



TREASURE VALLEY  
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

# TVDSA Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: [Celena Auger](#)

March 2015

## In this Issue

The March issue is full of announcements, exciting opportunities, and events. Please mark your calendars for the 2015 World Down Syndrome Celebration, The All-Ability Easter Egg Hunt, Idaho Gives Day and the Treasure Valley iCan Bike Camp.

Please consider helping TVDSA sell tickets to win a brand new ATV. The drawing is to be held at the TVDSA Family Picnic, June 10<sup>th</sup>. A great deal, and with only 2,000 tickets sold, a good chance you could be a winner! Individuals with Down syndrome that help sell tickets can also win a \$50 Visa gift cards!

Also included this month you can find information on the ABLE Act (page 2) provided by Autism Speaks. On page 3, you will find a touching story that hit Good Morning America, that you may have seen through social media.

Monthly and archived TVDSA newsletters are available on our website at: [www.idahodownsndrome.org](http://www.idahodownsndrome.org) for viewing and sharing.

## 2015 World Down Syndrome Day Celebration Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> from 12pm to 2pm

at Albertsons Stadium on the Boise State Campus  
Wear your **CRAZY Socks** for a dance party on The Blue!

Featuring: music and dancing, Performance by the Danik Twisters  
Crazy Sock photos, Refreshments,  
and FUN with your friends and family from TVDSA!

Check out the ATV we will be raffling off at the summer picnic and buy tickets.

Enter through the Allen Noble Sports Hall of Fame  
Free Parking in the West Stadium Lot

(Rain location in the Caven Williams Sports Complex, next to Albertsons Stadium)

With special thanks to Boise State University



**Get Up to get Down, on the Blue!**



RSVP on [Facebook](#) or just show up and party  
to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day 2015!

Questions: contact Jason Robles at [marketing@idahodownsndrome.org](mailto:marketing@idahodownsndrome.org) or at (208)724-3160

## Your Ride is Waiting!

### Win a 2015 White Polaris 570 Sportsman EPS

Automatic, 4x4 AWD, 44HP, with Power Steering  
Retailing at \$7,399.00

TVDSA is covering the sales tax, title and doc fee!

**Tickets only \$10.00 each or 3 for \$25.00**

**Only 2,000 tickets available!**

Proceeds benefit TVDSA programs and services.

### Help sell tickets for TVDSA and win!

If an individual with Down syndrome assists in the selling of  
the winning raffle ticket, they win a \$50 Visa Gift Card!

Contact Paul & Celena Auger and Chris Brady at [atv@idahodownsndrome.org](mailto:atv@idahodownsndrome.org) to get  
bundles of tickets to sell to your family, friends, co-workers, & neighbors!

### Drawing will be held at the TVDSA Family Picnic

June 10<sup>th</sup> at Kleiner Park in Meridian  
Need not be present to win!

### To purchase tickets:

- Email: [atv@idahodownsndrome.org](mailto:atv@idahodownsndrome.org)
- Call: (208)954-7448
- Visit: Carl's Cycles at 5550 West State Street in Boise
- Buy your tickets at the TVDSA World Down Syndrome Celebration on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Albertson's stadium



## TVDSA Calendar of Events

March 1<sup>st</sup>:

**Treasure Valley iCan Bike Camp Registration opens.** Forms available at:  
<http://icanshine.org/boise-id/>

March 3<sup>rd</sup>:

**TVDSA Board Meeting**  
7:00pm-9:00pm at A New Leaf  
Contact: [Kristie Yerger](mailto:Kristie.Yerger@tvdsa.org)

March 14<sup>th</sup>:

**Best Buds** is going to Jump Time in Meridian from 2:00pm-3:00pm.  
Contact [Jorliena Isaacson](mailto:Jorliena.Isaacson@tvdsa.org)

March 19<sup>th</sup>:

**Mom's Night Out!** 7:00pm at Smokey Mountain Pizza in Meridian.  
Contact: [Malu Mulholland](mailto:Malu.Mulholland@tvdsa.org)

March 21<sup>st</sup>:

**World Down Syndrome Day Celebration** 12:00pm-2:00pm at Albertson's Stadium at BSU  
Contact: [Jason Robles](mailto:Jason.Robles@tvdsa.org)

April 4<sup>th</sup>:

