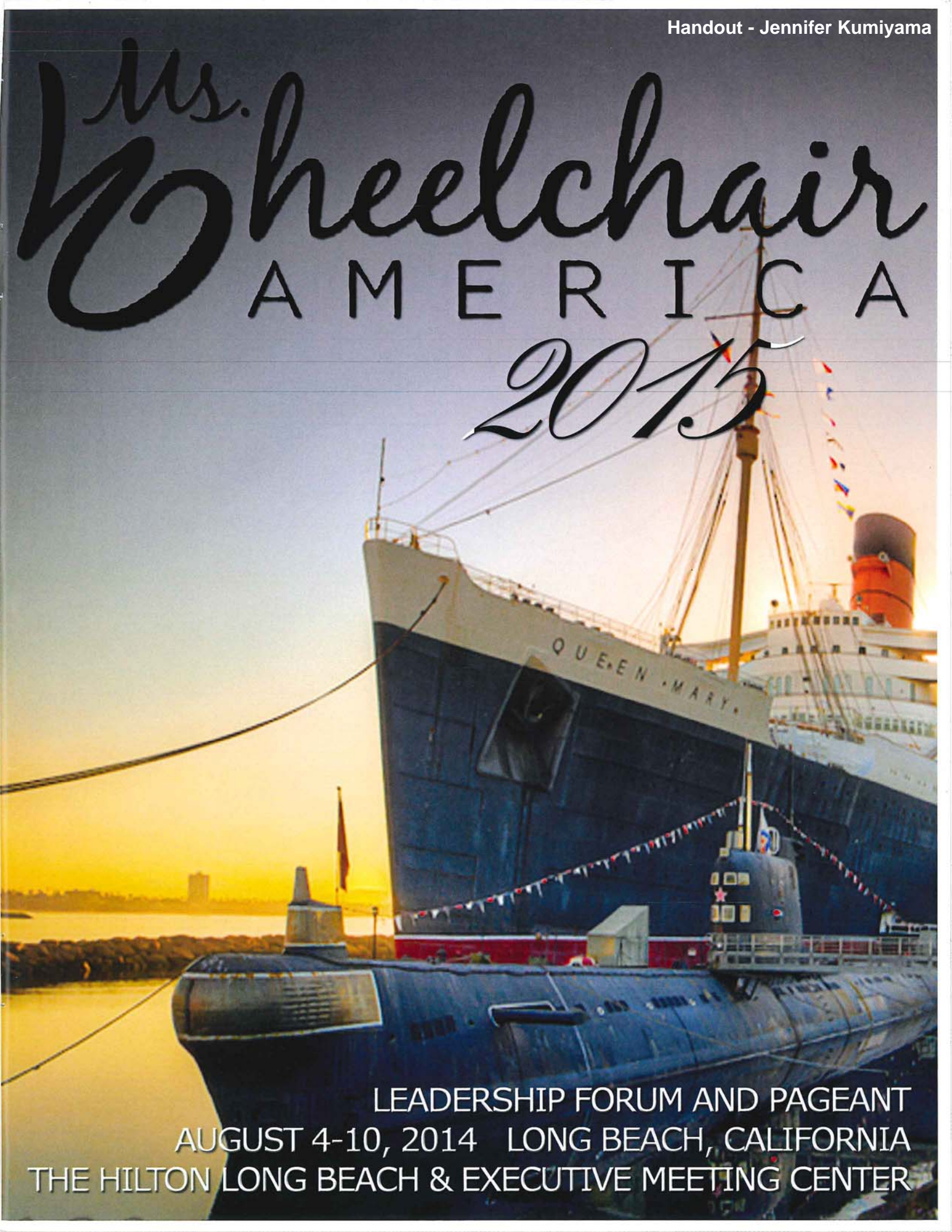


# Ms. Wheelchair AMERICA 2015



LEADERSHIP FORUM AND PAGEANT  
AUGUST 4-10, 2014 LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA  
THE HILTON LONG BEACH & EXECUTIVE MEETING CENTER



*City of Long Beach*  
Mayor Robert Garcia

Dear Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Contestants:

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the beautiful and progressive city of Long Beach, California. Long Beach is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest city in California, yet has a variety of neighborhoods that make people feel at home. Long Beach has the best of Southern California dining, entertainment and culture all within easy, accessible areas.

I am honored that the Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation is hosting the Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Leadership Academy and Pageant in Long Beach. Not only will this be the first time this event is hosted in Long Beach, but it is also the first time it will be hosted on the West Coast. I want to congratulate each one of you for your accomplishments and for representing your state in such a powerful and empowering way. Your hard work and dedication to the betterment of the disability community is changing lives one life at a time, and for that I commend you.

I applaud Ms. Wheelchair America for the remarkable job done to bring together impressive women from across the country to promote education and advocacy to more than 54 million Americans living with disabilities.

I am proud to say that Long Beach is home to three title holders, Jennifer Kumiyama - Ms. Wheelchair California 2010 and 1<sup>st</sup> Runner Up Ms. Wheelchair America 2011, Mary Zendejas - Ms. Wheelchair California 2012 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner Up Ms. Wheelchair America 2013 and Katie Hull - Little Ms. Wheelchair California 2012.

Again, welcome to the City of Long Beach California! I hope you enjoy your stay and come back to visit us soon,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia".

Robert Garcia  
Mayor

# Ms. Wheelchair America 2014,

## Jennifer Adams



Dear Ms. Wheelchair America 2015  
Contestants and Supporters,

This year has been an adventure beyond what I could have imagined! Winning the title of Ms. Wheelchair America 2014 has been my greatest accomplishment to date and opened so many doors to my dreams. Since childhood I have dreamed of being an itinerate motivational speaker. Prior to winning the national title I started a motivational speaking business in 2011. Along with my speaking business I started an anti-bullying campaign called "The Power of Words." These campaigns were inspired by my own experiences with the power of words and lead me to success in winning the title of Ms. Wheelchair Washington. When competing for the national title in July of 2013 my vision broadened for a national platform of inclusion in all areas of American society, which inspired my national platform "Inclusion Revolution." The Ms. Wheelchair America 2014 Leadership Conference provided so much information and resources to expand my vision and become an even better advocate for people with disabilities in America. In the last year I have made appearances in 30 cities in America with my national platform. I have shared my story and

platform message school, corporations, churches and rehabilitation hospitals all throughout the United States. I have been adaptive surfing, adaptive skiing and have seen monumental places like Times Square, Central Park, Nashville Tennessee, Pearl Harbor and Boston Harbor. Participating in the state and national pageant of Ms. Wheelchair America has been an amazing opportunity to meet like-minded people who are empowered and passionately advocating for people with disabilities in America. I am so grateful for this experience. I hope you enjoy this year's Ms. Wheelchair America Leadership Conference 2014. May it open the doors to your dreams.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Adams

Dear Supporters and Friends,

On behalf of The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation, I'd like to thank you for joining us for The 2015 Ms. Wheelchair America Leadership Forum and Pageant. We are delighted to call Long Beach, California the crowning place of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Ms. Wheelchair America!

The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation Board of Directors and Volunteers have put forth an exorbitant amount of effort in preparing for this remarkable event. Here, at "The Entertainment Capitol of the World", we are ready to shine the spotlight on the true stars—the beautiful contestants of Ms. Wheelchair America of 2015. By showcasing their triumphs and celebrating each and every one of them, we are certain our contestants' journeys will be extraordinary during this truly special event.

For 43 years, the exemplary women who have partaken in Ms. Wheelchair America have ventured forth in bringing national awareness to people living with disabilities by not only breaking attitudinal and architectural barriers for the disability community, but they have also strengthened and enhanced legislation for Disability Rights. We hope that by your participation this year, you will witness firsthand the heroes that reside in these exceptional women, the positive awareness that they bring to the disability community, and how essential The Ms. Wheelchair Organization is to people with and without disabilities.

Thank you all for being here for this remarkable event, to those who made it possible and congratulations to the women of Ms. Wheelchair America 2015!

Gratefully yours,

*Jennifer Kumiyama*

Ms. Wheelchair California 2010  
MWA 2015 Host State Coordinator  
Vice President, Ms. Wheelchair America



2333 Caspian Ave.  
Long Beach, CA 90810  
[mswheelchaircaliforniafoundation.com](http://mswheelchaircaliforniafoundation.com)

 @MsWheelchrCAfnd

 The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation



Greetings from Sunny California,

On behalf of the Ms. Wheelchair America Inc. Board of Directors, I would like to welcome you to Ms. Wheelchair America 2015, here in beautiful Long Beach, California. Are you ready for an amazing week? Are you ready to learn and share? I hope so. You will be challenged and changed.

Dr. Philip K. Wood saw challenges. He had devoted his career to rehabilitation, helping people overcome obstacles. He challenged others to use their talents, capabilities, and determination to be productive members of society. In 1972, he established Ms. Wheelchair America as a forum for change, a simple way for promoting the achievements and accomplishments of women who utilized wheelchairs for mobility. This year, as we crown the 43<sup>rd</sup> Ms. Wheelchair America it is important we take a moment to thank Dr. Wood for his commitment.

This organization has challenged and changed countless people, including you. I want to congratulate the state titleholders for all they have achieved to get here. They truly represent what Ms. Wheelchair America is all about. Each amazing woman will have the opportunity to share her talents, capabilities, determination. Their platform will educate, inform and motivate change.

