

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **LADIES NIGHT OUT**
Monday, July 18; details on back page.
- **SAVE THE DATE: 2011 BUDDY WALK! OCTOBER 15th** at West Forsyth High School N CLEMMONS!
- **CENTERPOINT DD ADVISORY MEETING—**
First Thursday of the month. No meeting in July. Next meeting: August 4th, 5:30—7 p.m., CenterPoint, 4045 University Parkway.
- **NO LIMITS II DANCE:**
Next Dance will be September 9th, 7-9 p.m.!
- **BEES—Building Exciting, Effective Skills for Parenting—**Next meetings is July 28, see item on back page.
- **BROADWAY ON MARSHALL—**8/26, details on the back page.
- Look for *part of your email address* to win free registration & shirts for Buddy Walk!

PDSSN has served our families & community for more than a quarter of a century!

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3

SUMMER 2011



Beyond Academics/UNC-G's First Graduates!

An N.C. First

All graduations are special. Parents cry, sigh in relief, and jump for joy along with their graduates.

A four-year residential program for college-age students made history on May 2nd when six students with intellectual disabilities graduated from UNC-G. It was a first for the university, as well as a first for

North Carolina.

This special graduation was made even more so because of the historical implications it brought. At this ceremony, it wasn't just the parents who did the crying, it was friends, classmates, State Leaders for Exceptional Children, and even the Provost. The first class of Beyond Academics marched proudly across the stage and received their certificates from the UNC-G Department of Humanities. They were challenged to comprehend the magnitude of their pioneering accomplishment. When compared to the Woolworth protesters and the Russian Astronauts of a previous generation, it was hard not to gasp at the reality for North Carolina and the pioneers of this truly cutting edge, national breakthrough program.

Jeremy Donohue joined five other graduates, who marched to live music, and heard speaker after speaker celebrate the tenacity and vision of local leaders who were "brave enough to participate in something that many thought would fail." But the speakers did not stop there, they also praised the indomitable spirit of the graduates who pushed for full recognition from the University, demanded Identification Cards, and broke through stereotypes. Michael Mayer, one of the speakers and a senior partner with Community Resource Alliance, told the students they had done what people said could not be done and that the university will never be the same because of the risks they took, and the effort they put forward and the challenges they met. Mayer said, "You now have an obligation to make this world a better place. You can never sit back and refuse to try something because you think it will be hard. You've already proven you can do 'hard'."

While all would go their separate directions, Jeremy returns to Winston Salem where he has begun work at Walgreens and will live at the Arbors on Country Club.

The graduates were excited to shout out their gratitude to teachers, friends and family. From the podium we heard about the bright future for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We heard about each graduate and their plans. And we all basked in what a wonderful sense of social justice and common sense this was for North Carolina. And why shouldn't we? After all, it was a college graduation and everyone jumps for joy.

- Bill Donohue (Jeremy is the son of Bill Donohue & Deborah Woolard)

Buddy Walk 2011

WOW! IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! TIME TO PREPARE FOR OUR ANNUAL BUDDY WALK! YOU CAN HELP—HERE'S HOW:

- ♥ REGISTER AT www.pdssn.com AND MAKE SURE YOU GET OUR SNAZZY 2011 SHIRTS FOR YOUR FAMILY (shirts are free with registration).
- ♥ PUT TOGETHER A TEAM OF WALKERS FROM YOUR WORKPLACE, NEIGHBORHOOD, OR CHURCH AND SIGN UP SPONSORS. (Remember that every little bit counts—we want to raise awareness as much as we'd like to raise some money for our good works.)
- ♥ FIND A CORPORATE SPONSOR! A BUSINESS OR RESTAURANT YOU PATRONIZE!
- ♥ CALL OUR PDSSN VOICE MAIL (336/714-0106) AND VOLUNTEER TO HELP IN SOME WAY, OR WRITE BARBIE AT bwright@pdssn.com.
- ♥ TELL YOUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, CO-WORKERS, EXTENDED FAMILY ABOUT THIS FUN DAY! GET THEM TO COME TO THE BUDDY WALK! THE MORE, THE MERRIER!
- ♥ REMEMBER THE DATE, TIME AND PLACE:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15th, 9-NOON, WEST FORSYTH HIGH SCHOOL!

Join Up & Be Counted!

For \$10 per year, your family can join the membership of Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network. Here are some good reasons to join:

- ◆ Be a member, be an “owner” - you will have the knowledge that you “have PDSSN’s back” - that you and your family appreciate the efforts of PDSSN and you want to be a voting member.
- ◆ Be eligible for workshop scholarships! Our members have been supported in going to national conferences, as well as those near home.
- ◆ Add your vote when it comes to supporting causes that benefit people with Down syndrome. We give grant money to several organizations, such as Beyond Academics, Triad First in Families, the self advocates, and others who apply.
- ◆ Be eligible for our quarterly drawing of one newsletter-reading family to receive free registration and T-shirts to the Buddy Walk!

