



# EMPOWERING ABILITIES

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City of Jacksonville Disabled Services Division 117 West Duval St, Jacksonville, FL 32202  
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*"The overall goal of the Disabled Services Division is to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities by addressing, researching and attempting to resolve the many barriers they encounter".*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION

By Audra M. Craig-Walker, Disabled Services Manager

2017 will be an exciting year for the Disabled Services Division. We have several innovative programs and services which we are very excited about and cannot wait to share. It is our goal to reachout to the entire community through strategic engagement activities. The Disabled Services Division is committed to offer programs and services that increase opportunities for people with disabilities. Challenges are being addressed by researching resources and providing support to our citizens with disabilities as they strive to overcome barriers they encounter. The barriers faced by the disabled community include, transportation, housing, employment, accessibility, and discrimination. The Disabled Services Division uses the theme, "One city, One Jacksonville" as a motivation to serve the community with passion and enthusiasm every day.

## Disabled Parking Enforcement Program (D.P.E.P)

By Angie Miller

On February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> The Disabled Services Division held its latest disabled parking enforcement training at the Criminal Justice Center, F S C J North campus. This 16 hour (two day) course offers citizens the opportunity to become certified parking enforcement specialists through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement with a particular focus on disabled parking violations such as parking in an access lane (the striped area beside the disabled space meant to offer extra room needed to allow a wheelchair ramp to deploy), expired Placards, and miss use of placards. If you or anyone you know is interested in finding out more information about our Disabled Parking Enforcement Program please call Clinton Hamilton at (904) 630-3711 or email us at [disabledservices@coj.net](mailto:disabledservices@coj.net).

## MDC Corner

The Mayor's Disability Council (MDC) is comprised of a diverse group of people; approximately 80 percent represent the City's disabled population. The 13 member board was created in 1989. This dynamic group actively volunteers their time, experience and expertise to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities living in Duval County. The MDC reports to the Mayor on barriers and accomplishments within the disabled community. The MDC public forum addresses issues and problems regarding individuals, businesses, and various agencies groups that serve citizens with disability. The MDC meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month in the Mayor's Office. All MDC meetings are scheduled from 3:00pm-5:00pm.

## **Title III Program**

P. David Brackin, Title III Inspection

In 2013, the City of Jacksonville Disabled Services Division's Disabled Parking Enforcement Program (D.P.E.P.) had observed that complaints about accessible parking seemed to be increasing. Despite these issues, compliance was difficult to enforce due to the space's inaccessibility. In April 2013, two members of the Disabled Parking Enforcement Program began research for a solution.

In January of 2015, the first Notice of Violation (NoV) was written by the newly developed Title III program dubbed the Disabled Violations Enforcement Program, or DAVE for short. Since that time the program has been coordinated by David Brackin in the Disabled Services Division. David is a Navy Veteran and a retired Florida Department of Children and Families worker as well as a member of the Disabled Parking Enforcement Program.

From January 2015 through December 2016, the DAVE program has opened 275 cases and has closed 255 cases; bringing at least 300 disabled spaces into compliance within the city limits.

To report accessibility issues regarding parking contact the Disabled Services Division at (904) 630-4940 or call the City at (904) 630-CITY (2489).

## **Non-Profit Spotlight**

The Down Syndrome Association of Jacksonville (DSAJ) is a non-profit organization that has a 28 year history. DSAJ was established in 1989 by a small group of families who acknowledged the need for an organization that would offer support to families. Since the inception of the DSAJ, the emphasis has continued to be providing programs, services, awareness and education regarding individuals with Down syndrome. Additional primary goals are to promote community inclusiveness and make available opportunities to maximize the potential of individuals with Downs Syndrome. The offers support and guidance to individuals and families at every stage of life. Social programs are available for expecting parents, newborns and adults 18 and up. The DSAJ individual, family and community membership has grown to over 1,500.

DSAJ helps families construct the building blocks essential at every stage of development as they structure a life that will be fulfilling for their child. The services provided are built upon as foundation emotional support, information, education and community connection opportunities.

For more information about events and programs offered please contact Desiree Jomant (904)353-6300 or visit [www.dsaj.org](http://www.dsaj.org).