Behind the scenes of this amazing organization are the state coordinators. They keep this program running at the state level, without their time and commitment, you would not be here. I would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication, as well as, challenge them to continue the work started by Dr. Wood.

A very special thank you goes out to Jennifer Kumiyama, The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation and the amazing volunteers that have worked to make this week happen! Follow their example and "Leave a Legacy" to be proud of.

Finally, thanks to all of you for being here and helping us recognize and celebrate an amazing group of women!

---

**Shelly Loose**

President, Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc.

P.O. Box 86 – Byron Center, Michigan 49315  
1-877-MSWHEEL (679-4335)

# **Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Speech Night**

**Friday August 8th, 2014**

The Hilton Long Beach Hotel & Executive Meeting Center

**6pm**

Tapas on the Rooftop

**6:30pm**

Dessert in The Grand Ballroom

**7:00pm**

Contestant Speeches commence

# **Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Pageant**

**Saturday August 9th, 2014**

The Hilton Long Beach Hotel & Executive Meeting Center

Master of Ceremonies – Russ Marchand

**5:30pm**

Dinner in The Grand Ball Room

**6:45pm**

The Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Pageant Opening Number

Introduction of Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Contestants

Top 5 is announced

On Stage Judging Questions - Top 5

Awards - Shelly Loose, Ms. Wheelchair America President Best Speech, Lifetime Achievement Award, Ms. Congeniality, People's Choice Award and the Nikki Ard Award

Recognition of 2015 Sponsors - Jennifer Kumiyama,  
MWA Vice President Host State Coordinator for MWA 2015

Auction of The Tiaras

Farewell Speech - Ms. Wheelchair America 2015, Jennifer Lynn Adams

The Crowning of Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 followed by her acceptance speech

# CONTESTANTS



**LINDA TUCKER**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR ALABAMA 2014**

---

Linda lives in Bessemer, Alabama and works at Weight Watchers International. She obtained a Nail Technician License from the Alabama State Board of Cosmetology. Linda enjoys spending time outdoors, cooking, reading, and spending time with her family & friends. She was born with Spina Bifida. Linda describes herself as independent, strong-willed, and humorous.



**JULIET MARTINEZ**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR ARIZONA 2014**

---

Juliet lives in Gilbert, Arizona where she works as a freelance business consultant. She also volunteers with the Phoenix Children's Hospital, Hope Kids Arizona, and Relay for Life. She received her masters degree in Business Management and Technology from Arizona State University. Juliet enjoys swimming, social media consulting, makeup, and traveling. She was diagnosed with Leukemia when she was 4 and stopped walking at age of 8 because of a medical malpractice. Juliet describes herself as bright, fun, and unstoppable.



**THERESA DE VERA**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR CALIFORNIA 2014**

---

Theresa lives in Los Angeles, California where she is the President of the Los Angeles Commission on Disabilities. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science in 2004 and Masters of Arts Degree in Pastoral Theology with an emphasis in Bioethics from Loyola Marymount University. Theresa enjoys volunteering, advocating, mentoring, and babysitting her twin nieces and nephew. She obtained a brain injury after suffering a severe asthma attack and went into cardio-respiratory arrest where she survived a 3-month coma. Theresa describes herself as driven, dependable, and loving life!



**MELISSA WEISSER**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR COLORADO 2014**

---

Melissa lives in Aurora, Colorado and works as a Legal Word Processor. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the Metropolitan State College of Denver. Melissa enjoys reading, going out to eat, and walking her Dachshund, Bella. She became Paraplegic on July 11, 1992 at age of 16. Melissa describes herself as sassy, friendly, and optimistic.

# CONTESTANTS



**KOURTINEY LOCKHARD**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA 2014**

---

Kourtiney lives in Washington, DC where she works at Turner Elementary. She studied Office Support Specialist from Career Technical Institute. Kourtiney enjoys shopping, dancing, and fashion. She is a paraplegic due to a gunshot wound. Kourtiney describes herself as supportive, loyal, and reliable.



**STEPHANIE WOODWARD**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR FLORIDA 2014**

---

Stephanie lives in Miami, Florida and is an attorney at the Disability Independence Group—a not for profit disability rights law firm and is also a member of the grassroots disability rights advocacy group ADAPT. She earned her Bachelor's in Business and English from St. John Fisher in Rochester, NY and earned her law degree and Master's in Disability Studies from Syracuse University. Stephanie enjoys using a variety of methods to fight of disability rights both at work and outside of work, extreme sports including hang gliding and bungee jumping, and eating cheeseburgers every chance she gets. She was born with Spina Bifida and wouldn't have it any other way. Stephanie describes herself as passionate, impatient, and outspoken.



**PEARL GANNON**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR ILLINOIS 2014**

---

Pearl lives in Chicago, Illinois and volunteers through Canine Companions for Independence as well as being player representative for her wheelchair basketball team. She is studying American Sign Language and social work for early childhood intervention from the Center on Deafness and Wilbur Wright College. Pearl enjoys wheelchair basketball, adaptive wake boarding, learning sign language, and relaxing to read a book. She has a neuromuscular disorder similar to multiple sclerosis named Charcot-Marie-Tooth that first showed signs when she was eight years old. Pearl describes herself as hard working, passionate and somewhat of a daredevil.



**RUTH SMITH**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR INDIANA 2014**

---

Ruth lives in Fort Wayne, IN and works as a Receptionist at a Medical Doctors office and does volunteer counseling at Turnstone. She is pursuing a Masters Degree in Clinical Mental Health from the University of Saint Francis. Ruth enjoys cooking, crafting, traveling and animals. She contracted spinal bacterial meningitis (meningococemia) as an infant. She endured bilateral leg amputation above the knee, amputations of the nose and some fingers and loss of skin. Ruth describes herself as compassionate, strong-willed and genuine.



# CONTESTANTS



**MICHELE MEADORS**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR IOWA 2014**

---

Michele lives in Des Moines, Iowa and serves on The IOWA Olmstead Consumer Task Force and for the Governor appointed Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). She received a QRMP/QDDP\* (Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professional) from Indiana Protection Advocacy Agency. Michele enjoys advocacy, sporting events, and a refined interest in food. She experiences paralysis due to an automobile accident. Michele describes herself as inspiring, savvy and ambitious.



**BIRGID SCHWILLIG**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR KANSAS 2014**

---

Bridgid lives in Leavenworth, Kansas and does a variety of volunteer work with children, elderly, and the military. She is a licensed clinical social worker and addictions counselor. She obtained a Masters Degree in Social Work from Washburn University in 2003. Bridgid enjoys volunteering, swimming, reading, and working with her service dogs. She has had Cerebral Palsy since birth. Bridgid describes herself as purposeful, determined, and loyal.



**BOBBIE JAMES**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR KENTUCKY 2014**

---

Bobbie lives in Louisville, Kentucky and works at the Center for Accessible Living. She received her Masters Degree from Kaplan University. Bobbie enjoys swimming, reading, and participating, in Special Olympics. She is a quadriplegic because of an automobile accident on November 16, 2003. Bobbie describes herself as dependable, driven and ambitious.



**LEAH HOFFPAUIR**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR LOUISIANA 2014**

---

Leah lives in her hometown of Crowley, Louisiana. Leah recently obtained her associates degree in Fine Arts from the Louisiana State University at Eunice and will begin attending the University of Louisiana at Lafayette this fall in the college of visual arts. When Leah is not in school she is working at Fezzo's Seafood, Steakhouse, and Oyster Bar. She enjoys painting, photography, and laughing till she cries. Leah is a quadriplegic and describes herself as witty, determined, and artistic.

# CONTESTANTS



**SHANI WATSON**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR MARYLAND 2014**

---

Shani lives in Upper Marlboro, Maryland and works for the Prince George's County Police Department. She obtained a Bachelor's of Science in Management from University of Phoenix. Shani enjoys scuba diving, traveling, and teaching people with and without disabilities about accessibility and inclusion. She is a paraplegic because of a spinal cord injury. Shani describes herself as confident, capable, and conscientious.



**ROSA ANGELICA COLÓN**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR MASSACHUSETTS 2014**

---

Rosa is an identical twin that lives in Milton, Massachusetts and works as an Assistant Clerk Magistrate for the Boston Municipal Court West Roxbury Division. She earned her Juris Doctorate from the Massachusetts School of Law at Andover, MA. Rosa enjoys raising her two little nieces, Angelia 10 and Jayla 6 years old as a Foster Care mother. She is also involved with the Straight Ahead and Mother's Program. Rosa also enjoys volunteering at La Alianza Hispana. She suffered a Spinal Cord injury on April Fool's Day 2000. Rosa describes herself as fierce, relentless and resilient.



**KELSEY KLEIMOLA**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR MICHIGAN 2014**

---

Kelsey lives in Ypsilanti, Michigan and is a stay at home mom and professional volunteer. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in the field of Communication from Aquinas College. Kelsey enjoys scrapbooking, reading, writing, and meeting new people. She has had Cerebral Palsy from birth. Kelsey describes herself as driven, passionate and joyful.



**KELSEY PETERSON**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR MINNESOTA 2014**

---

Kelsey lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota and volunteers at Circus Juventas. She studied dance, receiving her B.F.A. from the University of Montana. Kelsey enjoys live music, yoga and spending time with her friends and family. She is a C6 quadriplegic after a driving accident on July 4th, 2012. Kelsey describes herself as funny, outgoing and driven.