If you are not now a member, just send a \$10 check to Helen Johnson, our treasurer, today! That covers your family for a year of membership. See the page 9 of this newsletter for Helen’s address.

Tidbits from the Top!

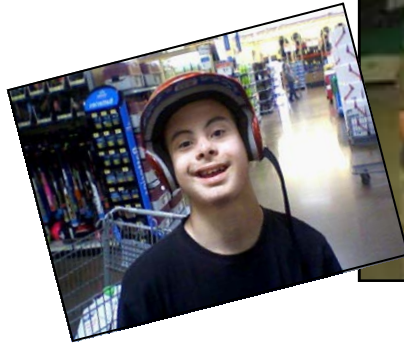
We Have Dancers!

ELIN, BRENT, & FRIENDS

Elin Dahlin, Brent Bennett, & several other individuals with Down syndrome will be participating in a dance recital on June 18 at East Forsyth High School at 6pm.

The dance company is Extravadance & Tumble. The special needs program is called Dreams in Motion. The address for the school is 2500 W Mountain Street in Kernersville.

DALTON COPE



Bobby Cope writes : "My son at his prom (photo at right) at Stoner Thomas School in Davidson County!!! I am so proud of him!! My gift from GOD!!" On the left, we've included a more candid photo of Dalton that shows his personality just beaming out at you!

RACHAEL OWEN

Rachael's mom writes that Rachael will be dancing again this summer with Cross Movement Dance, a Christian-based dance company in Lexington, NC. She has been dancing for around nine years now. She will be in the 16 and up Hip Hop and Ballet groups. She said to tell you she's "Dancing for Jesus". It really is an awesome ministry/dance program, sometimes with as many as 200 students from the surrounding communities. It gets a lot of advertisement from WBFJ-FM, as DJ Verne Hill's daughter is one of the dance assistants and is in Rachael's class. The production will be held at the Lexington Civic Center on August 5th, at 7:00. Free Admission. Doors open at 6—for good seats come early. Live praise and worship band at 6:30. Visit the website for information: <http://www.crossmovementdance.com/>

**"PURE AND SIMPLE,
ANY PERSON WHO IS
ENJOYING LIFE
IS A SUCCESS."**

- William Feather



An Olympic Swimmer!

KARLY FULLER

Karly competed in the Special Olympics swimming event at the state level in Raleigh on June 4th. She won a GOLD MEDAL in the 25 meter freestyle! Karly also participated in a Charlotte program called "Lose the Training Wheels," and she's doing very well. Way to go, Karly!!

And Two Wheeler!



More Tidbits from the Top!



Mr. Stephen Reeves



Miss Ruby Loftin



Miss Rachael Owen
Mr. Jeremy Donohue

The Annual Formal - at Camelot!



Mr. Steven Trevitte



Miss Jeannie Crook



Ms. Melinda Gentry
Mr. Brent Bennett

PDSSN PLANS FOR THE COMING YEARS!

On May 23rd, sixteen of our members and friends met with Karl Yena, a talented and renowned strategic plan facilitator, to discuss the future of Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network, and to formulate some goals for the near future.

Mr. Yena brought the richness of his experience with non-profits, and shared ideas and resources with the group. It was a great meeting and people came away from it with renewed enthusiasm and a vision for the future of our organization.

Prior to the meeting, a “survey monkey” was made available to all of you so that your perceptions and ideas could add to the planning. Although only eleven people responded to the survey, the results seemed a fair representation of the thinking of families who make up PDSSN. Briefly, here is a summary:

What most impresses you about PDSSN?

- Buddy Walk
- Notebook
- Board Dedication
- Family Support Provided
- Family Friendly
- Grants Provided
- Membership Dedication

next three years?

- Hire initial staff member on a part time basis
- Update the website
- Increase the membership
- Enhance the variety of programs
- Family involvement in PDSSN
- Larger number of volunteers

What improvements would you like to see over the

With this input and some serious discussion, the planning retreat culminated in the formulation of a strategic plan, goals and objectives for 2011-2014. There were six major goal areas and several strategies under each. Here is a look at the major areas and one highlight from each of them. For the full document, please feel free to write us an email request at pdssnemail@gmail.com and we will email it to you.

Goal 1: Develop and implement a fund raising and revenue producing plan sustainability (immediate, short-term impact and longer-term sustainability). [During 2011-12 submit grant to WS Foundation and/or KBR Trust for a part-time Development Director for a comprehensive development program to include expanded events, fund raising partnerships, quarterly appeals, endowment, and planned giving, OR a part-time Executive Director.]

