



## February 2021 Newsletter

**Happy New Year to all of our members!**

**DSAHV is actively seeking an accountant to help with bookkeeping and grant reporting.**

If you are interested in joining our team and learning more about the responsibilities of our Board please email [info@dsahv.org](mailto:info@dsahv.org). Meetings occur on the second Monday of the month and are currently being held remotely from 6:30-8:30pm.

### Meet the 2021 DSAHV Board of Directors

Maha Anand Golden - President

Bonnie Ann Dombroski – Vice President

Tammy Windheim - Treasurer

Amy Jett - Secretary

Stephanie Labodin

John Aagaard

Laura Aagaard

Christa Wicklund - Self Advocate

Jessica Doering – Self Advocate

Jason Gehlert – Program Coordinator

Ashley Quitoni – Membership Coordinator

Tammy Gehlert- Educational Coach



## NDSS Providing Important Information



### **National Down Syndrome Society Announces New Board of Directors Leadership and Members**

**New York, NY (Sept. 28, 2020)** – The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome, is pleased to introduce their newly elected board chairman, executive committee and board members.

At the 2020 NDSS Annual Meeting on September 24, Charles E. Symington Jr. was elected as the new chairman of the NDSS Board of Directors, succeeding F. Gordon Spoor who has served in the role since 2017. Charles is senior vice president for external, industry and government affairs at the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America (IIABA). He has served on the NDSS board since 2014 and on the executive committee as vice-chair since 2017. Charles resides in Alexandria, Virginia with his wife Cathy and their three children. He is the proud father of a six-year-old son with Down syndrome.

“NDSS makes such an impact in the lives of people with Down syndrome and their families, and I am honored to assume the role of chairman,” Symington stated. “I welcome the opportunity to serve alongside a committed executive committee and board to continue the great work NDSS does for the community.”

Charles will lead a strong executive committee, including Tiffany Barfield as vice-chair, Heather Lavallee as secretary and Carlo Frappolli as treasurer. The newest member of the committee, Heather Lavallee, is president of tax-exempt markets for Voya Financial and has served on the NDSS board since 2017.

“I’m excited about the future of NDSS under the leadership of this group,” said Kandi Pickard, president & CEO. “These men and women have shown tremendous dedication to NDSS and to the community we serve.”

Two new board members were also elected at the September 24 meeting. The new directors include Thomas J. Santos and C. Mitch Taylor.

“We look forward to the contributions our new board members will make to NDSS in the years to come,” stated Pickard. “Both Tom and Mitch have strong backgrounds in policy and advocacy, which will strengthen NDSS’ critical work in that area. Their active support of our programs and community events in the past speaks to their strong commitment to the NDSS mission.”

Thomas J. Santos and his wife Lauren are the parents of two. Their son Will has Down syndrome. Tom is currently a member of the NDSS Public Policy Advisory Committee and has also supported NDSS by participating in the NDSS golf tournament in Washington, DC. He is an assistant vice president at Zurich North America.

Mitch Taylor is director, public policy at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) where he draws on more than 12 years of experience in government affairs and public administration to advocate and facilitate positive change. Mitch collaborates with NDSS on the working group of the CEO Commission for Disability Employment, providing guidance and strategy to the Commission, particularly in the area of policy.



# Covid-19 Information

## COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

NDSC has been advocating for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), their caregivers, and support personnel to be given priority in vaccine allocation and ensure that vaccine allocation is done in an equitable, accessible way. According to a recent [Science Magazine report](#), people with Down syndrome are ten times more likely to die from complications from COVID-19, and people with IDD have been [disproportionately impacted](#) in many other ways.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued [guidelines](#) for distributing the vaccine and have recently included Down syndrome in its [list of underlying medical conditions](#) that pose an increased risk of COVID-19. Each state, though, is responsible for developing individual plans. A compilation of all state plans can be found on the [Council of State Governments website](#). Many state plans are still being finalized, so we advise you to reach out to your Governor's office and [state Department of Health](#) to urge them to give people with Down syndrome and IDD priority in vaccine distribution. Advocacy efforts by Down syndrome groups across the country have been proving successful, and states such as Connecticut and Missouri have recently placed people with Down syndrome into a higher priority phase for vaccine allocation as a result of these efforts. We encourage you to reach out to your state public health officials to share information about the impact of COVID-19 on people with Down syndrome and the need for this population to receive priority in vaccinations.

President-elect Biden has laid out his plan to confront the challenge of vaccination distribution. His plan will require the full support of the federal government, local communities, and society as a whole, is detailed in a [FACT SHEET: President-Elect Biden Outlines COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#).