# CONTESTANTS



**CHAE'MONALEASZA HARRIS**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR MISSISSIPPI 2014**

---

Chae'MonaLeasza Harris lives in Meridian, Mississippi and volunteered as an activity director at Oak nursing home and Meridian Community living Center. She is the proud mother and wife of 24 years. This newly crowned advocate has spent the last few months learning that all God's creation is beautiful. Her hobbies are reading the bible, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. Most of all, she enjoys being able to support and attend her family's events despite being confined to a wheelchair. Chae'MonaLeasza has Multiple Sclerosis. She describes herself as loving, intelligent, nurturing and determined.



**JESSICA PATTERSON**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR NEW YORK 2014**

---

Jessica lives in Weedsport, New York and works as a volunteer at Upstate's Golisano Children's Hospital in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from Oswego State College. Jessica enjoys her work with children, participating in 5K events, volunteering with MoveAlong Inc. Adaptive Sports Programs and spending quality time with her friends and family. She was injured in an automobile accident on April 11, 2003 and became paraplegic after a transected aorta and two tears caused a loss of blood flow to her legs. Jessica describes herself as compassionate, generous and ambitious.



**ARIELLA BAKER**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR NORTH CAROLINA 2014**

---

Ariella lives in Charlotte, North Carolina and works for Charlotte School of Law as a professor of law. She obtained Bachelors in Business and Administration and Doctorate in Law. Emory University. Ariella enjoys playing the flute, learning and speaking foreign languages, doing needlepoint, and singing. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type III, which was diagnosed at age 3. Ariella is passionate, humorous, and intelligent.



**ELIZABETH SCHRACK**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR OHIO 2014**

---

Elizabeth lives in Dayton, Ohio and attends school. She studies social work and will earn her bachelor's from Wright State University. Elizabeth enjoys reading, writing historical fiction, and dancing. She has had Cerebral Palsy since birth. Elizabeth describes herself as funny, intelligent and compassionate.

# CONTESTANTS



**MARY BETH DAVIS**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR OKLAHOMA 2014**

---

Mary Beth lives in Stillwater, Oklahoma and volunteers at her local animal shelter and vet clinic and serves as a peer mentor for newly injured and currently injured patients with spinal cord injuries. She recently received her Bachelor's degree in Zoology with a minor in Nutritional Sciences from Oklahoma State University. Mary Beth enjoys cooking, reading, playing with her animals, and staying physically active in support of her platform speech focusing on health and nutrition. She sustained a C6-C7 spinal cord injury for years ago and functions as paraplegic. Mary Beth describes herself as passionate, determined and open-minded.



**JENNIFER GILLILAND**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR PENNSYLVANIA 2014**

---

Jen lives in Harrisville, Pennsylvania and works at the Office of Personnel Management Federal Investigative Services as a Program Analyst. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from St. Andrews University. Jen enjoys spending time with her friends and family, volunteering and working in her church, and spreading awareness of Invisible Disabilities in an effort to make the invisible visible and accepted. She contracted Transverse Myelitis at the age of 15 and as a result was left paralyzed from the waist down. Jen describes herself as determined, outgoing and friendly.



**AMANDA SZIDIRUPULOSZ**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR TENNESSEE 2014**

---

Amanda lives in Cleveland, Tennessee and is a music teacher at Charleston Elementary School in Bradley County. She received her Bachelors of Music Education from Middle Tennessee State University, her Masters of Technology in Teaching from Walden University and has begun work on her Doctorate in Education with a focus on Teacher Leadership. Amanda enjoys crafting, writing and spending time with friends and family. She was born with Spina Bifida and Scoliosis. Amanda describes herself as creative, compassionate and determined.



**LAURA HALVORSON**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR TEXAS 2014**

---

Laura lives in Plano, Texas and volunteers at nonprofits for people with disabilities such as Camp Craig Allen as their Programs Director and gives presentations for Service Dogs Inc. She received her Masters of Special Education from Texas Woman's University and is certified as an Educational Diagnostician. Laura enjoys going on adventures with her service dog, adaptive water skiing, playing ukulele, and traveling. She was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at age 15. Laura describes herself as determined, caring and witty.

# CONTESTANTS



**AMANDA RHEES**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR UTAH 2014**

---

Amanda lives in Pleasant View, Utah and works at Green Acres Elementary School. She volunteers for Freedom Riders, Make-A-Wish, and is a Garden Aide on Temple Square. She received her diploma from Weber High School. Amanda enjoys horseback riding, gardening, drawing, and spending time with her large family. She was born with Spina Bifida. Amanda describes herself as service-oriented, loving, and full of positivity.



**KANIKA DAVIS**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR VIRGINIA 2014**

---

Kanika lives in Lynchburg, VA and works for the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, which provides vocational services to individuals with disabilities who are trying to enter the workforce. She obtained a B.A. in Psychology and a Masters in Professional Counseling from Radford University (BA); Liberty University (MA). Kanika enjoys traveling, making accessory jewelry, volunteering with Young Leaders Society through the United Way of Central Virginia. She sustained a spinal cord injury during a surgery performed on her abdomen due to complications of Crohn's Disease when she was 15 years old. Kanika describes herself as creative, motivated and funny.



**EVELYNA CASTRO**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR WASHINGTON 2014**

---

Evelynna lives in Longview, WA. Evelynna is the owner of Special FX Make-up Artist at EC Makeup Alchemy. She is also is the owner/operator of Evelynna's Voice-Over Studio. Evelynna studied Theatre Arts and Makeup from Foothill Theatre Conservatory and Cinema Makeup School. Evelynna enjoys archery, performing, music, and make up FX. She was born with Spina Bifida. Evelynna describes herself as determined, passionate and strong-willed.



**SAMANTHA SCHROTH**  
**MS. WHEELCHAIR WISCONSIN 2014**

---

Samantha lives in Greenville, Wisconsin and works with the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities as a research assistant in veterinary biomedical science. She received a Bachelor's Degree in animal science and a minor in biology from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. Samantha enjoys racing, writing, and making others around her laugh. She incurred a spinal cord injury in a freak accident when a dead tree fell on her resulting in paraplegia. Sam describes herself as passionate, intelligent and witty.

# **PLATINUM SPONSOR**

**MV-1**

## **SPONSORS**

The Hilton Long Beach and Executive Meeting Center

Braun Ability

The City of Long Beach

The Port of Long Beach

Invacare

Global Paratransit

## **IN-KIND SPONSORS**

Brett McKee at Amramp

Physical Therapy for All

King Medical Supply

*Thank you to all of your Sponsors  
for making this event possible!*

# CONTESTANT SPONSORS

## ALABAMA

Dick & Alma Maben; owners of the  
GREEN LANTERN  
Bryon & Danette Cummins  
Linda Hamilton  
Jimmy & Renae Arnold  
Bessemer Elks Lodge  
WT's  
Tuscaloosa Elks Lodge  
Lakeview Country Club  
Shooters  
Toomers for Tuscaloosa

## ARIZONA

Junky Truck  
Hope Kids  
Vera Bradley

## CALIFORNIA

Global Paratransit  
Access Services  
San Gabriel Transit  
Herb West Photography  
Lou Razon Couture  
Coloplast  
The Center for Disability Access  
Mobility Works  
Amramp  
Soroptimist International of the  
Verdugos  
Bradley  
Maria Diaz  
Shelly Verrinder  
Luis Garcia- GPI  
David Lear  
Dr. Chetty Dentistry  
The Porras/Suriano Family  
Honorable Los Angeles City  
Councilmember - Jose Huizar  
Linda Amiana  
Jim's Chevron  
The de Vera family  
The Baxter Family  
Tom Topping- Boulevard Sentinel  
Janelle So - Kababayan Today  
Daisy Lin - Huffington Post

## COLORADO

Impact Photographics  
Craig Hospital  
Arapahoe Sertoma  
Aurora Gateway Rotary Community  
Foundation  
Bank of Colorado  
Daydream Photography  
J&J's Hairstyling

## FLORIDA

Pride Mobility  
Quantum Rehab  
Kevin Barrett  
Christi Hayes  
Katie Kamm  
David Wittie  
Matt Albright  
Dan Tylee  
Brienne Yantz  
Ashely Hodnett  
Christian Camargo  
Carolyn Abdenour

## ILLINOIS

Kathy and Roy II Reinhardt  
Danielle Austin

Eric Michael Clarke  
Matthew and Raena Goldberg  
Superior Washer and Gasket  
Corporation  
Orrin Beggs  
Sue and Larry Schuerr  
Wing-Hamlin Company, Inc.  
National Threaded Fasteners, Ltd.  
Michaela Sedivec  
Artwork by Kevin  
Nancy and Gary Austin  
Dave Cummings  
H2O Holistics  
Lily's Flower Supply  
Bowtique Wholesale  
The Paper Poppy Store  
Alicia Morado  
Eado Vintage  
Curtsey Boutique  
Leslie Sabella  
Constant Collide  
LaPorte and Simon families  
Cleora Costello and family  
Jean Surratt  
Hope Chafee  
Judson University  
Magic Touch  
Pam Pettit  
Hartland Klotz and family