**TVDSA All Ability Easter Egg Hunt** 10:00am-12:00pm at Settler's Park, Meridian  
Contact: [Elisha Jimenez](mailto:Elisha.Jimenez@tvdsa.org)

May 7<sup>th</sup>:

**Idaho Gives Day 2015**  
Please consider making TVDSA your charity this year.

June 10<sup>th</sup>:

**TVDSA Family Picnic** at Kleiner Park in Meridian  
Contact: [Lynda Wells](mailto:Lynda.Wells@tvdsa.org)

June 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>:

**Treasure Valley iCan Bike Camp** Contact: [Paul Auger](mailto:Paul.Auger@tvdsa.org)

## Treasure Valley iCan Bike Camp 2015



**June 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>,** the [iCan Shine bike program](http://icanshine.org) will be back in Idaho at the Homecourt YMCA in Meridian, Idaho to teach individuals with disabilities ages 8 & older how to ride a conventional bike and become a lifelong independent rider.

**Rider Registration now open!** Registration will be open through May 15<sup>th</sup>, on a first come first serve basis. Only a limited number of slots are available. Cost is \$150.00 for the week long camp for TVDSA members, and \$200.00 for non-members. Registration forms can be found online at: <http://icanshine.org/-boise-id/>

iCan Bike uses a fleet of adapted bicycles, a specialized instructional program and a trained staff to teach individuals with disabilities how to ride a bike. Riders attend the same 75-minute session each day for five consecutive days (M-F) whereby they are physically assisted and encouraged by two volunteer "spotters."

Over the course of the 5-day camp the adapted bike is adjusted to gradually introduce more instability in an effort to challenge riders at their own individual pace. Success in learning to ride a bicycle is a major accomplishment. Learning to ride builds confidence and an improved self-image. At the 2014 Treasure Valley iCan Bike Camp 82% of the riders became independent riders of a traditional 2-wheeled bike. We hope to have the same results this year!

For more information, please email Paul Auger at [tvicanbike@idahodownsyndrome.org](mailto:tvicanbike@idahodownsyndrome.org).

## 10 Things to Know About the ABLE Act

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act is built on the foundation of the current 529 Education Savings Plans that help families save for college. In the case of ABLE, families now have a tax-deferred savings vehicle to save for the care of people with disabilities. The National Disability Institute estimates there are 58 million individuals with disabilities in the United States.

What's next for ABLE and how does it affect you? Stuart Spielman, Senior Policy Advisor at Autism Speaks, answered questions about this important piece of legislation and what it means for the disabilities community.

**1. Briefly explain the ABLE Act and why it is so important?** The ABLE Act allows people with disabilities and their families to set up a special savings account for disability-related expenses. Earnings on an ABLE account would not be taxed, and account funds would generally not be considered for the supplemental security income (SSI) program, Medicaid, and other federal means-tested benefits.

**2. How does this differ from current law?** Current law makes savings for disability-related expenses difficult. Individuals and families can face the loss of federal benefits if savings exceed certain limits.

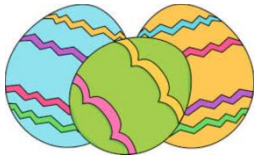
**3. Once signed into law by President Obama, how soon would people be able to set-up ABLE accounts?** Possibly in 2015. Before accounts can be set up, regulations will have to be written and ABLE programs established in states.

**4. Who is eligible for an ABLE account?** An eligible individual is someone who becomes disabled before age 26 and (1) receives Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or SSI; or (2) files a disability certification under rules that the IRS will write.

**5. What are the disability expenses covered under ABLE?** Expenses made for the benefit of a disabled individual for education; housing; transportation; employment



Continued on Page 6



## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual All-Ability Easter Egg Hunt

April 4<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am-12:00pm  
at Settler's Park in Meridian

**\*\*NEW LOCATION!\*\***

Happy  
Easter

TVDSA invites all elementary and younger kids, and their families to join us.  
There will be separate egg hunt areas for different ability levels.  
Plenty of eggs for everyone!

Directions: Northwest corner of Ustick and Meridian Road (3245 N. Meridian Rd.)

For more information or to help with this event, please contact: [Elisha Jimenez](#)  
or [Jorliena Isaacson](#) (208)846-8765.