Goal 2: Raise public awareness of PDSSN and Down Syndrome. [During 2011-12 create a comprehensive social media plan to attract volunteers and educate the public about PDSSN.]

Goal 3: Accomplish IT Upgrades. [During 2011-12, complete the current web site enhancements.] **Editor's note:** when you visit www.pdssn.com, you'll see that this goal is nearing completion.

Goal 4: Mission Statement. [During 2011-12, revisit mission statement for any relevant revisions.]

Goal 5: Programs [In early 2012 develop a financial planning workshop for members and the community.]

Goal 6: Board Effectiveness Enhancement [In 2011 establish a Board Development Committee with responsibilities contained in Committee Charter, provided by Facilitator.]

With even this abbreviated summary, you can see that your Board has its work cut out for them. Your commitment will ensure that PDSSN will reach these goals and make even a greater contribution to the lives of our members kgbsm@triad who have Down syndrome, and to their families!

Buddy Walk Shirt 2011

Change Your World

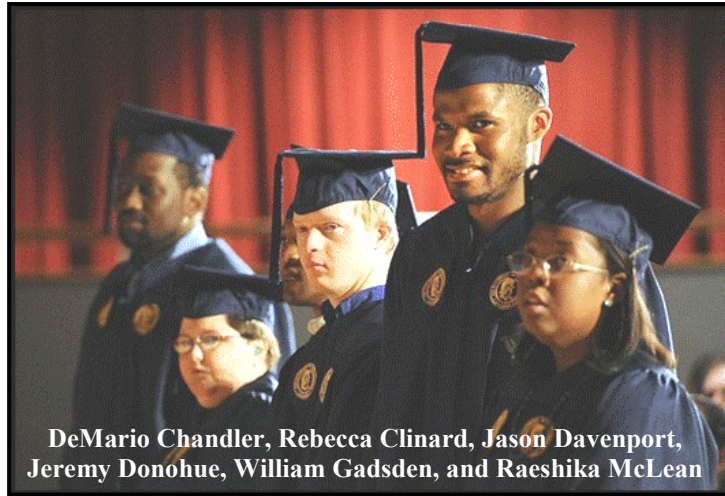
DOWN  **SIDE UP**

Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network - PDSSN.COM

Above is the beautiful design for our 2011 Buddy Walk Shirts. You know that you will want one! Just go to www.pdssn.com and register for the Buddy Walk and be sure to note what size shirt(s) you need. The design is delightful and you know that you'll want to have one!

Also remember that each issue of PDSSN News has the hidden email address of one lucky reader. That person will win free registration and up to four shirts for their family and/or friends. Look for the beginning of your email address in this newsletter! (This is one of the many benefits of membership in PDSSN!)

Beyond Academics Graduates First Class at UNC-G



DeMario Chandler, Rebecca Clinard, Jason Davenport,
Jeremy Donohue, William Gadsden, and Raeshika McLean

Photograph by JENNIFER ROTENIZER/JOURNAL

Article by PAUL GARBER | Winston-Salem Journal

Published: May 03, 2011

They lined up with proud smiles, wearing caps and gowns, preparing to walk across the stage just as countless other college graduates will do this month.

But this class of six people at UNC Greensboro was different. They have intellectual disabilities including autism and Down syndrome that would have prevented them from enrolling in college had it not been for a program designed to teach them how to live independently while living side by side with typical college students.

It's called Beyond Academics, and these six are the program's first graduates and the first in the state to earn such a four-year certificate. They received their certificates Monday in a special ceremony in the auditorium of the [Elliott University Center](#) on the [campus of UNCG](#).

More Kudos for this extraordinary accomplishment:

What a joy it is to see the successful outcome of this charter class of UNC-G's Beyond Academics program! Much credit goes to Joan Johnson and Fran Sandridge who initiated this North Carolina first. And to Deborah Woolard and Bill Donohue whose dream it was that such an opportunity would be available, not just for their son Jeremy, but for all people with developmental differences who wish to further their education. Congratulations to these six student pioneers, and to the many people (parents, Beyond Academics leaders and instructors, UNC-G administrative leaders and student friends, volunteers and state officials) who supported them and made this dream a reality for our community and for our state!

"When you do the best you can, you never know what miracle is wrought in your life, or in the life of another."

- Helen Keller

WrightsLaw CONFERENCE

One of the “perks” of PDSSN Membership is a scholarship benefit for attending conferences. This year member Sandy Sauer (coordinator for BEES) attended the WrightsLaw conference.

Here is Sandy’s report:

Peter Wrights’ Special Education Law and Advocacy Training was exactly what struggling parents needed to get started to advocate for their child. Three Wrightslaw books were provided to participants as part of the training.