## INDIANA

Lakewood Park Church, Auburn IN  
Florida Pharmacy Solutions  
Parkinsons Family & friends  
Support Group  
University of St. Francis Psych  
545 Class  
George S.  
Kerri P  
Pat S.  
Max P.  
Mary C.  
Harlan Lions Club  
Mullins Family  
Cooney Family  
Mary C  
Corey Family  
Rebecca D.  
Mara S.  
Regina D.  
Natalie B.  
Not So Random ACTZ  
Jennifer P.  
Rachel R.  
Traci P.  
Mara S.  
Corey Family

## IOWA

RDG Planning & Design,  
Des Moines, IA  
Mercy Acute Rehab, Des Moines, IA  
Quality Living Incorporated (QLI); Pat  
Kearns, President and COE and Don  
Terry, Director of Marketing,  
Omaha, NE  
Hobbs Christian Church, Hobbs, IN  
Easter Seals Camp Sunnyside,  
Des Moines, IA  
US Bank, Des Moines, IA  
(downtown branch)  
Iowa Finance Authority (IFA),  
Des Moines, IA  
KCCI Channel 8, Des Moines, IA

Hope Lutheran Church (SALT Sisters),  
West Des Moines, IA  
Java Joes, Des Moines, IA  
(Amy Brehm-Owner)  
Ron and Chris Weeks (Dad and Mom)  
Judy Brown and Davis Sanders  
Olmsted Consumer Task Force,  
Des Moines, IA  
Dawn Francis, Executive Director, SILC  
DeAnna Williams, Event Coordinator &  
Social Planner, Des Moines, IA  
Legend's Staff, Court Avenue,  
Des Moines, IA  
Dos Rios Staff, Court Avenue,  
Des Moines, IA  
Lisa, Vicki, Michelle, Diane, Helen,  
Rachel and all the other hot mamas  
on 4th Floor  
Tammi Rudder, Marketing, Media &  
PR Specialist for Madonna Hospital,  
Lincoln, NE  
Liz O'Hara, Center for Disabilities and  
Development, Iowa City, IA  
Kevin Dalin, "Tech Guy",  
Des Moines, IA  
Jennifer Roberts, DOT, State of Iowa  
Kim Karwal, Nichole Vos,  
Des Moines, IA  
Andrew Bernstrom and Clark Kent  
(Wonder Dog)  
Dreams Inc., Iowa City, IA  
Judy Hoyt, State Coordinator,  
Miss Wheelchair Iowa  
Richard Haines (ROB), Baxter, IA  
Heather White, SSS Specialist

## KANSAS

Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation  
Karen M. Schwilling  
Dr. Tom Liebl, D.V.M.  
Lynnette K. Cooley  
Applebee's Restaurant  
Corner Pharmacy  
Mr. Dennis  
Denise and Steve Welks  
Katie Welks  
Bill and Cindy Page  
Bryon and Diane Cole  
John and Clare Giboney  
Louise and Jimmy Johnson  
Jay Johnson  
Janay Johnson  
Josh Strick  
Ray and Sandra Ford  
Mara Ford  
Mikel Ford  
Elmer and Anita Fetters  
Ms. Lena  
Marilyn and Rick Caya  
Stan and Dana Palmer  
Mr. and Mrs. Hall  
Rex Michel  
Brian Seo  
Margaret Thomas  
Christy and Brian Edwards

## KENTUCY

First Street Missionary Baptist Church  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Pioneers Inc.  
Tom Bell-State Farm Insurance  
Paul Erway-Superior Van Mobility  
Jill & Terri-Frazier Rehab  
Tiffany McGee

Alecia Radford  
John Banks & Danny Banks  
Jasmine Mayfield & Erica Green  
Thomas Grant  
Rachel Crowder  
Monique McKnight & Latysha Nance  
Tosheika Douglas & Tramel,  
and Trashad  
Sheika Thompson  
LaToya & Bobby James  
Mindy & Larry Biven  
Wayne Campbell  
Monica Moore  
Karen Wallace & Lisa Moss  
Renee Blount & Sarah Nance  
Leigh Price/ April Cox  
Howard Pat  
Ambi & Jurry Smith  
Rhoda Mills, Shiloh Pfeiffer,  
Tammy Stay  
Donna Fox & YES Group  
Katheen Eleby  
John Leonard & Beverly Alford  
Keith Hosey & Larry Hosey  
Kenneth Burks

## LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge Rehabilitation Hospital  
EL Habetz Builders, Inc.  
Fezzo's Seafood, Steakhouse,  
& Oyster Bar  
Crowley Rotary Club  
Friends, Family, and Supporters of Ms.  
Wheelchair Louisiana 2014

## MARYLAND

IamShani  
Herbert Aiken  
Tiatte Day  
Nichole Sinibaldi  
Unforgettable Images by Harold Black  
Krwatson Photography  
Capital Crescent Associates  
Prince George's County Chapter of the  
NAACP  
Prince George's County Police  
Department  
DJ Thad  
The Hilton of Rockville Maryland  
A Very Special Thank You to the  
Volunteers of Ms. Wheelchair  
Maryland Organization

## MASSACHUSETTS

Eric Eversly  
Karyn Vandyke  
Richard Walker  
Eddie & Rebecca Gomez Figueroa  
Elias Akiki  
Maryanne Driscoll  
Ernest Sarason  
Kathleen E. Coffey  
Michael Donavon  
Angela Hopkins  
Samantha Leake  
Brendan Murphy  
Bobby Hanifin  
Danny Gill  
Chris Lembo  
Robert Tobin  
Peter McCarthy  
Lawrence Fisher  
Sean Murphy Foundation 33  
Marilyn J. Barrett

National Seating & Mobility  
Ivan Gonzalez & Paul O'Brien  
Maryann Galvin  
William Concannon  
Kevin Guy & Brendan Walsh  
William Samaras & Jon Michael Harber  
Bobby England & S/D Troy  
Anthony S. Owens & Helen Brown  
Nancy Heffernan & Kevin Brennan  
John Gibbons

#### MICHIGAN

Dematic Corporation  
Dave and Tami Mundwiler  
Doug and Cindi Schram  
Aubrey and Laura Trebilcock  
Warren and Lois Mundwiler  
Rex and Marilyn Pomrenka  
St. Paul Lutheran Church - Ann Arbor  
David Weinandy  
Shelley Irwin  
Keith and Anna Dutton  
Marc and Allison Singer  
Preferred Providers  
Lee and Joyce Hubbard  
Select Ride Incorporated  
Rick and Janet Mayernik  
Dale and Sandy Mundwiler  
Ron and Tammy Kruger  
Cory and Stephanie Dunham  
Pizza House  
Elizabeth Garcia  
United Cerebral Palsy Foundation of Michigan  
Wyoming Animal Hospital  
M Design and Photography  
Move Communications  
Christine Kleimola  
Ypsilanti National Little League  
Jill Caruso

#### MINNESOTA

Members of MAMES

#### MISSISSIPPI

Rush Hospital Pain Treatment  
Veterans of Foreign War  
NAS Meridian Chief Petty Officer Association  
Navy League  
Rush Neurology Clinic (Dr. Ahmad)  
Meridian Mayor (Percy Bland)  
Alliance Hospital (Dr. Terry Jordan)  
Meridian Navy Exchange  
Naval Air Station Meridian Command  
Naval Air Station Meridian Students  
Primary Care Clinic  
The Harris Family  
Tairrance Harris  
Crystal Mack

#### NEW YORK

Monroe Wheelchair: Rochester, NY  
New York State School for the Blind: Batavia, NY  
New York State Medical Equipment Providers Association: Albany, NY  
TiLite Wheelchair: Pasco, WA  
Syracuse Corvette Club: Syracuse, NY  
Miss. Syracuse Organization/Salt City Royalty: Syracuse, NY  
Family: Jason, Catherine, Dan, Dow, Sandy, Jamie, Nadine, Brandon, Chrissy, Todd, Roxanne, David  
TH Photography: Weedsport, NY

Guardian Glass Industries: Geneva, NY  
The Wester Dahl Family  
The Pacholyk Family Members  
MoveAlong Inc. Adaptive Sports: Oswego, NY  
Jeff & Cathy Wright  
Kyle, Katie and Kristian Gibson  
David Wilkinson & Dianne Gladky  
The Volan Family Members  
The Vogelewede Family Members  
Molly, Catherine, Laura, Alexis, Josh, Carolyn, Willem, Martin, Candice, Tiffany  
Jill, Tom, Melissa, Dan, Libby, Katie, Kyle, Serena, Ion, Jeremy, Leslie, Nancy, Karen, Jennifer,  
Amanda, Alice, Val, Richard, Sabrina, Pete, Pamela, Mary, Tom, Caleb, Cormack, Becky, Melissa  
Juliann, Julie, Tina, Tim, Wendy, Caitlin, Cari, Chlow, Rea, Jules, Nancy, Sue, Christopher, Sharon  
Monica, Luticha, Arlena, Kristy, Katelyn, Jim, Amy, Beau, David, Dana, Leanne, Zak, Christina, Jane  
Stephanie's, Omneya, Greg, Lindsey, Lisa, Jackie, Matt  
Holly Giacalone & Zachary Yoffe  
Emily & Frank Sciarretta  
Weedsport Central School District  
Mr. James Ennis  
Booster.com  
Ms. Jean Forster  
Faculty & Staff of Upstate's Golisano Children's Hospital

#### NORTH CAROLINA

Permobil, Inc.  
Rabbi Michael Brody, Esq.  
Blair Alexander Knox  
Beth Catranis  
Phyllis Glazer, Esq.  
Joel Rosner, Esq.  
Paul Vesely  
Suzanne Zumbach  
Rabbi Daniel and Faigie Tropper  
Eric Craig  
Steve Cohen, Esq.  
Rise Up to Cure Paralysis  
Opa Philip Bendheim  
Adrian White  
Tire Doctor  
Todd Dewey  
Marc Grey, Esq.  
Rachel Zelmanovich  
Gus Mancini  
Sgt. David Shimshi  
Ltn. Ari Maas  
August Adams  
Dr. Michael Wilhite, DDS, PA.  
Tirzah Photography.  
Van Products, Inc.  
Wallgreens, Inc.  
American Specialty Transportation  
Service LLC.