## Dad Refuses to Give Up Newborn Son With Down Syndrome

When Samuel Forrest of **Armenia** heard a baby crying from outside his wife's hospital room, he knew his life would change forever. Not only had he become a father, but he would soon receive some unexpected news about his newborn son.

"This pediatrician walks out of the room with a little bundle -- that was Leo," Forrest said. "She had his face covered up and hospital authorities wouldn't let me see him or my wife. When the doctor came out, he said 'there's a real problem with your son.'

Forrest followed doctors and nurses into a room where he'd finally get to meet his baby. "When I walked into the room they all turned to me and said 'Leo has **Down syndrome**,' he told ABC News. "I had a few moments of shock."

After the news had sunk in, Forrest held Leo for the very first time. "They took me in to see him and I looked at this guy and I said, he's beautiful -- he's perfect and I'm absolutely keeping him."

Soon Forrest walked into his wife's hospital room with Leo in his arms. Her reaction was unlike one he ever expected. "I got the ultimatum right then," he said. "She told me if I kept him then we would get a divorce."

Attempts to reach the hospital for comment weren't immediately successful. The baby's mother, Ruzan Badalyan, told ABC News that she did have a child with Down syndrome and she has left her husband, who has the child, but she declined to elaborate.

Forrest, who's from Auckland, **New Zealand**, said he was completely unaware of the hospital practices in Armenia when it came to children. "What happens when a baby like this is born here, they will tell you that you don't have to keep them," he said. "My wife had already decided, so all of this was done behind my back."

Despite his wife's warnings, Forrest said he never had a doubt in his mind that he would hold onto his son.

One week after his birth, Leo's mom filed for divorce. "It's not what I want," Forrest said. "I didn't even have a chance to speak with her privately about it."

Forrest, who works as a freelance business contractor, has plans for he and Leo to move to his native country of New Zealand where he said they'll receive support from loved ones. In the meantime, he's enlisted for some help on his **GoFundMe** page titled "Bring Leo Home."

"This really came out of the blue for me," he said. "I don't have a lot, I have very little in fact. The goal is to raise enough for a year so I can get a part-time job so Leo doesn't have to be in daycare and I can help care for him. He's lost a lot in two weeks. It'd be different if he had his mommy."

Forrest has recently been working with disability awareness groups to share his story in the hopes that parents will become better educated on children with special needs. "After what I've been through with Leo, I'm not going to sit back and watch babies be sent to orphanages," he said. "As a child with Down syndrome, that becomes somewhat of a label. If we can get around this label, we'll see that they're normal. They're a little different from us, but they're still normal."

"They all have niches and I want to work hard to find out where Leo's special. This little guy is great."

Source: ABC News; Good Morning America with Nicole Pelletiere, February 5, 2015

[Link to story and photos](#)



TREASURE VALLEY  
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

## Social Groups Page

### Dads Appreciating Down Syndrome (D.A.D.S.) Meeting:

**D.A.D.S.** will not be having a separate outing in March. Please join us for World Down Syndrome Day, March 21st at Albertson's Stadium from 12:00pm to 2:00pm.

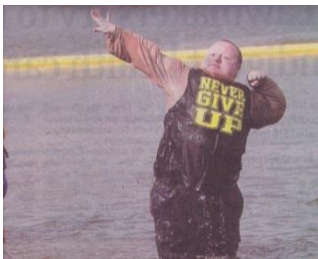
For more information about **D.A.D.S.** please contact [Gus Olmos](#)

### MOM'S Night Out!

**Moms** will be going to **Smokey Mountain Pizza** located at 980 E. Fairview Ave. in Meridian, **Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.**

TVDSA will supply the appetizers, Mom's provide the conversation. Give yourself a night out, you deserve it!

For more information or questions, please contact: [Malu Mulholland](#)



Jeff Wilson was in the Idaho Statesman after Taking the Plunge to support the Special Olympics. "Freezing is awesome," he said afterwards, his teeth chattering. Jeff dedicated his first-ever plunge to his younger sister Renee Nelson.

### Lil' Buddies (age birth-5 years) Update:

**Lil' Buddies** will not be having a separate outing in March. Please join us for World Down Syndrome Day, March 21st at Albertson's Stadium from 12:00pm to 2:00pm.

