

## Calendar of Events

February 20th	<b>UB Bulls Basketball</b> Alumni Arena 175 Webster Road, Amherst 14221 3:30PM
March 6th	<b>Spaghetti Dinner &amp; Basket Auction</b> The Columbus Hall 2735 Union Road, Cheektowaga 4:00PM
March 21st	<b>World Down Syndrome Day</b>
April 13th	<b>Transitions from EI/CPSE/CSE</b> Medaille College, Room M102 7PM
Jan 31, Feb 7, Feb 21, March 6, March 20, April 3, May 1,	<b>Young Athletes</b> Medaille College, Events Arena 3:00PM
April 17	Young Athletes location TBD
May 14	<b>Special Olympics Spring Games</b>

The DSPG News is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November



DSPG of WNY, Inc.  
547 Englewood Avenue  
Kenmore, New York 14223



# DSPG News

February 2016

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### UB Bulls Basketball Game February 20th

Bring your family to watch the UB Bulls take on Bowling Green courtesy of the DSPG on Saturday, February 20 from 3:30 - 5:30pm at Alumni Arena. Activities for kids and concessions will be available.

For tickets contact Janet Poreda at [janpo788@aol.com](mailto:janpo788@aol.com). Immediate family only please.

### Spaghetti Dinner and Basket Auction March 6th

The 2016 Spaghetti Dinner & Basket Raffle will be held at The Columbus Hall, 2735 Union Road Cheektowaga, 14227 from 4pm – 6:30pm on Sunday, March 6. Doors will not open until 4pm. **Tickets are \$7 and are presale only.**

We are looking for a few volunteers for the event, and will also be accepting basket donations along with donations of baked goods for the dessert table. If you are interested in donating a basket item, please email Barb Wakefield at [bb.wakefield1@verizon.net](mailto:bb.wakefield1@verizon.net).



To volunteer or for ticket information contact Trish Winnicki at 445-2177 or [trishwinnicki@gmail.com](mailto:trishwinnicki@gmail.com).

### World Down Syndrome Day March 21st

Monday 21 March 2016 marks the 11th anniversary of World Down Syndrome Day. Each year the voice of people with Down syndrome, and those who live and work with them, grows louder. We encourage our families to wear crazy socks or celebrate with random acts of kindness. The object is to get a conversation going so you can tell others all about WDS and why you celebrate it. The Peace Bridge will also be lit once again in blue and yellow to celebrate the over 500,000 people living in the United States and Canada.

See more ideas at <https://www.worlddownsyndromeday.org>.

### Transitions from EI/CPSE/CSE April 13th

Join us Wednesday, April 13 at 7pm in room M102 at Medaille College where Vicki Rubin from ECDC will speak on the transition process from Early Intervention to school age.

**\*\* At 6:30pm, prior to our meeting, we invite you to bring any gently used materials your child has grown out of, (books, DVDs, halloween costumes, etc.), to share with another family. Please do not leave any unclaimed items behind.**

## Young Athletes

**Young Athletes Winter/Spring 2016** Young Athletes is an early introduction to sports and to the world of Special Olympics for children ages 2 ½ to 8. The children enjoy games and activities that develop motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Young Athletes will start up again soon and we are looking for new families to join our group. The children learn new things, play and have lots of fun! We will be meeting in the Events Arena at Medaille College on Sunday afternoons from 3:00-4:00pm. Please note that the time has changed from previous years.

**Our winter/Spring session starts January 31st.** Join us for a fun-filled afternoon and move your bodies! Families are encouraged to participate and siblings are welcome to join the fun! The winter/spring season practice dates are: 1/31; 2/7; 2/21; 3/6; 3/20; 4/3 and 5/1. We have a special session planned for 4/17, location to be announced. Our season will conclude with an exhibition race at the Special Olympics Western Region Spring Games on Saturday May 14th. Any questions about the program can be directed to Melissa Garrity at 534-6121 or [mgarrity76@gmail.com](mailto:mgarrity76@gmail.com).

## Thank You To Our Donors

Adella Kirchmeyer- donated the proceeds from her painted pumpkins.

All the wonderful people who made donations in memory of Eric Hetzelt.

## Welcome to the following new families:

The Pollina Family  
The Williams Family  
The Willwerth Family

## DSPG Holiday Party

We had a great turnout on December 5 celebrating with DSPG family and friends at our annual Holiday Party. Students at the Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart once again provided crafts and games for the younger kids while all ages danced to music by Hank the DJ.

A new addition this year was Buffalo Animal Adventures who educated and entertained the audience with exotic wildlife.



