despite the welcoming culture and the peer mentors, Adam adapted academically to the transition to middle school more quickly than he adapted socially. In a discussion with one of Adam's teachers about ways to help him connect more with his peers, she suggested we sign Adam up for the school's basketball team. While the team did not require try-outs, it wasn't an adaptive program either. Adam has always liked basketball and has participated twice before in adaptive basketball programs. I wasn't sure if Adam would be successful in this program due to his various challenges but I didn't want to limit him either. After talking to his gym teacher, who is also one of the team coaches, he wanted to play so we decided to sign him up.

I wanted to watch his first team practice but knew that Adam wouldn't want me there, so I waited until near the end of practice and peeked through the gym doors to observe. What I saw was Adam following the lead of the other players and going through the drills fairly well. I also saw his teammates encouraging him and knuckle-bumping him for effort and success, just as they did one another. I felt a great deal of relief but still knew the real test would come in the first game.

When I sat in the bleachers during that first game, I couldn't have been more pleased or proud. Adam's skill level did not match that of most of his teammates, although his shooting ability is not bad at all. But he had as much playing time and received as much encouragement as every other player. There wasn't a single look or comment from anybody suggesting that maybe he should return to the bench when the opponent was threatening. The moment I appreciated most was when a teammate, the team's star actually, was on the ground. Adam approached him, reached down and gave him his hand to help him up. This is a routine occurrence in many games but this

*(continued on page 6)*

# GET DOWN DANCE

The Get Down dance that took place on Saturday, March 6 was unique in that a third party hosted it. About 15 students from East High School who make up the group "Throw Down" hosted the event. The purpose of their organization is to engage in fundraising activities to

underwrite social events for non-profit organizations. These civic-minded students were amazing! While it may seem simple to plan an event, there is a lot of work that goes into it. We are extremely grateful to co-presidents Skye Pawlik and Megan Ryan for planning, organizing and completing such an accomplishment.

It was truly a heartwarming event. Every self-advocate in attendance felt welcomed and included. Our gracious hosts made sure that nobody was dancing alone and some of the all time Get Down favorites were incorporated into the set list such as the Conga Line, the Electric Slide, and some good old-fashioned couples dancing.

Both organizations learned something from each other. Throw Down received our message of inclusion loud and

clear! MHDSA took from the evening the warm embrace of a caring organization that wants to make a difference in the community.

The next Get Down/Throw Down dance will take place on Thursday, June 17 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Christ the King Church in Denver (860 Elm St). The theme is a Country Western Hoedown and participants are encouraged to dress in the theme by wearing jeans, cowboy hats, bandanas, etc. Line dancing instructors will be on site. RSVP

(required) by Monday, June 14 by calling (303) 797-1699. Join us!



*Meg Wright dances with a member of "Throw Down"*



*Members of "Throw Down" organized the dance.*

## *A CASE FOR INCLUSION, FROM PAGE 5*

simple gesture showed me that Adam knew he was just another member of the team. Adam didn't score any points in that first game but his team won and he was thrilled. He did go on to score points in other games and the team had a very successful season.

Observing Adam's development of skills, confidence and new relationships from his participation in the school basketball team really gave me a new perspective on his abilities and the choices we should consider for recreation, education and more in the future. But that isn't where my lesson on inclusion ended. Really, my lesson began on February 23.

On February 23, 2010 I received a call no parent ever expects. Adam had basketball practice after school that day so I wasn't expecting him home yet when I received a call from his teacher telling me in a very hushed voice that there had been a shooting at the school and they were in lockdown. She was calling me from her cell phone while hiding in an office with a few students who had witnessed the shooting. They suspected that the occurrence was essentially over but didn't know for sure. She wanted

me to know what had happened before hearing it on the news and she wanted me to know that Adam was safe. She had watched him enter the gym before the shooting occurred and believed he was there with his basketball coach/gym teacher during the lockdown. Although I knew I wouldn't be able to get Adam until the lockdown ended, I headed over to be as close as possible at that time. It was surreal to walk past all the police cars, flashing lights and news trucks while hearing the constant hum of multiple helicopters overhead. It took me back almost eleven years to the massacre at Columbine High School just blocks away. By now I had received another call from Adam's teacher telling me that Adam had been evacuated and was now in the library of the nearby elementary school. I arrived there and had to wait nearly an hour through the process of checking identification and matching students to parents before I could see Adam. Finally, when Adam was brought to me by his teacher, I went to hug him, but being a thirteen year old boy in the presence of his peers, he wanted nothing to do with that. So I hugged his teacher instead and thanked her for communicating with

me through this ordeal. Adam actually seemed unaffected as we left the school and headed home. He knew some of what had occurred but not everything so I filled in the blanks for him. He didn't really want to talk to me about his experience during the lockdown so I had to piece it together by talking to others over the next days.

