



Reaching for the stars,
one dream at a time!



Media Kit

About Our Foundation

Dream Makers Youth Foundation is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization founded in 2004 that provides community-based educational, recreational, and therapeutic services to preschool through high school-aged children with special needs throughout Metropolitan Atlanta. Children with special needs are defined as children and adolescents with various disabilities including, but not limited to: Asperger's Syndrome, Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injuries, Mild to Moderate Intellectual Disabilities, and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder.

We believe that children with special needs have the right to engage in all activities made available to typically developing children. They too would benefit from the physical, mental, social, and emotional benefits associated with being active members of their communities. They deserve to have an accessible environment; they deserve to feel good about themselves; and they deserve to enjoy being kids, regardless of their conditions.

We are committed to promoting the overall well-being of children with special needs and their families. Our primary objective is to empower children with special needs to be active, productive individuals in a society designed for those who are typically developing. Our secondary objective is to increase community levels of awareness, empathy, respect, and comfort towards individuals with disabilities. We are visionaries determined to make a difference in our community, and in the lives of children with special needs and their families, one dream at a time.

Our mission is to enable children with special needs to be as independent as their conditions allow, within their natural environments.



Dream Makers Youth Foundation provides children with special needs the adaptations they need to effectively participate within their natural environments. Thanks to financial and in-kind contributions from individual and corporate sponsors and grant makers, these programs are offered *free of charge* to our enrolled children.

S.T.A.R.S. Adaptive Sports Program

This program encourages children with special needs to *actively adjust* to their disabilities by providing them with recreational opportunities and sports training.

- ★ Sports Teams for All, Regardless of Specialty
- ★ For children with mild to moderate intellectual delays
- ★ Initiated in 2004 by sponsoring the state-championship Cobb Cougars wheelchair soccer team through the American Association of Adaptive Sports Programs
- ★ Expanded program to include adaptive basketball and tennis programs and increased the number of children served to over 40
- ★ Plans to expand program to include wheelchair sports program



Foundations4Learning Tutorial Program

Since 2005, Dream Makers Youth Foundation has provided tutorial services to elementary school students with special needs residing in Metropolitan Atlanta who are having or have a high probability of having difficulties in school based on their diagnoses. **We provide the extra assistance they need to become more independent and successful in their school environment.**

- ★ In 2008, we transitioned from a home-based to school-based program and now utilize students from Clark Atlanta University to provide tutoring services
- ★ The program is currently integrated into Peyton Forest Elementary School (Atlanta Public Schools)
- ★ Over 200 students have been served, and all have demonstrated improvement in homework, grades, and standardized test scores
- ★ Plan to expand to additional schools



School2Work Program

Although the availability of employment has improved since the inception of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, **there are still limited opportunities for individuals with disabilities to become gainfully employed.** To address this need, Dream Makers Youth Foundation will offer a school-to-work program to high school-aged children with special needs who reside in the Metro

Atlanta area. The program is designed for those who are interested in obtaining employment, but require assistance to effectively transition into the workforce.

Program will launch in 2013



Dream Makers Youth Foundation hosts several events throughout the year to provide opportunities for our children to engage in recreational activities, increase community exposure of our organization and the abilities and needs of special needs children, and to raise money for our programs.

Celebrity Wheelchair Basketball Jam

Since 2004, we have hosted our annual Celebrity Wheelchair Basketball Jam (CWBJ) - a star-studded, fast-paced game of wheelchair basketball where local celebrities, often using sports chairs for the first time, play with and against disabled athletes.

DMYF's Celebrity Wheelchair Basketball Jam is their premier fundraising event, with over 350 attendees each year!



Past participants include:

Mario West (NBA/NBADL)
Josh Childress (NBA)
Gavin Cloy (Paralympian - Team USA)
Jerry Clark (Jerry Clark Foundation)
Lil' Bankhead (V103 Radio Personality)
Renaldo Nehemia (Celebrity Stylist)
Big Will (95.5 The Beat Radio Personality)
Mark Selbee (World Champion Kickboxer)
John Shibley (Radio Personality)
Alasia Ballard (America's Next Top Model)
Corinne DeGroot (Professional Boxer)
Anthony Allen (Georgia Tech Football)
Dominique Reese (Georgia Tech Football)
Terance Mathis (NFL)
Dorsey Levens (NFL)
Nick Anderson (NBA)
Jumpin' Jackie Jackson (Harlem Globetrotters)
Stevie Baggs (NFL/CFL)

Bring the Heat 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

Able-bodied and wheelchair divisions are featured at the Bring the Heat 3-on-3 tournament that exposes our community to the abilities, not disabilities, of wheelchair athletes since 2005. In 2009, Dream Makers teamed up with HoopAtlanta to recruit, organize and run the tournament's wheelchair division.



Chasing the Dream 5K Road Race

In 2011, DMYF will host our first 5K road race to increase community awareness about the abilities of disabled athletes and to raise money to help make the dreams of one of our disabled youth come true. We're excited to host the inaugural race on August 13, 2011 in Smyrna, Georgia.



Casino Night and Auction

Hosted annually in November, the Casino Night and Auction is an elegant, black-tie affair, where DMYF supporters make contributions while playing casino games and bid on live and silent auction items.



Family Movie Night

Hosted monthly, families with children with special needs can enjoy recent family-friendly movies in a theatre-like environment, with a concession stand...and no stigmas attached.

