



◆ **Down Syndrome** ◆  
C O M M U N I T Y

December 2009  
www.downsyndromecommunity.org

# DSC Newsletter

## Our Goals:

- Build a caring, understanding, supportive community open to all individuals and families whose lives include a person with Down syndrome.
- Share and nurture a climate where every human being is recognized, their strengths appreciated, and their accomplishments respected and valued.
- Strengthen the network of individuals and groups working with issues affecting the lives of those with developmental disabilities and their families.

## Jacque Martin: My Buddy Walk Experience

Thirteen years ago my family and I were blessed with a beautiful miracle, who to this day fills our lives with so much joy. When Janel was born, none of us really knew too much about Down syndrome or what to expect.

Over the years, my sister has shocked us all with her amazing abilities and enthusiasm about life. Janel, like many others with Down syndrome, has so many interests and goals, and just wants to find her place in the world.

I joined the Buddy Walk Committee not only to help promote awareness and acceptance of peo-

ple with Down syndrome, but to become more involved with these wonderful families. This was my first year on the committee helping plan this year's Buddy Walk, and just in these past few months of working with some of the other members and volunteers I have learned so much. These are such caring people, who over the past years have devoted so much of their time to help make this event and other functions possible.

We all have very busy lives with work and other chaos, so to commit to organizing and managing an event like the Buddy Walk is a

very selfless act. The committee sacrificed much of their time over a period of months to ensure that this was a success. Whether it be contacting speakers, entertainment, or promoting the event, all



these things are done in a way to ensure that we do not go over budget, even if it means working twice as hard by contacting multiple sources. The result of this hard work and commitment enables families of loved ones with Down syndrome, or expecting, to have the resources needed to help make their lives successful.

What a rewarding experience to be part of something that had such a great turnout of people, all looking for what's best for their loved ones. I hope these numbers will continue to increase and we can continue to promote public awareness and acceptance of people with Down syndrome.

—Jacque Martin, Buddy Walk Committee Member



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# Thank You

*The Down Syndrome Community Board of Directors, with sincere and heartfelt gratitude, salutes the 2009 Puget Sound Buddy Walk Committee. On behalf of all who attended, thank you for a fantastic event!*

## Your 2009 Buddy Walk Committee

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Linda Michael, Buddy Walk Chair             | Jacque Martin   |
| Lynne Palmisano, Board of Directors Liaison | Barbara Matthes |
| Sandy Clayton                               | Doug Milligan   |
| Jessica DeBord                              | Linda Milligan  |
| Flo Firpo                                   | Barbara O'Kelly |
| Patty Fothergill                            | Brian O'Kelly   |
| Adrienne Fraley-Monillas                    |                 |
| Wendy Hawley                                |                 |

# DSC Newsletter

## From the President

The morning of the Buddy Walk, gusty winds threatened to carry away everything. I watched balloons dragging chairs across the plaza and canopies parachuting off the ground. But by the time the Buddy Walk began, the wind had calmed a bit and it was a perfect day for a little get together of almost 700 people.

A dedicated group of volunteers created a moving event out of something we almost had to give up on. I saw self advocates – the strongest, most resilient people I know – walking proudly. I saw new parents mingling with those who have been through it all. I saw clowns and painted faces, balloons

and smiles, handshakes and hugs. I saw supporters, educators, legislators, artists, entertainers, moms, dads, siblings – people from all walks of life with a common bond, a common love, and a common belief in the power of connections to create a bright future. Most of all, I saw extraordinary energy.

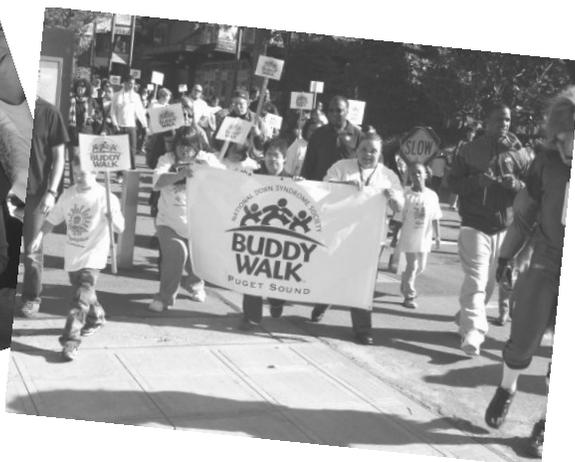
Thanks to everyone who celebrated with us. Your contributions helped pay for the Buddy Walk, which allowed the raffle ticket sales, our only major fundraiser for the entire year, go toward supporting our other DSC events. A special shout out to everyone who sold raffle tickets before the Buddy Walk. That's a tough act in

this economy, and in an organization our size, every little bit helps to bring our members a little more.