#### OHIO

Wright State University  
Wright State University Foundation  
Gayle Schrack  
Leslie Baird  
Mallory Holler  
Jean Denney  
Thomas Webb

#### OKLAHOMA

Dr. and Mrs. Rocky Bigbie  
Phil and Sharon Bieker  
Mid-America Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America  
InterBank- Oklahoma/Texas  
Erik Petersen and Petersen Creations  
Jeff Chappell and Companion Health Services  
Flashback Car Club- Guthrie, OK  
John Vance Auto Group  
Chickasaw Nation  
Edmond Family Dental  
Asa and Audra Nelson- Nelson Monument Company  
Dr. Amal E. Moorad, MD  
Dr. Brent Tipton, MD  
Keith Wilton, VP, Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation  
Dr. Kristi Self, MD  
Dr. Wenjia Zeng, MD  
Neuro Resources  
Larry and Robin Nicholas  
Bill and Judy Antle  
Clint and Teresa Davis  
Daniel Peteresen  
Oklahoma State University Undergrad Services and Colvin Center  
Kicker Mobile and Audio Products - Stillwater, OK  
University of Oklahoma  
Oklahoma City Red Hawk's  
Oklahoma Tourism and Recreational Department  
Robert and Laura Tomlin  
Guthrie Chamber of Commerce  
Jesa Lopez  
All of Mary Beth's family, friends, and the entire community of Guthrie, OK

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Polk Presbyterian Church  
Bethel Presbyterian Church  
Forrestville United Methodist Church  
Bradford First Church of the Nazarene  
Troy Alan Chevrolet  
Static Styling Salon  
M.J. Weidner Photography  
Turner Insurance Agency

#### TENNESSEE

Superior Van & Mobility  
Car Rehab  
Disability Law & Advocacy Center  
Drs. Shields & Shields  
Insync Resources  
McGrath Solutions, Inc.  
United Knitting  
M&M Mars  
Coca Cola  
Angie Underwood Photography  
Manufacturer's Chemicals  
Sim and Anne Marie Wilson  
Dana Slack  
Jeannette Beach  
Create & Celebrate Studios  
Terry & Tammy Beaty  
Charleston Elementary School  
Melissa Crittenden  
The Prendergast Family  
Jill Hammond  
The Maddox Family  
Reba Garrison, State Farm Insurance  
Kevin & Teri Lynn Duggan  
Pro X Powersports, Chattanooga, TN  
The Catch Bar & Grill, Cleveland, TN

The Keen family  
Debo's Kitchen, Chattanooga TN  
Lassiter's Coffee House  
Village Bake Shop, Cleveland, TN  
Cakes by Christy

#### TEXAS

TIRR Memorial Hermann Hospital  
Ms. Wheelchair Texas Foundation  
United Access  
Permobil  
Camp Craig Allen  
Stout's Dallas  
Rulli Torres  
The Halvorson and Woodling Family

#### UTAH

The Dale B. Hull  
Foundation/Neuroworx  
Albrechtsen Orthodontics  
T-Mobile  
Bella's Fresh Mexican Grill  
Isagenix

#### VIRGINIA

Lynchburg Community  
Avanate' Nursing Home, Lynchburg VA  
Riverside Rehabilitation Institute, Newport News VA  
Civitan Group, Petersburg VA  
Ms. Wheelchair VA Inc., Fishersville VA  
Sodexo, Lynchburg VA  
Crown Sterling, Lynchburg VA  
RA Bistro, Lynchburg VA  
Sweet Frog, Lynchburg VA  
Steven Toyota, Harrisonburg VA  
Isabella's Italian Restaurant, Lynchburg VA  
Chik fil A, Lynchburg VA  
Kroger, Lynchburg VA  
Libbey Family Dentistry, Forest VA  
Holiday Inn Select, Lynchburg VA  
Lynchburg Covenant Fellowship, Lynchburg VA  
Kim Davis, Lynchburg VA  
Mrs. Ann Johnson, Lynchburg VA  
Mr. Tim Beatty, Lynchburg VA  
Kelly Bryant, Lynchburg VA  
Cheryl Brown, Lynchburg VA  
American Legion Post, Lynchburg VA  
Kimberly Davis, Dale City VA  
Catherine Davis, Lynchburg VA  
Family and friends of Kanika  
Home Depot, Lynchburg VA

#### WASHINGTON

Varilite  
Pink Papaya  
Seattle Adaptive Sports  
Olympic Pharmacy  
Casey's Kettle Corn  
By Design Group Inc.  
Dream Catcher  
Talk & Roll Enterprises

#### WISCONSIN

Barnes & Associates Dentistry  
NuMotion  
TML Auto  
Wichman Farms Maple Syrup  
Ray and Mary Hosmer  
Omro Pharmacy  
Bridal Elegance and Formalwear  
Glen & Daniels  
Tri City Glass & Door  
Tommy Brown Photography



# JUDGES & EMCEE



## **JEWELL MASSEY - HEAD JUDGE**

---

Jewell Massey retired from teaching in 1996 due to post polio syndrome and recently returned to Knoxville, Tennessee after teaching high school biology in Florida and elementary gifted in Georgia. Currently, she is remodeling a 1930's bungalow and reinventing herself as a raised bed gardener.

Shortly before polio vaccine was discovered, Jewell was diagnosed with the acute paralytic polio and could only move the fingers on her left hand. At 13, a counselor at Camp Easter Seal had suggested college and changed the course of Jewell's life. Graduations followed from Lincoln Memorial University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology, Mercer University with a Masters degree in Biology, the University of Georgia with an Ed.S. in behavior disorders, and Macon College with an Associate degree in criminal justice.

Jewell served as Ms. Wheelchair Georgia in 1988 and Ms. Wheelchair America 1989. She has been an advocate for many years in various capacities: peer supporter at Shepherd Spinal Center in Atlanta, First International Conference on the Church and Disability, Project Smile, Camp Phoenix for children with burns, child abuse, National Association for Mental Illness, Council of Exceptional Children, Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Arthritis Association, MDA volunteer for several years, committee for fundraising for AIDS Center, Para Olympics torch bearer, polio post child, Shriner's poster child, mito-chondrial diseases, Cerebral Palsy, and Alzheimer's. She was a Pilot Clubs Georgia Professional Woman of the Year, Gifted Teacher of the Year in Macon, served on the Georgia Governor's Council on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, Executive Director of Macon Mayor's Council on Employment of People with Disabilities, Macon Council's Citizen of the Year, 1990 Census Committee, and others.

She would tell you that there have been many "encouragers" along the way and folks who believed in her before she was strong enough to believe in herself. Somehow, there were always bridges from one phase to the next level of adventure. There were honors and achievements and titles, but the biggest honor was the one allowing her to accompany her Mother as a 24/7 caregiver on her Alzheimer's Journey.



## **DAVID KORSE, JUDGE**

---

David has been working in the F2F (Face-to-face) Events (exhibitions, conferences, special events) industry for 30 years. He has held senior management positions with a number of international exhibition organizing companies and he has been responsible for launching, managing and growing over 300 events in North America, Europe and Asia.

Since 2008 he and his business partner Lewis Shomer have been the owners and managers of the Abilities Expo series of events for the disability community held around the United States.



## **LLOYD UPDIKE, JUDGE**

---

Lloyd Updike is an Area Sales Manager for Braun Ability the world's largest manufacturer of adaptive equipment for our disabled community. Lloyd is responsible for the Braun dealer network in the country of Canada and is the liaison for his company between Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A. as well as Toyota Canada Inc.

Lloyd has been serving the disabled community for over 15 years providing service and products to the Braun Ability dealer distribution network. He works closely with various State and Federal agencies as well as Rehab and Care facilities. He resides in Lincoln, Nebraska and travels extensively throughout Canada and the U.S.

Lloyd can be reached at [Lloyd.updike@bruanlift.com](mailto:Lloyd.updike@bruanlift.com)



## GAIL WILLIAMSON, JUDGE

---

Gail Williamson is a well-respected advocate for performers with disabilities supporting their diverse images in television, film, commercials, theatre and print advertising. She is currently employed by Kazarian, Measures, Ruskin and Associates & Associates Talent Agency in Los Angeles, California where she oversees their Diversity Department representing talent with disabilities. Gail spent 12 years working with the California Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities out of their Media Access Office where she got her introduction to the casting process. Today she also continues to support her passion project, Down Syndrome in Arts & Media, a casting liaison service for talent with developmental disabilities across the nation and around the world.

