



# HIGHLIGHTING ACCOMPLISHMENTS & RAISING THE BAR



## 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



# LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

I am proud & really amazed at what the DSAF has accomplished since its inception in 1995. We first started because parents wanted to get together to share information, joys, concerns, & accomplishments about our children. When we met big sisters donated babysitting time during our meetings & people brought treats to share. In 2002 we had our first walk for Down syndrome called the “Buddy Walk”. To have the walk we had to apply & become a non-profit group & we obtained our 501c3 status. Now we had some funding so we could start thinking of providing programming. Now we could pay our babysitters, purchase food, & even plan events we could pay for like renting a pool for a swim party.

We launched our website in 2007. Our website has improved so much. It is & probably always will be a work in progress. Now we have the funding to keep working on it & some dedicated members who work to make it more accessible, informative, & helpful.

- 1995: DSAF was founded by Deb Safarik
- 2002: Hosted the first Buddy Walk
- 2002: Established as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization
- 2007: Launched the professional website
- 2010: Hired the first paid staff member

Our main fundraiser is our yearly walk the first Saturday in October. We changed the name of our walk to the “Step Up for Down Syndrome” walk to more clearly state its purpose. We have grown our committee to plan & provide all the fun events & awareness you enjoy every year. This is a big job. Many of the same people work on this year after year. We can always use more help!

Our biggest step has been to hire our first paid staff. Lori Tackett is our program director & brings fresh ideas & the ability to work on programs as part of her job. This frees up volunteers to specialize more on their specific interests within our organization. This first annual report shows what this group is accomplishing. I hope it “blows your socks off”. It encourages & excites me to see how far we’ve come & how much more we will be doing to “support individuals with Down syndrome, their families, friends educators, & professionals who share their lives.”

-Deb Safarik, president

## 2010 Board of Directors

Deb Safarik (President / Founder)  
Jane Quiring (Treasurer, 2nd Half of 2010)  
Sally Ludwig (Treasurer, 1st Half of 2010)  
DEan Fuelberth (Vice President)  
Dyann Rupp (Secretary / Newsletter Chair)

## Program Director

Lori Tackett

## 2010 DSAF Committees

**Medical Outreach Committee Chair** - Anna Calhoun  
**Lil’ Stars Chair** - Liz Echternkamp  
**Super Stars Chair** - Caroline Fehlhafer  
**Parents & Teens Chair** - Amy Svoboda



# PROGRAMMING

## NETWORKING

- Three Main Networking Family Events:

- March Madness Ball Night
- Summer Picnic / Pool Party
- Christmas Brunch

- Moms' Night Out:

A time in a casual environment to talk with other moms of children with Down syndrome. Meet other mothers that share your joys and challenges; share stories, advice or just enjoy a night out.



## EARLY YEARS

- Medical Outreach

This committee educates others regarding Down syndrome by raising the awareness of the local medical community, particularly during the diagnosis of a new child with Down syndrome and providing current and accurate information to new and expecting parents.

In 2010, we:

- Provided information for expectant or new parents
- Provided information regarding support and resources for families
- Produced and distributed STARS Video
- Presented up-to-date information about Down syndrome and recommendations on giving pre-natal/post-natal diagnosis.

“A small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead



- Lil' Stars (Birth - 5 yrs):

This group provides social events especially for our member families with children ages 0-5.

In 2010, events included:

- Sessions at Kindermusik
- A trip to Ager Indoor Playground
- Play dates at the park
- Story Time with Curious George
- A trip to Roca Berry Farm

We all have disabilities of our own in one way or another. Our hope is that the world will understand that we should accept one another for the love we have to share, and not judge solely on ability or appearance.

-DSAF Parent

# PROGRAMMING

## MID YEARS

- **Super Stars (6 yrs - High School):**

This group provides meaningful social events for school-aged children, focusing on fostering peer relationships for the individual with Down syndrome.

In 2010, events included:

- Pizza & Miniature Golf Outing
- Movie Night
- Roca Berry Farm
- Skating Party

To be a Star you must shine your own light, follow your own path, and don't worry about the darkness for that is when Stars shine the brightest!  
- **Anonymous**

## INCLUSION



**"We are all in this together!"**

- **Teen Stars (High School):** This new group provides an opportunity for teens with Down syndrome to socialize with their peers. While the teens are enjoying time with young adult mentors and their peers, the parents meet and have the opportunity to get together and share information.
- **Peer Presentations:** A Peer Presentation is a 15 to 20 minute classroom or grade level presentation tailored around a specific student that addresses any issues related to his/her disability. Often, openly discussing Down syndrome will encourage students to understand why the child learns or behaves differently. In 2010, we offered our first Train the Trainer session to show parents how to give Peer Presentations. Peer Presentation kits may be checked out by any DSAF member.
- **SEAS (Summer Enrichment Activities Support):** This program helps parents provide paraprofessional support during summer programs. This allows a child with Down syndrome to participate fully and meaningfully in community summer programs open to all children.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."  
- **Martin Luther King Jr**

## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT



The DSAF website allows our organization to reach a State-wide audience. It provides downloadable resources, links to critical information and websites, upcoming DSAF events, copies of DSAF publications, event on-line registration, and, soon, an upgraded membership section with special benefits just for DSAF members. The site has seen two major renovations, the last one about five years ago. A new web committee formed in January to work with the Web Content Engineer to take the site to the next level of Web 3.0 functionality.