We'll continue to try to produce quality events that give you the most bang for your buck and satisfy you in a variety of ways. Please help us improve the Buddy Walk by completing our survey at [www.pugetsoundbuddywalk.com](http://www.pugetsoundbuddywalk.com). And connect with us on Facebook at Buddy Walk of Puget Sound, where you can find more Buddy Walk photos.

I hope to see you at our next event.

—Sean King



You can find lots more Buddy Walk pics on Facebook at Buddy Walk of Puget Sound.

## 2010 Conference Taking Shape

The 2010 DSC Conference will be held at the Blackriver Training and Conference Center in Renton on Saturday, April 10th. It's an all day event with two keynote speakers, and two breakout sessions with multiple presenters to choose from.

"We're going to offer a full-fledged conference with a broad scope," said Sean King. "We want everyone who attends to feel like

every minute they spend at the conference is worthwhile."

Margaret Lee Thompson will deliver the morning keynote address, One Road to Advocacy. Maureen Eckersley, fitness and nutrition expert, will deliver the afternoon keynote address.

Breakout topics presented by specialists well-known in their fields will include: dentistry and

orthodontics, sexuality, supported living, building inclusion, nutrition and fitness, functional behavior analysis, and legal issues.

Look for complete conference information and registration details soon.

For more information and to contribute your time and/or financial resources to help produce this event, contact Conference Committee Chair, Anne Mullis: [anne@oldmillmicro.com](mailto:anne@oldmillmicro.com), 206-842-9027.

*"We're going to offer a full-fledged conference with a broad scope."*

## Marcella Young's Speech: 2009 Puget Sound Buddy Walk Self Advocate Speaker



Hi, my name is Marcella Young, and I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. A few weeks ago I had a birthday and now I'm 27 years old. I love celebrating my birthday. It was low key this year because we went out to dinner. I live at home with my parents and like going to the movies, making art patterns, watching videos (especially if Will Smith is in them), going to church where I am an usher, listening to my iPod, doing social activities and Special Olympics with the Seattle Parks Department, going on vacation, bowling, going to the library, eating pizza, helping people, swimming, watching the Mariners on TV with my dad, and last but not least, hanging out with my best friend Brian. This year I really liked the Mariners since Junior is back on the team. He's my favorite player. I like being at home with my family, and I love Friday date night. That's when my mom and dad go out together and I get the whole house all to myself. They usually bring dessert home for me. Dessert always makes me smile—unless it's chocolate.

For almost three years I have worked at Goodwill in Burien. I have good customer service skills. I talk to customers and help them find things in the store. I ask them how they are doing. My customers tell me I am friendly and a hard worker. I work mostly in production, but help in retail too. Sometimes I change back and forth and feel like a utility worker, because I do everything. I work fast and get things done. In production I bring merchandise out from in the back. In retail I organize and put the merchandise neatly away.

Sometimes when a co-worker needs a break, I help with donations.

They weren't sure of where to use me at first and I had a little bit of a bumpy start. They tried to show and tell me too many things at the same time. Sometimes I got confused and couldn't remember what everyone told me. That was a hard time for me, and I wasn't happy with my job. My parents weren't happy with it either. After six months things got better. I am happy to be a part of the Goodwill team. In July 2007 I was employee of the month in retail. In June 2008 I was employee of the month again, this time in production. Both times I got a certificate and a day off with pay. My job coach found the job for me and checks in with me about once a month to see how I am doing. My bosses and co-workers help me to learn different skills. I really like going to work on Tuesdays when my dad takes me to Starbucks on the way to work. I love my tall, skinny, vanilla latte. That's also the day I buy lunch at Jack in the Box. It's really nice to have my own money to pay for my own things.