Gail has been recognized for her contributions to the disability community with a Walter Knott Service Award, as one of Good Will Industries Women of Hope and as one of Family Circle Magazine's Women Who Make a Difference. She received the Changing Images in America Award for her advocacy in the entertainment field as well as a Tri-Union (Screen Actors Guild, American Federation of Television and Radio Artist and Actor's Equity) Diversity Award in 2004. Gail was also recognized in 1999 as American Mothers Incorporated's California State and National Mother of the Year.

During the 1990's Gail and her husband Tommie took their 6 nieces into their home after the deaths of Gail's brother and sister-in-law. The girls joined the Williamson's two sons. The youngest son Blair, born with Down syndrome was already a professional actor with some nice credits to his name. Gail's experience with Blair's career made her even more passionate about creating more diverse characters with disabilities in the entertainment industry.



## SHARINA JONES, JUDGE

---

Michigan native, Sharina Jones was a shooting victim when she was just five years old. This event left her unable to walk for the rest of her life. More importantly, however, it was the beginning of the unveiling of Sharina's purpose in life; to inspire others to reach their greatest potential. Even from such an early age, Sharina was aware that she was to overcome her tragedy by not focusing on herself, but to move forward to help those around her. With the help and guidance of her family, friends, medical personnel and others, Sharina was able to adjust to her circumstances, pushing past huge obstacles and limitations, and perform her life's mission.

After graduating high school she continued her education and attended Mott Community College, earning an Associate's degree; the first in her family to attend college. She continued her education and earned a Bachelor of Science degree at Oakland University, and an MBA from

Wayne State University in 2008.

Ms. Wheelchair America 2012. She established the nonprofit organization, Think Beyond the Chair, and also started the motivational clothing and accessories company Push Goddess, LLC. Her first book, Life of a Push Goddess, is one of her favorite accomplishments. She is currently writing her second book, Not All Goddesses Are Alike. Sharina was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Michigan in 2011, 1st But when asked, it is her marriage to Grover Jones in May of 2010 that brings Sharina the most joy. The loving couple resides in Michigan, where they enjoy all that life has to offer.



## RUSS MARCHAND, EMCEE

---

Russ was born and raised in Las Vegas and always wanted to be in show business. He didn't have the right curves to be a showgirl so decided to study comedy instead, and began getting laughs at the ripe old age of 5 with his now infamous bunny fart routine. Russ's love of hosting started early in life. He spent hours watching game shows and pretending to be the host during commercial breaks.

Marchand is a classically trained actor who has studied theatre at the University of Nevada Las Vegas and improv with the Upright Citizens Brigade LA. Russ, a skilled live event host has been the go-to host for Disney for years. He has hosted events with Miley Cyrus, Selena Gomez, Tyra Banks and many others (not to mention Mickey Mouse). He has toured the country as a spokesman for Mercedes-Benz, Buick Pontiac GMC, Kinerase Skincare and of course, Disney.

Often regarded as a 'One Take Wonder,' Russ's acerbic wit and charming swagger have made him the ideal host for skewering pop culture and current events. As a host, comedian, writer and super nice guy, Russ is a pleasure to work with and his creativity knows no limits.



## Purpose and Goals

Each year the Ms. Wheelchair America Program holds a competition to select the most accomplished, articulate spokeswoman for the people with disabilities. The titleholder must be able to communicate and educate the public, business community, and lawmakers regarding the dignity, productiveness and basic value of people with disabilities. Ms. Wheelchair America continues to eliminate the architectural and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with disabilities from assuming their right place in society.

Ms. Wheelchair America has numerous duties. During her reign, she has the opportunity to travel, visit advocacy groups, make public appearances, and conduct interviews. Ms. Wheelchair America promotes her chosen platform in a variety of settings. She serves as a positive role model for the next generation of Americans with disabilities inspiring them to leave their own legacy. Her commitment and personal example to serve to further the mission of Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc.

The pageant is made up of multitude of activities. This allows the judging panel time with the state titleholders, while enabling the competitors an opportunity to share with each other and develop friendships. The titleholders become stronger advocates throughout the week because of the variety of interesting workshops that strengthen them. These workshops develop skills that heighten awareness on issues within the community and open a dialogue between the women and their thoughts, ideas, values, and experiences.

The Ms. Wheelchair America, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that is staffed and coordinated totally by volunteers from many different organizations, businesses, private citizens, and previous titleholders. It is through the monetary and in-kind support of the many sponsors that the national titleholder is able to fulfill her duties throughout the year and travel across the country with her message of empowerment for people with disabilities. The Ms. Wheelchair America Program is actively seeking sponsors and volunteers and would appreciate any support that is offered.

# Judging Criteria

The Ms. Wheelchair America judging is based upon criteria established by the national committee of the Ms. Wheelchair America Program. The following excerpts were taken from the official guidelines:

- A. Accomplishments
  - a. Personal Achievements and Accomplishments since Disability in the following areas:
    - i. Academic
    - ii. Vocational
    - iii. Personal
  - b. Adjustment to Disability
- B. Community Skills
  - a. Ability to deal with media, peers, civic groups, etc.
  - b. Public Relation Skills
  - c. Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
  - d. Self-confidence – Motivation – Initiative – Creativity
- C. Self-Perception – Projection
  - a. Poise and Demeanor
  - b. Appropriate Attire and Personal Presentation

## Ms. Wheelchair America Creed

As Ms. Wheelchair America,  
I promise to do my best to promote public awareness of people with disabilities,  
To use my time and efforts to this purpose,  
To strive to achieve the best that is within me,  
To offer my hand in friendship to everyone I meet,  
To be cheerful, honest and loving,  
To give hope to the less fortunate,  
To set an example by my attitude, and  
To do all this with grace, warmth and dignity.



## **HISTORY**

In 1972 Dr. Philip K. Wood of Columbus, Ohio had devoted his career to treating and rehabilitating persons with functional impairments. During his practice, he became aware of the talents, capabilities, determination and courage of persons with disabilities. As a result, he established Ms. Wheelchair America as a forum for promoting the achievements and accomplishments of woman who utilize wheelchairs for mobility, as well as the needs of all persons with mobility challenges.

The mission of Ms. Wheelchair America is to provide an opportunity for women of achievement to successfully educate about and advocate for the more than 54million Americans living with disabilities. The Ms. Wheelchair America Program is in no way a traditional beauty contest.

# Ms. Wheelchair America

## PAST TITLEHOLDERS

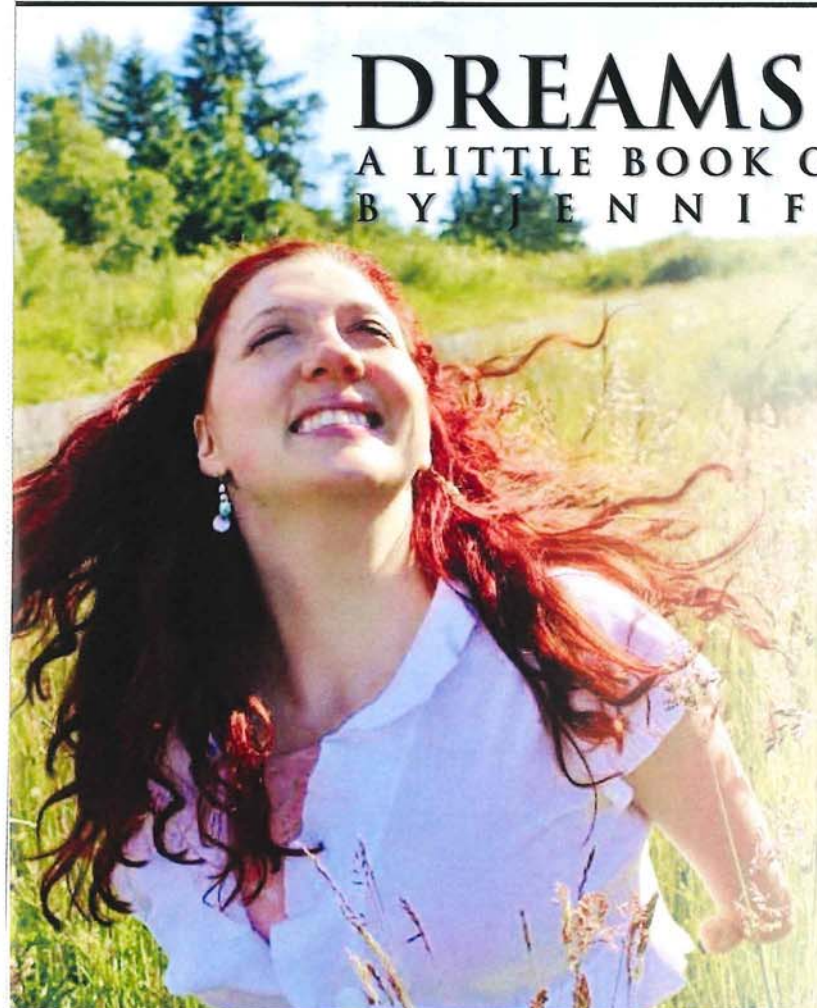
1973	Patricia Nevins	Michigan	1994	Dawn Blodgett	California
1974	Janie Robinson	Texas	1995	Wendy Petzold	Wisconsin
1975	Kathy Smith-Tiley	Alabama	1996	Amy Baker-Ley	Texas
1976	Dixie Lee Etheridge	Mississippi	1997	Elaine Stefanowicz	Washington
1977	Beverly Chapman	Florida	1998	Terri Cecil	Kentucky
1978	Margie Sloan	Georgia	1999	Christina Gilmore	Wisconsin
1979	Margie Chmielewski	Michigan	2000	Tracy Charlton-O'Connor	South Dakota
1980	Nancy Pudvin	Georgia	2001	Nicki Ard	South Carolina
1981	Vivian Thompson	Massachusetts	2002	Candy Marsh	Colorado
1982	Marian Schooling-Vessell	Maryland	2003	Catherine Gugala	Wisconsin
1983	Barbara Crozier	Alabama	2004	Cinda Hughes	Oklahoma
1984	Gaynell Colburn	Maryland	2005	Juliette Rizzo	Maryland
1985	Lori Cottam	Utah	2006	Kristen Connor	Rhode Island
1986	Donna Cline	Nevada	2007	Autumn Grant	Massachusetts
1987	Sandra Honbaier	North Carolina	2008	Kristen McCosh	Massachusetts
1988	Peggy Simpson	Alabama	2009	Michelle Colvard	Texas
1989	Jewell Massey	Georgia	2010	Erika Bogen	North Carolina
1990	Kathy Garcia-Farnsworth	Utah	2011	Alexandra McArthur	North Carolina
1991	Mercedes Rodriques-Fowler	Florida	2012	Josie Badgar	Pennsylvania
1992	Deanna Green-VanHook	Texas	2013	Mariah Kilbourne	Texas
1993	Kim Mensi	Alabama	2014	Jennifer Adams	Washington