Please use the following links for more information:

<https://www.ndss.org/ndss-covid-19-down-syndrome-resource/>

<https://www.ndss.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-Treatment-Statement.pdf>

[https://www.aaid.org/docs/default-source/publication/state-of-the-science-on-covid-19-and-people-with-idd---dec-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=25893421\\_0&blm\\_aid=2235323](https://www.aaid.org/docs/default-source/publication/state-of-the-science-on-covid-19-and-people-with-idd---dec-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=25893421_0&blm_aid=2235323)

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?blm\\_aid=2235323](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?blm_aid=2235323)

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/15/fact-sheet-president-elect-biden-outlines-covid-19-vaccination-plan/>



## Down Syndrome Association of the Hudson Valley

Invites everyone to wear your  
Brightest Colored, Mismatched, Silliest or as Many Socks as you can fit in your shoes on  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021

### World Down Syndrome Day

Please help us celebrate and bring awareness to the value, acceptance, and inclusion of people born with Down syndrome on 3/21. This day symbolizes the 3<sup>rd</sup> copy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Chromosome people born with Down syndrome have.

It's easy to do, so whether you are at home, school, daycare, a university, work, play, travel, vacation or anywhere, join in! We would love to see pictures! Please email them to Ashley at [AQuitoni@dsahv.org](mailto:AQuitoni@dsahv.org), so we can share them on social media!

Down Syndrome  
Association  
Hudson Valley





# Christa's Corner

## My Holiday Season 2020

**By: Christa Wicklund**

I helped my Mom decorate the whole house. That took three whole days! It looked really pretty!

Our holidays felt different this year because there were only five of us here, but it was still fun. I liked having my sisters, Abbey and Cori at home. I even went shopping with my sister, Abbey. We had a girls day.

I helped my stepfather to make a candy cane chocolate dessert for my family. It was really yummy! We watched the "Sound of Music," and other Christmas movies. For New Years Eve my stepfather and I made our own ball to drop. It was funny, and we said, "bye-bye coronavirus!" I wish everyone a Happy New Year 2021!



2021 Membership Form (January-December)  
 Down Syndrome Association- Hudson Valley  
 www.dsahv.org



Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: H- \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_ C- \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ School District: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Family Member with Different Ability: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you receive services from OPWDD? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have a Tab Number? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name and Ages of Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Survey for Family Support Services (FSS)**  
 Please rate on a Scale from 1 to 5, using 5 as the best

DSAHV has been helpful and informative to me, as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5
DSAHV's newsletter, emails, Facebook page and website are informative.	1	2	3	4	5
DSAHV provides opportunities for social networking with other families.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel having contact with other parents is important.	1	2	3	4	5
DSAHV offers useful information by hosting informative workshops.	1	2	3	4	5
Do you use DSAHV as your educational advocate/coach?				YES	NO

I prefer to: \_\_\_ Go "GREEN" and receive all correspondence by email.  
 \_\_\_ No thank you, please use the postal service.

At events, DSAHV may take pictures to add to our website, Facebook page, brochures or flyers:  
 \_\_\_ Yes, I give permission to use my family member's photos.  
 \_\_\_ No thank you, we are camera shy.

\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer and I'd like more information on how I can lend my talents.

Occasionally, DSAHV will hold seminars where we bring in guest speakers to teach us about various topics of interest. From the following list, please prioritize THREE topics you are most interested in:

- \_\_\_ Behavioral Support      \_\_\_ Issues for Older Adults      \_\_\_ Sibling Support      \_\_\_ Employment  
 \_\_\_ Inclusive Education      \_\_\_ Speech Therapy      \_\_\_ Special Education Law and IEP's  
 \_\_\_ After High School      \_\_\_ Trusts, SSI, Medicaid      \_\_\_ Group Homes and Residential Issues  
 \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What can DSAHV do to help improve our services for you and your family? \_\_\_\_\_

Membership for the year is \$12-. Please make checks payable to DSAHV and they can be mailed to:  
 DSAHV, PO Box 161, Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

## Upcoming Events

Due to Covid-19 events are subject to change and possible cancellation. We hope everyone is safe and healthy. Looking forward to the time when we are all able to meet again!

Keep checking our website at [www.dsahv.org](http://www.dsahv.org) for updated information on Covid-19, future events, seminars and resources.

**World Down syndrome Day**  
March 21, 2021

**Annual Family BBQ and Baseball Game**  
Date to be Determined  
Renegades Stadium

**2021 Buddy Walk**  
Date to be Determined  
11am – 3pm  
Renegades Stadium



PO Box 161  
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

**Like us on Facebook:**  
"Down Syndrome Association Hudson Valley"

**Follow us on Twitter:**  
"DSAHV321"