# PROGRAMMING

- **Conferences:** In 2010, DSAF held two conferences. The first was a Behavior Conference with Matthew McNiff. Matthew is a behavior consultant with Educational Service unit No. 5 in Beatrice. The second was a Literacy conference led by Tiffany Hogan, an assistant professor and researcher with UNL. After sharing information on the Simple View of Reading, she shared specific information pertinent to children with special needs.
- **Newsletter:** The bi-monthly DSAF Newsletter provides information on DSAF events, community events and a variety of topics that impact our families.
- **E-mail Blasts:** E-mail blasts are sent out on a regular basis to keep members informed about upcoming DSAF events and events in the community that may be of interest to our members.



- **Book Bundles:** DSAF offers books in our Book Bundles at a highly discounted price. Book Bundles are a great way to gain more information about Down syndrome
- **Book Donations and DSAF Bookcart:** DSAF provided books to local libraries and schools on a variety of topics relating to Down syndrome. Resources relating to Down syndrome are available locally for check-out by parents and schools from the DSAF Bookcart.
- **Special Needs Trust Stipend:** Life planning for people with disabilities can be very complex. A Special Needs

Trust is a legal document to address many of the common planning issues. In 2010, DSAF provided seven \$300 stipends to families toward the legal cost to have a special needs trust created or reviewed.

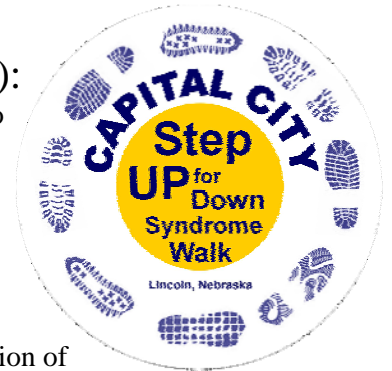
- **Community Connections:** In 2010, DSAF joined forces with other local groups to work together to bring programs to our community. This alliance brought us Husker Heros where we partnered with the NU Athletics Department to provide a night of fun for our members and a Schools Out event for Teenagers with disabilities
- **Scholarships:** DSAF provided scholarships for DSAF members to attend local and national conferences that focused on issues pertinent to individuals with Down Syndrome.



It takes courage to fall and to begin again.  
Determining that failure does not mean that  
you will not succeed; It just means that I may  
take a little longer.  
- Anonymous

# A W A R E N E S S

- **Inclusive Schools Week:** The first week of December is Inclusive Schools Week and during this week we celebrate the progress that schools have made in providing a supportive, quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. In 2010, DSAF recognized 28 teachers and paraprofessionals nominated by our members. DSAF sent gift cards to these educators in appreciation of their year round efforts to include children with Down syndrome in regular education classrooms.
- **2010 DSAF Calendar:** These Calendars featured people with Down syndrome as well as facts about Down syndrome. They were distributed throughout the community to promote education and awareness.
- **Capital City Step UP for Down Syndrome Walk (CCSUDS):** The 9th Annual walk was a tremendous success! We had over 1,200 walkers join us to celebrate individuals with Down syndrome and promote awareness, inclusion and acceptance within the community of Lincoln. Over \$52,000 was raised to support individuals with Down syndrome.



### Stars Tent & Shooting Stars BLOG:

The Stars Tent highlights the accomplishments of our children by displaying Bios within the tent. As an extension of our Stars Bios, which sit static on the walls of the tent, we created the "Shooting Stars" concept to allow a group of volunteer college students to follow the DSAF Stars outside the tent and into their lives during the morning of the walk. Through text, quotes, and pictures, we hope that this blog captured the heart-warming magic that is the Step Up Walk!



**Fact Posters:** New in 2010 to DSAF, Fact Posters were displayed along the route of the walk and featured pictures of our loved ones with Down syndrome and important facts about Down syndrome in an effort to raise awareness.