## DREAMS COME TRUE!

A LITTLE BOOK ON THE POWER OF WORDS  
BY JENNIFER LYNN ADAMS

This book demonstrates that words have the power to make dreams come true! It gives little glimpses into the life and story of Jennifer Lynn Adams, who was born with partial limbs, and overcame every obstacle to her dreams through receiving kind, true and supportive words from others. The book lovingly guides children ages 5-10 to recognize the power of words, and shows them how they can help others and themselves achieve their dreams by using words of love, kindness and support with everyone in their world.

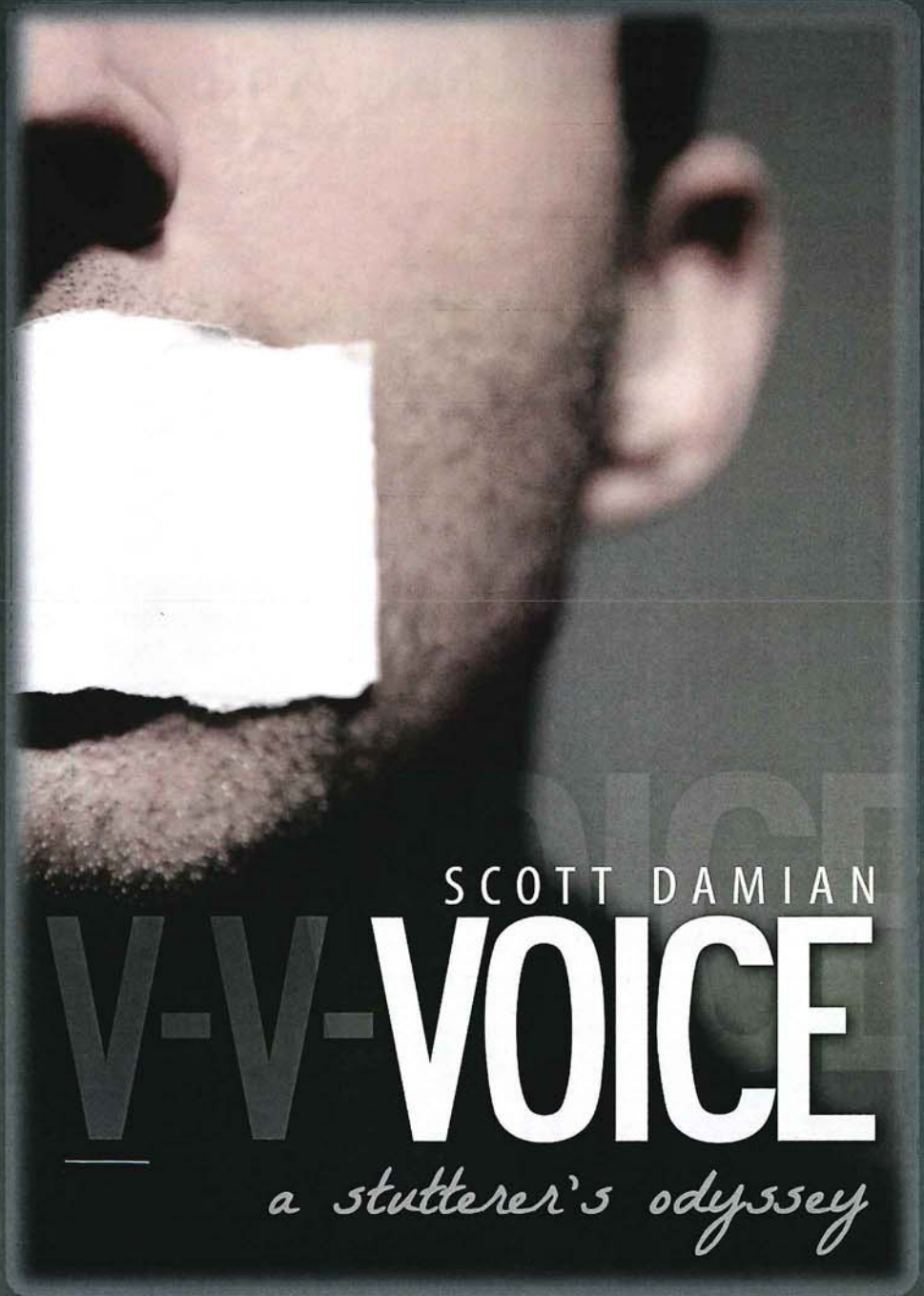
**COME BY MY BOOTH TO  
PURCHASE YOUR COPY TODAY!**





From his haunting blue-collar childhood in New Orleans to the physical and psychological scars that led Damian down a path of self-destructive behavior that was as crippling as the stuttering itself, "V-V-Voice: A Stutterer's Odyssey" chronicles the struggles of one stutterer to do the unimaginable; to use his voice as an actor and a writer, and help others find their own.

Get your copy today at  
<http://behlerpublications.com/titles-damian.shtml>



THE  
STUTTERING  
FOUNDATION®

A Nonprofit Organization  
Since 1947—Helping Those Who Stutter

Scott Damian is a recipient of the Stuttering Foundation's "Converting Action Into Awareness" Award in 2012.

# Professionals Abilities Association

of America

[www.paaofa.org](http://www.paaofa.org)

**\*\*Formally known as DisABLED Professionals Association\*\***

PAA is an association formed and operated by business professionals with disABILITIES for business professionals with disABILITIES and friends.

The Mission of Professional Abilities Association is ...

To develop and establish a network of business professionals with disabilities.

Focusing on supporting and recognizing business professionals with disabilities, their accomplishments and ABILITIES, while promoting awareness of the strength and richness they bring to the business professional community.

**WWW.PAAOFA.ORG**

**Professional Abilities Association....  
Empowering Through Knowledge,  
Unity & Pride!**



## Schwartz Roller & Zwilling

is a national law firm primarily engaged in the representation of individuals with disabilities in an effort to enforce their civil rights under the American's with Disabilities Act, Rehabilitation Act, Fair Housing Amendments Act, Architectural Barriers Act, Air Carrier Access Act and various civil rights laws against discrimination on the basis of disability.

We also consult for businesses and municipalities who wish to draft a work plan to remove barriers and engage in voluntary ADA compliance.

Please contact us regarding issues affecting your civil rights in any state to determine whether we can be of assistance.

No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

# SCHWARTZ ROLLER & ZWILLING

Schwartz Roller & Zwilling LLP | 600 Vestavia  
Parkway, Suite 251, Birmingham, Alabama 35216  
Phone 205.822.2701 | Fax 205.822.2702 | E-mail  
ezwilling@szalaw.com

YOUR LAWYER.  
YOUR ADVISOR.  
YOUR VOICE.

DEDICATED  
TO  
DEFENDING  
THE RIGHTS  
OF  
INDIVIDUALS  
WITH  
DISABILITIES



**Ms. Wheelchair California 2014  
THANK YOU**

*Theresa de Vera*

for all of your hard work and dedication to uphold the mission of The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation. We are grateful to have you to represent The Golden State! You make us all so proud! We love you!



**The MWCF Board of Directors:  
Alyson Roth, Mary Zendejas,  
Elizabeth Cruz, Carolyn Rossi and Sarah Hull  
Little Miss Wheelchair California Luzi Ashly  
and your State Coordinator, Kumi**



The California Foundation • Fair • UO17pa

**The Kentucky Board of Directors wish you GOOD LUCK!**



**And remember...Reach for the sky...it has no limits!**



## **DateAble, Inc.**

The Dating Service with Heart  
[www.dateable.org](http://www.dateable.org)



## **The CP Group**

A Group for Adults with Cerebral Palsy  
[www.thecpgroup.org](http://www.thecpgroup.org)

Proud Supporter of  
Shani Watson  
Ms. Wheelchair Maryland 2014 & Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Pageant

DateAble, Inc. is a non-profit organization that provides dating and social opportunities for people with and without disabilities.