I learned that Adam hadn't actually been in the gym with his gym teacher during the lockdown. In fact he was with the only group of students still in the school at the time of the lockdown without an adult present. He was with some of his basketball teammates in the locker room. This group of boys had the amazing presence of mind to stay together, stay quiet, close and lock doors and to use a cell phone to text a teacher in another part of the building to inform someone that they were in the locker room, they were okay and that Adam was with them. In hindsight, we now know that the danger was over by that time but they didn't know that. When I spoke to the boys a few days later, they insisted that Adam had helped them by keeping the mood light and keeping

*(continued on page 7)*

## Ready or Not, Adolescence is Here: An Overview of Puberty, Sexuality and Relationships

On February 24, MHDSA and JFK Partners sponsored a workshop for 40 parents, caregivers and providers who came together to learn more about puberty, sexuality and relationships. Participants received an overview of topics including:

- Sexuality – what's it all about?
- Ways in which sexuality may be affected by disability
- Social skills and relationships
- Healthy psycho-sexual development
- Sex Education
- And more

Participants shared resources and information. Questions led to great discussions of these challenging topics. Evaluation responses show that participants really valued the opportunity to learn more and that our speakers, who donated their time and expertise, did a great job of preparing parents and caregivers for the transition from child to adult. Additionally, participants were asked to identify topics for further education and the most requested topic was social skills. We are actively working to schedule an educational offering on this topic in the near future.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Daniels Fund for donating the use of their meeting space for this program.



**DENVER ADULT  
DOWN SYNDROME  
CLINIC**

Last year, the Denver Adult Down Syndrome Clinic celebrated its 10th anniversary. Founded in 1999 as a program of the Mile High Down Syndrome Association, the "Clinic" began providing medical and psychosocial services to adults in our community. We are proud that we continue providing a high level of service to patients. DADSC is one of only five such clinics in the country that specializes in adults with Down syndrome. That is why we see patients from all over the metro Denver area, the Rocky Mountain region, the country and even the world.

In October 2009, we received an unusual request. The brother of a 42 year-old woman with Down syndrome called us from Boulder, Colorado. His sister had been living with their mother in their native Venezuela. When their mother passed away, he sought the services of the Denver Adult Down Syndrome Clinic for his sister who now was without a primary caregiver at home in Venezuela. In order to obtain a visa for the woman to come to the United States to be seen at our clinic, they needed a special letter of request from Dr. Barry Martin, DADSC Medical Director. We sent the letter to the US Embassy in Venezuela and were thrilled when a visa was granted for the patient to visit her brother for a period of three months.

In January 2010, we saw the patient and her brother in the clinic with the help of a volunteer medical interpreter. The patient's first language is Spanish and although her brother speaks English fluently, we wanted to provide translation services directly between the patient and our health care providers. The following Monday, the family attended our Aging Issues Forum held at the Alzheimer's Association. We are so pleased that we had the opportunity to serve this family and are very grateful for our community partners MHDSA, the Alzheimer's Association, and MCPN.

For information on all our programs and upcoming events, please visit us online at [www.denverdsclinic.org](http://www.denverdsclinic.org).

### *A CASE FOR INCLUSION, FROM PAGE 6*

smiles on everybody's faces. I suspect he was being silly because he didn't feel comfortable with the uncertainty of the situation and with his own fear.

While it certainly wouldn't have been my preference to have Adam in this situation without an adult present, the fact that he was with boys he knew from the basketball team made such a difference. I can only imagine how much more frightening this situation would have been for Adam and the others if they hadn't had these relationships in place. They dealt with this awful situation as a team.

The benefits of having Adam included in his school and his basketball team extended to a new level I could never have anticipated. While most students with developmental disabilities will never experience a school shooting, they very likely will encounter other unforeseen and difficult situations. Having

relationships with many other students, not just those who also have disabilities, may provide them with a larger network of friends and supporters. We can never know or control all that our children will encounter in life. Having a connection to the larger community can have so many benefits.

Update: School resumed a few days later at Deer Creek Middle School. Some things are back to normal, others are modified and some things will never be the same. Adam is still struggling to make sense of what occurred. Aren't we all? He is using his relationships with the school staff and with other students to help him understand and feel good at school again. Even though the basketball season is over, spending time with his teammates is something Adam really values and enjoys. He can't wait to play on the eight grade team next year.



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DENVER, CO



# Tee Up for Down Syndrome

*Join us at the beautiful Arrowhead Golf Course in Littleton for the Max Muscle Sports Nutrition MHDSA Tee Up for Down Syndrome golf tournament. Our special guest and speaker will be Brad Hennefer, self-advocate and driving force behind Golf For Life, an organization that promotes opportunities for those living with Down syndrome through golf.*

**Monday, June 28**

**1:30 p.m. Shotgun Start**

**\$225 per player prior to May 7 and \$250 after May 7.**

**Price includes boxed lunch, all on-course food, dinner at awards ceremony, all non-alcoholic beverages and beer for the day, player gift bag, all the fun you can have in one day, and the knowledge that you supported a worthy cause.**

**To RSVP please call Laurie at  
(303) 797-1699 or email her at  
[laurieh@mhdsa.org](mailto:laurieh@mhdsa.org)**