From September 2008 to May 2009 I took self advocacy training through the ARC of King County. I got to meet people and I learned some leadership skills and ways to speak up for myself and others with disabilities. In fact our group even went to Olympia where I met my senator, Claudia Kaufmann. I told her I thought it was important to continue to have money for supported employment and other services for people with developmental disabilities. Geoff Simpson is my representative and I left a note in his office. He sent me a thank you card for visiting his office. He wrote that he hopes to see me the next time I visit Olympia.

In the next two weeks a group of us (self advocates and parents) will visit some high schools in the area and share our life stories with students. We want them to know that we are more alike than different. We want them to know that even though some things

may be hard for us, we are people first and we like who we are. Everyone wants to be treated with respect and so do we. People with developmental disabilities have feelings and dreams for our lives just like everyone else. We live in and want to be included in our families, communities and jobs. What I do at work is important and they miss me when I'm not there. I am proud of who I am. Mom tells me all the time that I'm the best Marcella she knows. My parents love and support me. It makes me feel like I can achieve and do anything I want. They encourage me to be and do my best. My best doesn't look like anyone else's because it's mine.

When I was young some doctors and other people had low expectations for my life. They didn't know my family and the support they would give me. People might be surprised to learn that when I was only six years old I jumped on a trampoline 321

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*“My best doesn't look like anyone else's because it's mine.”*

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times in a row for a school fundraiser. Mom says she was glad she sponsored me at a flat rate and not per jump. When I was about eight years old I taught myself to swim. I also taught myself to bowl with my left hand—and I'm not even left handed. I have voted in almost all elections since I was eighteen. I have a good life and love who I am. I have dreams for my future and lots of things that I still want to do. My parents, family and friends believe in me and I believe in myself. My pastor at church says my best days are still ahead of me, and I think he's right! Each morning when I talk to my mom on the phone before I go to work she tells me three things to remember and I will tell you. She says: Do your best. Be nice to people. And have fun.

—Marcella Young, Self Advocate



♦ **Down Syndrome** ♦  
C O M M U N I T Y

17930 Normandy Terrace SW  
Normandy Park, WA 98166

The Down Syndrome Community is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the lives of individuals with Down syndrome and their families by focusing on education, communication and advocacy. Our service area includes the entire Puget Sound region and Western Washington. Our members include a wide cross section of families and professionals across the United States.

You can find more information and make a tax-deductible donation through PayPal by visiting our website at [www.downsyndromecommunity.org](http://www.downsyndromecommunity.org)

## Upcoming Events

### Annual Holiday Party

December 12, 2009,  
6-8:30pm, Community  
Center At Mercer View  
8236 SE 24th Street  
Mercer Island, WA  
Phone: 206.236.3545

You, your family and friends are invited to join us for an evening of potluck, fun, and a visit from Santa Claus.



#### Potluck:

A-L bring a main dish  
M-Z bring a salad or side dish  
DSC will provide dessert

If you want Santa to call out your child's name and deliver a gift, bring a neatly tagged, wrapped present.



### Sweetheart Dance & Pizza Party

February 20, 2010, 5-8pm  
Highland Center, Bellevue

### DSC Conference

April 10, 2010  
Blackriver Training and  
Conference Center, Renton

### Board Meetings

Board meetings are open to all members. Please let Sean know you are coming: [president@downsyndromecommunity.org](mailto:president@downsyndromecommunity.org), 425-228-3391

Next Board meeting:  
January 20, 2009, 7pm  
Mercer Island Library  
(tentative)

### Board of Directors

Sean King, President  
[president@downsyndromecommunity.org](mailto:president@downsyndromecommunity.org)

Louise Avery, Vice President of  
Community Relations  
[dsc\\_relations@comcast.net](mailto:dsc_relations@comcast.net)

Carla Snyder, Secretary

Curtis Thelin, Treasurer  
[treasurer@downsyndromecommunity.org](mailto:treasurer@downsyndromecommunity.org)

Anne Mullis, Recording Secretary

Nick Kappes, Finance  
Committee Chair

Sarah Holcombe

Mangala Lonkar

Lynne Palmisano

Laurel Sturges