



**S**→**A**  
Powerful  
Friends  
Believe  
Togetherness  
Inspires  
Dreams

# Miracle

## Special Points of Interest:

- Ambassadors for Respect
- Self-Advocacy Highlights
- Self-Advocates United Taco Feed
- Self-Advocates United Celebrating 5 Year Anniversary
- Shooting Stars Give Back to Their Community

## Stars Shooting Into Summer

The Ambassadors for Respect reached 997 4th grade students and teachers in 38 classrooms this year. We presented to 12 local schools: **Cowan** and **Richardson** in North St. Paul; **Harambee**, **Brimhall**, and **Parkview** in Roseville, **Willow Lane**, **Matoska International**, **Otter Lake**, and **Birch Lake** in White Bear Lake; **Little Canada Elementary**; **Vadnais Heights Elementary**; and **St. John the Baptist** in New Brighton. WHEW!

For **Katie C.**, **John C.**, **Abby H.**, **Karen L.**, **Alysha W.**, **Jessica W.**, **Tim M.**, and **Roberta B.**, it was a wonderful opportunity to be experts and share their experiences. A grant from the MN Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities funds this program. The grant covers wages and training for self-advocates, items handed out to students (buttons and bracelets), and transportation to each presentation.

We are looking forward to reaching more students with our important message next year.



## Self-Advocacy Highlights

- At the SA United meeting and the Advocacy Committee meeting. **Marcus F.** presented his inspirational life story of growing up in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. He has created a PowerPoint presentation and will be conducting presentations at the self-advocacy at Merrick and other self-advocacy groups during Black History month and on Martin Luther King Day.
- Self-Advocates have been applying for the Class 34 Partners in Policymaking course. They should be hearing soon of those lucky to be selected. Over the past ten years, there have been 11 self-advocates from the Shooting Stars and four from the Self-Advocates United. All have become leaders in their own right!
- **David D.** and others in Minnesota were filmed by a King Television crew from Seattle to provide insight on the difference between institutional living and community living. The series has prompted a lawsuit, forcing the state to move forward and close the institutions in the state of Washington. **David** continues to be a change maker.
- **Ben**, **Loren**, and **Gary** from the Frankettes self-advocacy group have goals to create oral histories of their experiences in state hospitals. They are excited about sharing their experiences with other self-advocates.

## Self-Advocacy Meetings and Events



**Mark Your Calendar!**  
**Self-Advocates United Taco Feed**  
**Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>**  
**2 - 5 p.m.**  
**\$10.00 per person**

Tickets will be available at the door  
 or in advance from members of  
 Self-Advocacy United

**Doghouse Bar and Grill**  
 2029 Woodlynn Avenue  
 Maplewood

The **Shooting Stars Self-Advocacy** groups meet during the following times:

- Tuesday afternoon 1:15 - 2:10 p.m. at 3210 Labore
- Wednesday morning 8:30 —9:30 a.m. at 3210 Labore
- Thursday morning 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. at 3210 Labore

**Frankettes: Self-Advocacy** group meets once per month at 9:45—11:00 a.m. at the NSP Adult Day Services program—check monthly calendar.

Any questions, please contact Mary R @  
 651-789-6200.

The **Self-Advocates United** meet every-other Thursday afternoon at J. Arthur's Coffee Shop at 2441 Rice Street in Roseville, from 4:00—5:30 p.m. Any questions, please contact Katie @ 651-815-2262.

**Everyone is welcome to join!**

## Self-Advocates United Celebrate 5th Anniversary!

Can you believe the **United Self-Advocacy** group is turning five years old this August? So we thought it would be fun to ask **Katie M.**, the self-advocate who started the group about the history. Katie had a goal as a peer mentor to create an external group to continue to make a difference for other self-advocates. There were many self-advocates from Merrick that could not attend the Shooting Stars group meetings because they were working at the times the meetings were held. Katie researched locations and thought the J. Arthurs coffee shop would be great location for all the advocates since it was centrally located and on a bus line. The first meeting was held on August 18, 2011. In 2013, the group decided for a name change from Shooting Stars to Advocate Aces. Three years later, a former President of the group wanted to take the name back since she had it trade marked. In the fall of 2015, the group decided on the name of Self-Advocates United. Katie sees big changes with the direction of the Self-Advocates United—possibly combining meetings and events with the Believers of Self-Advocacy group from Anoka more involvement with legislative issues, fundraising, and leadership trainings. Katie hopes when each self-advocate leaves the meeting, they have gained more confidence, leadership skills, and friendships! They should be very proud of their achievements. She can't wait to see what the Self Advocates Untied group by stating, "Yes, We can make a difference!!!!!!!"