Need more information on **Lil' Buddies**? Please contact [Elisha Jimenez](#).

### Best Buds Update (Elementary ages):

**Best Buds** will be going to **Jump Time** in Meridian on **Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> from 2:00pm-3:00pm.** Jump Time is located at 1375 E. Fairview Ave. TVDSA will pay for children with Down syndrome. Bring family or friends to join in the fun. Each family is required to fill out a waiver which can be found online at [www.jumpimeidaho.com](http://www.jumpimeidaho.com).

**Don't forget to bring your socks!**

Need more information on **Best Buds**? Please contact [Jorliena Isaacson](#) (208)846-8765.



### Cool Club Update (ages 12-17):

**Cool Club** will not be having a separate outing in March. Please join us for World Down Syndrome Day, March 21st at Albertson's Stadium from 12:00pm to 2:00pm.

Need more information on **Cool Club**? Please contact [Kristie Yerger](#).

**Help Wanted:** We are looking for a **new Cool Club coordinator to take over.** If you would like to help organize monthly outings, and fun activities for individuals with Down syndrome ages 12-17 in the Treasure Valley, please contact [Kristie Yerger](#).

### Adults in Motion Update:

**AIM** will not be having a separate outing in March. Please join us for World Down Syndrome Day, March 21st at Albertson's Stadium from 12:00pm to 2:00pm.

Need more information on **AIM**? Please contact [Lynda Wells](#).

### 2015 TVDSA calendars are still available

\$15.00 each

Please contact [Kristie Yerger](#) or complete an [order form online](#) to order.





## Conferences, Workshops, Webinars & TVDSA Scholarship Information

**2015 321 eConference**  
**March 21, 22 & 23**  
 10 am to 5 pm (EST)

63 sessions will be presented over the three days. Plus access to recordings for 30 days.

Cost:  
 Early Bird: \$63 (until 2/1)  
 Regular: \$75 (until 3/1)  
 Late: \$85 (after 3/1)

Click to [register](#) or for more [information](#)

**PEAL Center's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Inclusive Communities Conference**  
*Common Ground: Creating a Community Where All Belong*

**March 25<sup>th</sup>**  
 Pittsburgh, PA  
**Registration opens soon.**

<http://pealcenter.org>



**IPUL FREE Webinar Series**

**Tuesday March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
 Times: 11:00am-12:00pm

Topic: **Getting and Keeping the First Job**

Participants will learn about the importance of employment for all and its particular impact on people with disabilities. The critical role of families and engaging youth in career planning as well as maintaining high expectations of youth are included. Basic job search activities as well as skills that help youth with disabilities keep the jobs they get.

Contact: [Amy Ireland](#)  
[Register Here](#)

**IPUL's Regional Mid-Week Mini-Conference**

at the Clarion Inn Pocatello, ID

**April 14-16th.**

The Idaho Parents Unlimited Regional Mini-Conference is held every other year and in a different region of the state to best meet the needs of families throughout Idaho who have children and youth with disabilities and special health care needs. **This conference is free to families!** Conference details, draft agenda, and registration can be found at: <http://www.ipulidaho.org>  
[Registration](#) is now open!

**All Born (In) Cross-Disability Inclusion Conference**

**May 2, 2015**  
 Portland, OR

Registration opens soon!

[Northwest Down Syndrome Association.](#)

**Illinois Includes**  
**May 6-7<sup>th</sup>**

If you are an educator, parent, grandparent, therapist, school and district leader, self-advocate, or concerned community member come and share ideas for growing inclusive opportunities in our communities.

**Registration opens soon.**  
[www.illinoisincludes.org/](http://www.illinoisincludes.org/)

**Think College Capacity Building Institute**

**June 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**  
 Boston, MA  
 Sessions and workshops on inclusive higher education for students with intellectual disabilities.

[Online Registration open!](#)

**NJCIE's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Inclusion Conference**

*Cultivating Growth Sowing Seeds of Inclusive Education for All*  
**June 24-25<sup>th</sup>**

To be held at Montclair State Univ with National presenters: Dr. Julie Causton & Dr. Patrick Schwarz

**Registration opens soon.**  
[njcies-13th-annual-summer-inclusion-conference/](http://njcies-13th-annual-summer-inclusion-conference/)

**National Down Syndrome Congress Conference**

**June 25-28<sup>th</sup>**  
 Phoenix, AZ

Registration will open March 2015  
[convention.ndsccenter.org](http://convention.ndsccenter.org)



## World Down Syndrome Day: It's All About Those Random Acts of Kindness

New this year, NDSC is promoting Random Acts of Kindness in honor of people with Down syndrome on (or near) World Down Syndrome Day: March 21, 2015.