Parent Empowerment Series

In April 2009, we began hosting our Parent Empowerment Series during Family Movie Night, where we feature speakers with expertise in areas of concern for parents of children with special needs. The sessions have focused on topics including school advocacy, behavior modification, diet options and coping strategies.

DMYF Awards and Acknowledgements

- 2010** Grant Recipient from the Atlanta Thrashers Foundation
- 2009 & 2010** Grant Recipient from Speedway Children's Charities - Atlanta Chapter
- 2008, 2010** Grant Recipient from Solvay Pharmaceuticals
- 2008** Beneficiary Recipient of proceeds from the Knights of Columbus Annual Golf Tournament
- 2005** Present Beneficiary Recipient of proceeds from the St. Thomas Knights of Columbus Tootsie Roll Drive
- 2005** Distinction as Community Organization Leader by the Non-Profit Training Institute
- 2007** Nominee for Tom Joyner's Hardest Working Non-Profit Organization Award

DMYF Media Coverage

- Mar 2011** Celebrity Wheelchair Basketball Jam a Slam Dunk Winner (Smyrna-ViningsPatch)
- Apr 2010** Wheelchair Basketball in Atlanta (FitAtlanta Magazine)
- Dec 2009** Playtime for All (FitAtlanta Magazine)
- Mar 2009** Hoops & Dreams (Marietta Daily Journal)
- Jul 2007** Nikki Wilson: Changing Lives (Rolling Out Atlanta)
- Jan 2007** Hoop Dreams & More for Kids (Atlanta Journal Constitution)
- May 2006** Student Doesn't Let Wheelchair Stop Her (Northside News)
- Mar 2005** Hoop Dream Makers
- Oct 2004** A Chance to Shine (Marietta Daily Journal)



STUDENT DOESN'T LET WHEELCHAIR STOP HER



President, Dream Makers Youth Foundation
nikki wilson
changing lives

Dream Makers Youth Foundation has a seven-member Board of Directors with a variety of educational and professional experience. Each member is dedicated to serving their community, and providing assistance to those less fortunate than themselves. Each member was recruited, and then elected, because of their areas of expertise, and the belief that they could help fulfill our organization's mission and objectives.

DMYF Board Members

Nikki K Wilson, MA OTR/L - Founder/President/Chairperson

Ms. Wilson is an Occupational Therapist who earned her Master's degree from New York University in 2001; she earned her Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Sciences from Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI) in 1997. She has been providing Pediatric Occupational Therapy services in a variety of settings since graduation, including aquatic, school- and home-based therapies. She has attended several Continuing Education courses, is competent in the stages of childhood development, and was a wheelchair soccer and basketball coach.

Joseph E Graves, Jr - Vice Chairperson

Mr. Graves is a Community Service/Public Service Consultant who studied Urban and Metropolitan Studies at Michigan State University (Lansing, MI). He has over thirty years of Senior Management experience, which includes lobbyist responsibilities, advocating for community-driven agendas, and developing collaborative community initiatives. Mr. Graves also served as Chief Deputy Director of the Michigan Department of Social Services.

Clarence Porter, Jr - Treasurer

Mr. Porter is an Accountant who attended Dekalb College (Clarkston, GA) in 1976. He has been the owner and operator of P-Books, Inc. since February 1978, and provides accounting, tax, and general consultation services to small businesses, their owners, and managers. He is also enrolled to represent taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service.

Patricia A Wilson - Secretary

Ms. Wilson is a middle school English and Reading Teacher who earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Michigan State University (Lansing, MI) in Secondary Education (1972) and Secondary Reading (1974), respectively. Ms. Wilson has taught on the secondary level, and in adult education, in the Lansing, Comstock, and Kalamazoo School Districts. She has over thirty years of experience in education, and is competent in curriculum research and development for school-aged children.

Gavin Cloy - Board Member

Gavin is a world-class paralympic wheelchair basketball player, with several years of experience with the National Wheelchair Basketball Association and international play. He played on Team USA during the Paralympic Games in 2004, and won a Silver medal during the World Games in 2006. Gavin is very involved in the wheelchair sports community, and has been instrumental in recruiting wheelchair athletes for our integrated sports events. He believes strongly in the importance of sports for all youth, and is passionate about introducing wheelchair sports to youth in chairs.

Anthony Riviere - Board Member

Anthony is the Managing Principal for SHEA Engineering and owner of The Bernstein Group, where he provides Project Management Services, Business Consulting, and Import/Export services. He earned an EMBA in International Marketing from Emory University and a degree in Civil Engineering from Georgia Tech with certificates in Materials, Urban Planning & Management. He is a member of the St. Thomas the Apostle Church and served as Grand Knight for the St. Thomas Knights of Columbus from 2008 – 2009 (Council 12386). Anthony looks forward to helping DMYF grown in scope and coverage by leading process development efforts and assisting with corporate development.

Kimberly Fisher - Board Member

Kimberly graduated from of Clark Atlanta University in 1991 with a Bachelors Degree in Mass Communication/Public Relations and a minor in Marketing. She earned a Masters Degree in Organizational Business Management from Trevecca Nazarene University. Kimberly has over 15 years of healthcare experience and previously served as Operations Manager for the Emergency Department at Washington Hospital, Director of Client Relations and Support Services with HCA, and Assistant Director of Dekalb Medical Center Patient Access and Financial Counseling. Kimberly is currently the Director of Operations at Fisher Orthodontics and parent to a special needs child. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc and serves as Treasurer of the DDD Foundation in Atlanta.



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