## Self-Advocacy and Giving Back!!!

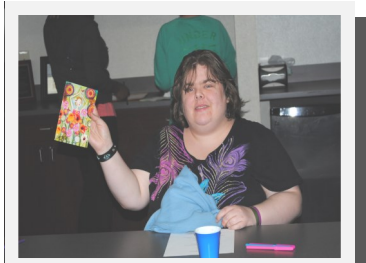
It feels great giving back to the community! The Shooting Stars love giving back to their community because it makes them feel “good,” and “happy!” In the past we have raised money for the Red Cross, food and toy drives, and volunteered at events supporting persons with disabilities.

This year the group has been busy, supporting several organizations and military personnel. In May, they created homemade greeting cards for Cerenity Senior Care residents in White Bear Lake. During the same month, self-advocates wrote letters for a Merrick staff person’s husband serving overseas to be shared with personnel at his military base.

In June, the Shooting Stars wanted to help out the Vadnais Heights Lions’ club food drive by sponsoring a food drive at Merrick. The self-advocates made posters to get things rolling. The self-advocates and staff brought in non-perishable food items so kids would get lunches during the school break, and still be able to get some food.

It feels very good to be helping out others in need!

Future plans may include taking up a collection of treats, blankets and toys for a local Animal Humane Society.



## Mary's Corner



Wow! I can’t believe it has been a whole year (July 23, 2015) since I started my job as the peer mentor! In this role I will continue to work as a peer mentor for the Shooting Stars, Self-Advocates United, and Frankettes.

In the coming year, I will be doing follow-up Person-Centered Planning training for staff to meet the Positive Support training requirements and refresher information. I have also been hired by Star Services to conduct online training on the topic of person-centered planning. In June, I gave a presentation to County Case Managers at a conference held in Virginia, MN where I talked about how self-advocacy changed my life and the importance of person-centered planning. The Honorable Judge Frank made a

presentation after me; he was overwhelmed by the audience’s applause for me and the other self-advocate presenter.

In the next three months, I will be offering training for self-advocates about the Olmstead Plan, which will be featured in the next newsletter.

Additionally, I will be coordinating voter education and registration drives before the upcoming elections. I will be setting up times with a “voter outreach” person from the Secretary of State’s office to visit with self-advocates at the group meetings. It is important for everyone to understand their voter rights and practice using the voting machines. Like every election, every vote counts!



Shooting Stars of Merrick, Inc.  
3210 Labore Road  
Vadnais Heights, MN 55110

**"Miracle" is a newsletter written by self-advocates to share their good news with everyone. It is published four times a year.**

Visit the **Shooting Stars'** and  
**Self-Advocates United's**  
Facebook pages.

If you are interested in writing an article for the self-advocates' newsletter "Miracle" please send the article to my email address.  
(mymomrocksbear1972@gmail.com)

The deadline for the fall issue  
is October 15th.  
Take a chance to  
show who you are!!!

## *Stars of the Season:*

### **Dan G.**



Nominated by:  
Tina M.

**Reasons for nomination:**  
Dan is a great guy who has a big heart and works hard!

**Q. What are you thankful for?**

A. That I have a job and good family that helps me.

**Q. What does self-advocacy mean to you?**

A. It means that I get to help people and have more independence.

**Q. What are your favorite things you like to do outside of work?**

A. I like to watch T.V. and movies, play games, and walk in the rain.



### **Jessica P.**



Nominated by:  
Brian J.

**Reasons for nomination:**  
Jessica is friendly and helpful, and she makes people happy. She plays an important role with the self-advocacy group.

**Q. What are you thankful for?**

A. I am thankful for family and friends that get me through the day.

**Q. What does self-advocacy mean to you?**

It helps me know that people are there for me and help me, and to get to speak up for myself and others.

**Q. What are your favorite things you like to do outside of work?**

A. Working out on my exercise ball, go swimming, and camping up North with family.