Peter discussed the purpose of special education law and strategies of how to write a SMART IEP. He highlighted sections of each of his books to help participant’s use them as a reference. The participants gained an understanding of the Statutes and Codes relating to special education law. In addition, participants learned how to understand the Bell Curve to be able to interpret standardized testing scores and %ile rank given as part of the education testing to determine if a child qualifies for an IEP as well as where a child scores compared to peers.

Peter stressed two points through out the conference. The first was that according to IDEA, special education is meant to meet children’s “unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living.” The second point was that parents and advocates need to do their best to create a teamwork approach and to provide a perception of collaboration with school staff to be able to negotiate for the services you want. He offered some creative ways of building a relationship with school staff such as bring a food platter to IEP meetings.

Dance! Dance! Dance!

Time: 7—9 p.m.
Where: Pinedale Christian Church
(Get directions at www.pdssn.com)

No Limits II

Spend some more time with your family
 Get More Exercise
 Catch Up with Friends

NEXT SEVERAL DATES:

September 9, 2011
October 7, 2011 (note change)
November 11, 2011
December 9, 2011

No Limits II is for adults 18 and over who have mental and physical challenges.

Check Out the New & Improved www.pdssn.com!

If you haven’t visited our website recently, you have a treat in store! Rebecca Smitherman, Deborah Woolard, and our Webmaster Rich Blakemore have done a marvelous job of reorganizing and “prettifying up” the space. Events and other items are so much easier to find. The landing page is attractive, clean, and uncluttered. This work will continue as we address one of our goals mentioned in the article on page five.

You can help! We would like photos of your child, family, etc. to use on the website. Click on the Members Information section and complete the release form to send to Deborah Woolard, 4049 Max Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106. Then email your electronic photos to dgwoolard@gmail.com. Thanks to the great work that Rebecca, Deborah, and Rich have put into this project! Go visit today!

Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network



4045 University Parkway

Phone: 336-714-9120

E-mail: pdssnemail@gmail.com

Website: www.pdssn.com



PDSSN is a non-profit organization

PDSSN friends—if you are not

Support PDSSN! Join Today!

yet a

member of PDSSN, consider joining, please. You can print the membership form you'll find on our website and mail it with your \$10 family membership annual dues to:

PDSSN

Helen Johnson, Treasurer

PO Box 91

Pfafftown, NC 27040

PDSSN News Publishing Schedule

- ◆ Winter (January, February, March),
- ◆ Spring (April, May, June),
- ◆ Summer (July, August, September)
- ◆ Fall (October, November, December)

Contributions, including photos, may be sent to pdssnemail@gmail.com in early December, March, June, and September (the month prior to each publication) or earlier. Share your thoughts and proud moments in *PDSSN News!*

Remember to look for part of your email address in this newsletter. Informational emails are not eligible, and your complete email is not displayed. Send a note to pdssnemail@gmail.com to say you saw it! You will receive free registration and up to four T-shirts for this year's Buddy Walk!

News You Can Use!

- ♥ **ACCESSIBLE FESTIVAL 2011**—July 15th -Free to any child with a disability, 6:30—8:30 a.m. and p.m. Call Tina Caron-Wilkins at 748-3243 for information.
- ♥ **LADIES NIGHT OUT**—Monday, July 18, Kanpai on Stratford, 6:30. To be included, please RSVP to Kristen Douglass (krisrobdouglass@gmail.com, or 813-9260).
- ♥ **BROADWAY ON MARSHALL**— Friday, August 26, 8 p.m. at The Enrichment Center, 1006 South Marshall, Winston-Salem. \$15/Individual; \$25/Couple includes song, wine, cheese, dessert reception. Call TFIF at 724-1412x144, or email tfif@youthopp.org to reserve your spot!
- ♥ **BEES**—will meet on Thursday, July 28th, 6:00 to 7:30 (light supper at 5:30) at Amos Cottage. No cost, child care provided. Speakers: Kris Drum and Sarah Kaplan, Speech/Language Pathologists. RSVP snbsauer@hotmail.com. Next dates are August 25, and September 22nd (always the 4th Thursday of each month from 6- 7:30).
- ♥ **THURSDAY MORNING PLAYGROUP**—Thursdays, 9-10:30 at The Children's Center. Free to all, but parents must accompany children.
- ♥ **INFO NEEDED:** We are gathering a list of business people who employ folks with Down syndrome. We plan to honor them at this year's Buddy Walk. Please let Deb know at dgwoolard@gmail.com, or 922-0530.
- ♥ **NEED TO LOCATE:** PDSSN Display Board in black carrying case and the *Down Syndrome Transition Handbook* by JoAnn Simons. Contact Deb at dgwoolard@gmail.com or 922-0530.
- ♥ **CAN YOU HELP?** Family needs certified respite care worker to assist with two boys ages 8 & 5 who have Fragile X syndrome. Eight hours a week between 9 and 3 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. \$10 per hour. Pass the word. Candidates can call April at 765-7276.