15520 Bald Eagle School Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613  
301-657-DATE (3283)



**McGrath  
Solutions, Inc.**



*Promoting Employment & Providing Affordable IT*

[www.mcgrathsolutions.org](http://www.mcgrathsolutions.org)

Proud Supporter of  
Amanda Szidiropulosz, Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee 2014  
& Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Pageant

American Airlines



Here's to those  
who elevate the  
world around them.

American Airlines is proud to support  
Ms. Wheelchair America.



American Airlines, the Flight Symbol logo and the Tail Symbol are marks of American Airlines, Inc. oneworld is a mark of the oneworld alliance, LLC.  
© 2014 American Airlines, Inc. All rights reserved.

Wishing you all the best,  
Laura Halvorson!



Ms. Wheelchair Texas 2014

THE  
*Ms. Wheelchair Texas*  
FOUNDATION

*iamShani*

*advocate trainer speaker*



*Good Luck*

*Shani Watson*

*Spread your Wings*

[www.iamshani.com](http://www.iamshani.com)

[shani@iamshani.com](mailto:shani@iamshani.com) 301-744-9773



**ENCORE HAIR STUDIO**  
"DEDICATED TO MAKING OUR WORLD A  
MORE BEAUTIFUL PLACE"

2200 N Lakewood Blvd  
Long Beach, CA 90815  
Phone: (562) 595-4309  
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK, 10am to 7pm



**3E LOVE**

embrace. educate. empower.

Join the Movement

[www.3elove.com](http://www.3elove.com)

 @3elove

 /3elove

#3elove

# CAPITAL CRESCENT BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

## Team

meet us today

OUR TEAM



BOOKKEEPING      BUSINESS PLANS  
MARKETING PLANS  
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CONSULTING  
PROPOSAL WRITING

CAPITAL **CRESCENT** BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

240.245.0206 Office  
support@capitalcrescent.com  
www.capitalcrescent.com

**CRESCENT**



Congratulations to Miss Wheelchair Maryland 2014  
Miss Shani Watson



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light green button-down shirt and dark pants, is sitting in a golf cart. She is smiling broadly and looking towards the camera. She is holding a small object in her hands. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees.

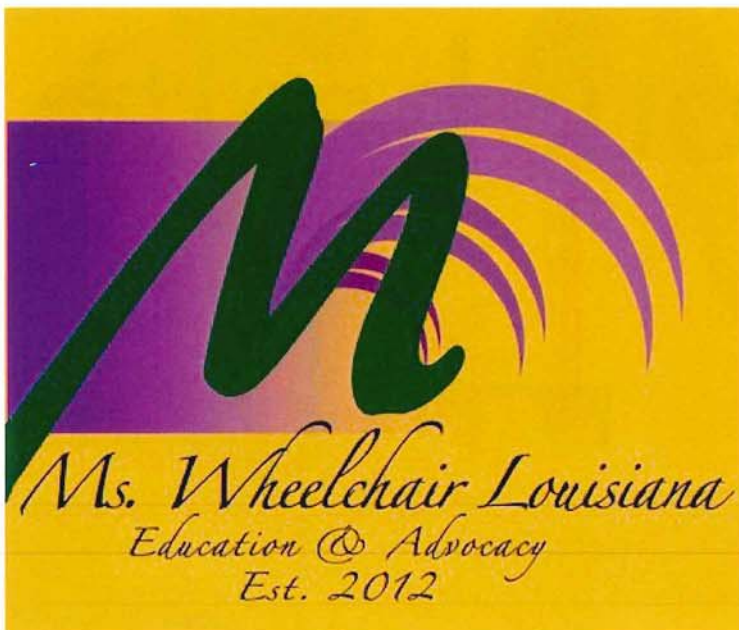
**Congratulations, Theresa.**

**Bring the crown home to California!**

*From your friends at Access.*

**access**

Access Services PO Box 5728 El Monte, CA 91734-1728 [accessla.org](http://accessla.org)



Best Wishes to Ms. Wheelchair Louisiana 2014,  
*Leah Hoffpauir*  
 Sincerely, Anita Gray,  
 MWLA State Coordinator



Congrats to the  
**New Ms. Wheelchair!**



**FREE  
 ADMISSION**

**Boston** - Sept. 5-7, 2014  
 Boston Convention/Exhibition Center

**San Jose** - Nov. 21-23, 2014  
 San Jose Convention Center

**Los Angeles** - Mar. 6-8, 2015  
 Los Angeles Convention Center

**New York** - May 1-3, 2015  
 New Jersey Conv. & Expo Center

**Chicago** - June 12-14, 2015  
 Schaumburg Convention Center

**Houston** - July 31- Aug. 2, 2015  
 NRG Center (Formerly Reliant Center)

Come to the Expo to experience:



**www.AbilitiesExpo.com**  
 Register online for priority access

# we heart your health.



healthy-living  
products



fitness + nutrition  
solutions



workplace wellness  
programs



healthy kids  
initiatives

live life fit  
**fit**losophy™  
[www.getfitbook.com](http://www.getfitbook.com)

## live life fit



MS WHEELCHAIR  
*Michigan* INC.

IS PROUD TO SUPPORT

# Kelsey Kleimola

*"Hold onto Hope"*



# SUPPORTING MS. WHEELCHAIR AMERICA THEN & NOW



**BraunAbility**

Life is a Moving Experience™



Bev Chapman, Miss Wheelchair America 1977  
with Ralph Braun, Founder of BraunAbility.



**BraunAbility has been a proud supporter of the  
Ms. Wheelchair America for nearly 40 years.**

**We believe in education, disability advocacy and achievements of the  
accomplished women in this program.**

[www.BraunAbility.com](http://www.BraunAbility.com)

# Production Team

Stage Manager – Sandra Halloran

Assistant Stage Managers – Kathy & Keith Cunningham, Austin R. Sarti and Meghann McCullough

Lighting Technician – Chuck Brandt, BCT Entertainment

Lighting Technician Assistant – Jeff Handke

Sound Technician – Elijah Reyes, Ignite Entertainment

Sound Technician Assistant – Jeffrey Gerrards

Event Photographer – Beth Dubber Corey and Volunteers

Hair and Make-Up Team – Rheanne Garcia, Anthony Escoto and volunteers

# The Ms. Wheelchair California Foundation Board of Directors

President – Alyson Roth, Ms. Wheelchair California 2009

Vice President – Mary Zendejas, Ms. Wheelchair California 2012

Treasurer – Elizabeth Cruz

Secretary – Carolyn Rossi

Member at Large – Sarah Hull

# The Ms. Wheelchair America 2015 Planning Committee

Jill Caruso

Dorothy Chester

Jacque Chester

Cherrie Cruz

Christina Cruz

Olivia Cruz

Ritchie Cruz

Anthony Escoto

Rheanne Garcia

Matthew Gifford-Tinker

Oscar Gonzalez

Rola Halawanji

Heather Kumiyama

Henrietta Kumiyama

Matthew Kumiyama

Nicte Mack

Russ Marchand

Susan Rotchy

Kalen Sakima

Liz Trenholm

Roberto D. Velasquez

Sandy Williams

# Thank you

The Hilton Hotel & Executive Meeting Center

The Hull Family

Kemi Yemi-Ese

The Mack Family

The Hill-Mariscal Family

Liz Castillo

Mayor Robert Garcia

Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell

Program Designer Kalen Sakima.

# The Ms. Wheelchair America Foundation Board of Directors

## **President**

Shelly Loose

## **Vice President**

Jennifer Kumiya

## **Secretary**

Megan Abrams

## **Treasurer**

Carrie Greenwood

## **Member at Large**

Brandee Ponder

## **Executive Director**

Joey Murello

## State Coordinators

Alabama .....	Xaveria Powell Anderson
Arizona.....	Terry and Karen Charlton
California.....	Jennifer Kumiya
Colorado.....	Zara Kruska Vargus
District of Columbia.....	Jeri Wasco
Florida.....	Shari Wilson
Illinois.....	Pamela LaPorte
Indiana.....	Connie Todd
Iowa.....	Judy Hoit
Kansas.....	Carrie Greenwood
Kentucky.....	Pat O'Byrant
Louisiana.....	Anita Gray
Maryland.....	Robert Watson
Massachusetts.....	Santara Sen
Michigan.....	Shelly Loose
Minnesota.....	Anne Neumann
Mississippi.....	Kebra Moore
New Jersey.....	Maggie Redden
New York.....	Shameka Andrews
North Carolina.....	Brandee Ponder
Ohio.....	Jessica Kelbley
Oklahoma.....	Jesa Lopez
Pennsylvania.....	Megan Abrams
Tennessee.....	Samantha Moreno McGrath
Texas.....	Angela Wrigglesworth
Utah.....	Katie Johnson
Virginia.....	Pam Cobler
Washington.....	Meg Paulsen
Wisconsin.....	Carol Banks

# WHERE WILL YOU VENTURE?



The MV-1 is the only mobility solution built from the ground up. Designed with best-in-class accessibility, durability, and proven safety, the MV-1 provides independence wherever your travels may take you.

- Spacious front-row wheelchair access
- Meets or exceeds all ADA guidelines
- Integrated side-entry ramp stores under the floor
- Independent driving solutions readily available
- Fully FMVSS certified from the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) with a bumper-to-bumper warranty
- Produced by Mobility Ventures, a new wholly-owned subsidiary of AM General



[www.MV-1.us](http://www.MV-1.us)

1-877-MV1-FORU

info@MV-1.us

All features subject to change.

# MV-1®