Our Media Partners:



|                       | 2002<br>CCBW * | 2003<br>CCBW | 2004<br>CCBW | 2005<br>CCBW | 2006<br>CCBW | 2007<br>CCBW | 2008<br>CCBW | 2009<br>CCBW | 2010<br>CCSUDS |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Total Walkers:</b> | 360            | 300          | 550          | 753          | 1,069        | 930          | 1,003        | 900          | 1,234          |
| <b>Funds Raised:</b>  | 19,471         | 27,988       | 22,429       | 21,199       | 30,382       | 44,233       | 36,694       | 34,662       | 52,953         |

\* Previously called the Capital City Buddy Walk (CCBW)

## CCSUDS Committee

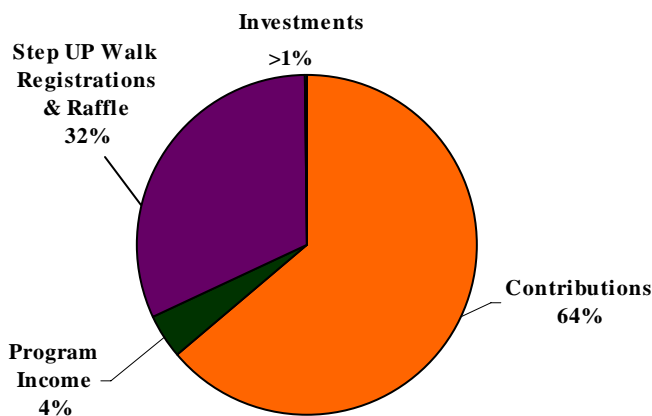
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Deb Safarik (Chairperson)</b>            | Lori Tackett (Volunteer Coordinator)       |
| Jody Bartels (T-shirt Chairperson)          | Dennis Kriz (Logistics Chairperson)        |
| Jane Quiring (Treasurer)                    | Liz Echternkamp (Fact Posters Chairperson) |
| DEan Fuelberth (Publicity Chairperson)      | Tina Barrett (Committee Member)            |
| Deb Safarik (Food and Beverage Chairperson) | Angie Willey (Web Content Chairperson)     |
| Lori Kennedy (Entertainment Chairperson)    | Natasha Dobbins (Games Chairperson)        |
| Caroline Fehlhafer (Prize Chairperson)      |  |

# THE FUTURE OF DSAF

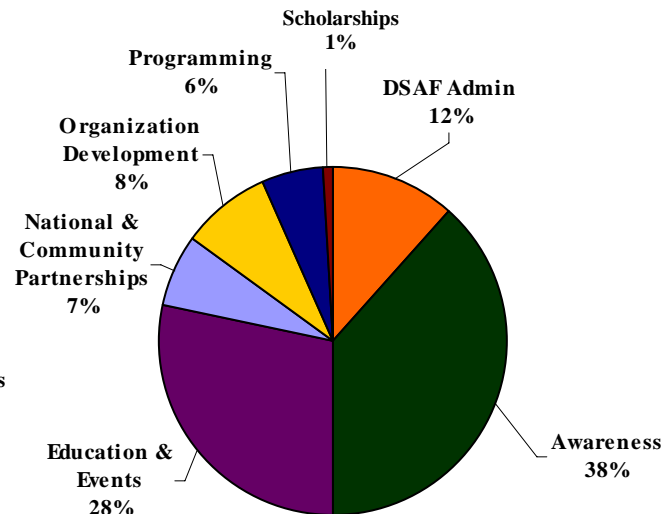
Looking forward, the DSAF plans to continue programming that was offered in 2010 and expand and strengthen programs providing support to our families and community. We will provide additional resources to our: families with children starting Kindergarten; siblings - an outing and workshop; and children learning to ride a bike. We will continue to sponsor quality, educational conferences such as the July 2011 Wrightslaw Boot Camp and plan to expand our educational conferences to include multiple topics and tracts within a one-day event to better serve many of our diverse membership. We will continue to raise awareness locally with our Step UP walk and World Down Syndrome Day events, and begin to reach out to rural communities within the state of Nebraska.

## DSAF Financials

**2010 Revenues\***



**2010 Expenses\***



\* Based on DSAF 2010 Revenues of \$57,208 and Expenses of \$59,225

In 2010, \$2,000 was designated by the Board to add to the Post High School Advanced Education Fund bringing the account balance to a total of \$8,041.

### Examples of Expenditures for Each Area:

**Administration** – cost to run the organization that cannot be allocated elsewhere.

**Awareness** – cost of providing information about Down syndrome and DSAF, such as the Step Up Walk and World Down Syndrome day.

**Education/Events** – cost of providing specific information about Down syndrome to parents, medical professionals, teachers and others and the all group events.

**National/Community Partnerships** – cost of organizational memberships and donations to national and community organizations of mutual benefit.

**Organizational Development** – cost of training and developing DSAF staff and volunteers.

**Programming** – cost of DSAF programs for specific populations, such as Lil’ Stars, Super Stars, and Parent and Teens group events.

**Scholarships** – cost for members to attend local conferences and national conventions about topics relating to Down syndrome.



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## The Down Syndrome Association for Families (DSAF)

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[info@dsafnebraska.org](mailto:info@dsafnebraska.org)

402-421-1338

## MISSION:

*The Down Syndrome Association for Families (DSAF) is a Lincoln non-profit organization that provides support for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, friends, educators, and professionals who share in their lives.*

*Every person with Down syndrome is an individual who has a unique purpose and abilities. The Down Syndrome Association for Families provides networking and a positive vision for the future.*

**RAISE THE BAR**

**I CAN**

**I WILL**

**WATCH ME**