Let's share information, celebrate people with Down syndrome, and spread a little love and kindness -- all in the name of Down syndrome!

### It's as easy as 1-2-3-4!

1. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, wear a t-shirt that says something about Down syndrome. (Your NDSC Convention t-shirt, the one from your local walk, or a WDSY shirt are all great options!)
2. Choose an act of kindness, like taking cookies to a fire station, or checking in on an elderly neighbor. (We have a [list of suggestions](#) to help get you started!)
3. Print a WDSY [postcard](#) (like the one to the right) and give it out or place it with your Random Act.
4. Take pictures of the random act and post on your social media pages with the hashtag **#WDSY15**.

We'll have people on the receiving end of our kindness, and the whole world watching on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Let's make this the biggest, best World Down Syndrome Day yet!

### TVDSA Scholarships

**Did you know that TVDSA supports members in gathering information at local and national conferences and/or workshops?**

The TVDSA Scholarship program is NOT income based, so all TVDSA members are eligible.

Please see our [Scholarship application](#) for the guidelines and how to apply today.



World Down Syndrome Day (WDSY) is an annual global awareness day advocating for the rights, inclusion and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome.

You have been chosen as the recipient of this Random Act of Kindness in honor of all people with Down syndrome.

**#WDSY15**



TREASURE VALLEY  
DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1404  
Meridian, Idaho 83680  
(208)954-7448

We're on the Web!

See us at:

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

Check us out on  
[Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

IDAHO  
GIVES

MAY 7, 2015

## Support TVDSA through Idaho Gives Day 2015:

Idaho Gives is a special day for philanthropy across Idaho. May 7<sup>th</sup> is a day for Idahoans to come together with one voice of support for our nonprofits, big and small. A day for you to find your passion, donate to your favorite causes and share in the excitement!

Join us at <http://idahogives.razoo.com/story/Tvdsa> **May 7, 2015** to make a contribution to the nonprofit you support. Last year Idaho raised \$782,862 from 7,566 unique donors who gave to 576 nonprofit causes. **TVDSA hopes you will select TVDSA as your nonprofit cause this year.**

### ABLE Act (continued from page 2)

training and support; assistive technology and personal support services; health, prevention, and wellness; financial management and administrative services; legal fees; expenses for oversight and monitoring; funeral and burial expenses; and any other expenses approved under regulations.

**6. Does having an ABLE account affect Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits?** Only if the ABLE account exceeds \$100,000. SSI benefits would be suspended but not terminated. In other words, the beneficiary of the account would not receive a check but would retain eligibility for the SSI program.

**7. Does it impact Medicaid eligibility?** No.

**8. Would ABLE regulations differ in each state?** Maybe. Although federal law applies uniformly to all states, individual states may regulate ABLE accounts differently. Under current law, states provide different tax benefits for college savings accounts, which are similar to ABLE accounts.

**9. Are there age requirements for an individual to open an ABLE account?** No, except that an eligible individual is someone who becomes disabled before age 26.

**10. Where can people go to learn more?** Read more about the legislation [here](#).

Source: [Autism Speaks](#), December 2014

*The mission of the Treasure Valley Down Syndrome Association is to enhance the quality of life for persons with Down syndrome by promoting inclusive environments, providing accurate information to parents, families, and the community, and by advocating respect, dignity, and appropriate supports for people with Down syndrome.*

#### Board of Directors:

President: [Kristie Yerger](#)  
Vice President: [George Taylor](#)  
Advisor: [Lynda Wells](#)  
Self-Advocate: [Seth Paetel](#)

Treasurer & Spanish Contact: [Lucy Olmos](#)  
Secretary: [Paul Auger](#)  
Marketing Chair: [Jason Robles](#)

For more information, articles, past newsletters and more, please visit our website: <http://idahodownsyndrome.org>  
Mailing: PO Box 1404 Meridian, ID 83680; Check us out on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)