## **O'Neill Tabani Enrichment Fund**

A.M. Craig-Walker

The O'Neill Tabani Enrichment Fund is an education grant that is awarded to adults with Down syndrome. The grant is awarded by the National Down Syndrome society. The Fund has been awarding grants since 2005. Since that year there has been 130 post-secondary grants awarded to student with Down syndrome. The Eligibility criteria is as follows: Applicant must have Down syndrome, be 18 years old or older and show intent to registrar for post-secondary class or training program that will enhance his or her life through a process of developing or increasing employability skills or living independently. The organization offers ten grants each year in denominations up to \$5,000. The grant funds must be used to pay for post-secondary course at a local college or tuition at institutions that offer programs that enrich the quality of life for its participants. The options for grant recipients are not limited to employability skills and life-skills programs. A portion of the grant can be used to purchase books and cover transportation cost. The grant is awarded annually in March.

## Adaptive Recreation

Angie Miller

The City of Jacksonville's Disabled Services Division prides itself on the fact that it supports community partners dedicated to adaptive recreation by addressing the needs of each agency and assisting in scheduling, funding, and sponsorship of adaptive recreation. The Division is dedicated to ensuring that citizens with disabilities have access to adaptive recreational activities in the Duval county area. Inclusion is vital as it enables citizens to become healthy active members of Jacksonville's athletic culture. One of our most supportive partner's in making this goal a reality is the Brooks Rehabilitation Adaptive Sports Program which was founded in 2007.

The adaptive sports program was created as a resource for individuals with disabilities who are interested exercise and independence. Having opportunities to participate in team sports cultivates a sense of collaboration and teamwork. When asked, why do I think adaptive sports are so important? Jimmy Smith, Disabled Services Program Coordinator, stated, "I believe adaptive sports are important because it gives the individual the opportunity to compete at his/her level of ability and gives him/her a sense of accomplishment."

For more information call contact Suzy Blalock at (904)354-7314.

## Program Spotlight: Waste Assistance Program

Angie Miller

Did you know that the City of Jacksonville offers a program to assist individuals with mobility impairments get their waste to the curb? Our division works in concert with the Solid Waste Division in order to provide this service; it is called the waste assistance program and it is the focus of this month's program spotlight. Here's how it works. First you call 630-CITY (2489) and put in an enrollment request. The request will be processed by Angie Miller, who will conduct a short prescreening interview to determine whether or not you meet the criteria to receive the service.

## STRONGER

A.M. Craig-Walker

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*"We can find strength and motivation in the victories of others." If you are looking for a good book please read "Stronger"*

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Jeff Bauman had no idea that his life would forever change on April 16, 2013. Initially he had no idea what had happened and how much his life would be changed. After many surgeries his life was saved. However, he woke up to discover both of his legs were missing. In the book he described in detail the disbelief and shock of what he was experiencing on that day in the Boston Medical Center. Jeff resilient efforts helped the authorities implement a planned manhunt that eventually brought justice to those that were directly impacted by events that took place at the 2013 Boston Marathon.

Several hours prior Jeff was staged at the finish line to cheer for his girlfriend when the first bomb went off at his feet. What is motivating and makes "Stronger" such a powerful book is the fact that despite this unfortunate tragedy, Jeff did not stop pursuing his dreams and living his life to the fullest. Jeff made a decision to embrace his new circumstances with an unbelievable degree of optimism, hopefulness and confidence for which grace and diligence is the foundation. Jeff made it clear that he would walk and talk again. He was determined.

I recommend "Stronger" to everyone that is faced with overwhelming challenges in their life. Jeff provides descriptive details of how he could have let the anger, chaos, and horror of the bombing, federal investigation, national security concerns, and the intense rehabilitation that he endured sent him to a place of self-pity. Instead, Jeff faced all his challenges with grace, courage, and passion. "Stronger" is a compelling story that is emotionally charged. If you do not know what bravery is, Jeff Bauman's book will define the full mean of the word through his life experience.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SPRING FLING

April 6, 2017  
(For children with disabilities)  
UF Developmental Pediatric Center  
Jacksonville, FL 32217  
6271 St. Augustine Rd, Suite 1  
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
For information call: (904)633-0801

### CONNECTING THE DOTS

April 13, 2017  
Schultz Center  
4109 Boulevard Center Drive  
Jacksonville, FL 32207  
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Reserve your tickets:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com>

### Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp Baseball

April 30, 2017  
Jacksonville Baseball Grounds  
To register contact Disabled Services  
Phone: 904-630-4940  
TTY: 904-630-4933  
First pitch 3:05 p.m.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days' notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted, but may not be possible to fulfill. Please contact Disabled Services at; VM 630-4940, TTY 630-4933, or email your request to [klmcdan@coj.net](mailto:klmcdan@coj.net).