## Eric Hetzelt

The WNY Down Syndrome community lost a great role model and the world lost a good guy on December 30, 2015 with the sudden passing of 37 year old Eric Hetzelt. Eric was an inspiration to all who met him and proved that "disability" can equal "capability".

Eric was as accomplished athlete in swimming, bowling and baseball. Had a longtime involvement in Special Olympics, first as a athlete, then as a coach. He was an avid fan of all Buffalo sports, almost never missing a Buffalo Bandits game. He was an usher at his church, and a fixture behind the deli counter at Wegmans on Alberta Drive for over 16 years. He was a devoted son to Carol and Erwin, loving brother to his 3 sisters and a great uncle to their children.

Carol was the driving force in starting the Down Syndrome Parents Group of WNY. After Eric was born, she had no information on Down Syndrome. She figured that other parents must be uninformed as well, so she began to organize monthly meetings with parents and health professionals on many Down Syndrome and other related topics. She has been a trailblazer for all of us.

## DSPG Scholarships

We would like to remind our members that the DSPG offers 4 conference scholarships per year (\$250.00 per scholarship). Scholarships will be awarded on a first come, first served basis. A proof of conference registration must accompany the request in order to be awarded. Individuals who have been awarded a DSPG Scholarship will be requested to present information received from the conference either in writing which will be featured in a future publication of our newsletter or presented at a DSPG meeting. There is a limit of one scholarship awarded per family per 5 year period. For more information please contact the DSPG at [dspgwny@gmail.com](mailto:dspgwny@gmail.com)

## National Down Syndrome Convention

The next NDSC Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida: July 21-24, 2016  
Keep an eye on their website for more details:  
<http://www.ndsccenter.org/the-convention/>

## National Down Syndrome Adoption Network



Multiply Your Blessings!

The NDSAN would like to add more families like yours to their Adoptive Family Registry.

If you are interested in adopting a child with Down syndrome, contact us today.

National Down Syndrome Adoption Network

Mission: To ensure that every child with Down syndrome has the opportunity to grow up in a loving family.

[www.ndsan.org](http://www.ndsan.org) • [www.facebook.com/dsadoption](http://www.facebook.com/dsadoption)

Adoptive Parent Contact: Stephanie Thompson - [stephanie@ndsan.org](mailto:stephanie@ndsan.org)

## Volunteer Opportunities

We have several opportunities for those looking to get more involved with the DSPG. Support Parents are needed to respond to families in need of guidance or a sympathetic ear. Calls and emails come in from new families as well as current members throughout the year. We are need of parents with kids from a variety of age groups and back grounds to respond to such inquiries. We are each other's best resource! Contact Amy Monson at [amonson23@gmail.com](mailto:amonson23@gmail.com) with questions or to become a Support Parent.

*We are always looking for new people to help out at our many functions. throughout the year...*

We are in need of baked good donations as well as volunteers at the Spaghetti Dinner on March 6. Contact Trish Winnicki at 455-2177 to sign up.

Our first planning meeting for Step Up for Down Syndrome 2016 will take place in the next few weeks. If you would like to help out with our most popular event please contact Gretchen White at [gretchen.w@dspgwny.org](mailto:gretchen.w@dspgwny.org).

If you are interested in any other activities contact Amy Monson at [amonson23@gmail.com](mailto:amonson23@gmail.com).



<https://www.facebook.com/DSPGWNYPARENTSGROUP>



## Friendship Class

Say and Learn, Inc. is excited to begin our 4<sup>th</sup> year of **Friendship Class**. We continue to offer a developmental readiness program that is designed to meet your child's speech and social needs for children in Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade. Classes are Thursday 4:00-5:00pm at the Jewish Center of Buffalo, 2640 North Forest Road, Getzville NY, 14068. Sessions are \$180 for 6 week of classes. Contact Laura Wexler at 716-818-3989 or [www.sayandlearnbuffalo.com](http://www.sayandlearnbuffalo.com) for more information..

## DSPG BOARD MEMBERS

### Presidents:

Amy Monson  
677-0604

Barbara Wakefield  
983-2140

### Vice Presidents:

Gretchen White  
834-0853

Trish Winnicki  
445-2177

### Treasurer:

Janet Poreda  
695-1299

### Communications Coordinator:

Michelle Giambra  
517-7961

### Secretary:

Bonnie Zon  
632-0137

### Members at Large:

Jason Brydges  
830-8636

Tracey Flick  
228-5002

Leah Marchewka  
631-7505

Wendy Slisz  
465-7574

### President Emeritus:

Carol Hetzelt  
832-4972