

Announcing our 2017 Conference Speakers

People First of Missouri is excited to share news about our speakers for the upcoming conference in April.

Our keynote speaker will be Julie Petty. Julie has been a leader in the self-advocacy movement in Arkansas and nationally for many years. She graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in Journalism, started Arkansas People First, served on boards and advisory councils related to disability policy, and co-developed a training curriculum for self-advocates. Julie was President of SABE from 2006-2008.

Featured speaker will be Chuck Graham, Associate Director of the Great Plains ADA Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He served eight years in the Missouri House of Representatives and four years in the Missouri Senate. Chuck currently serves as Chair of the Columbia Disabilities

Commission, is on the Board of the Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation, Treasurer of Global First Responders, and on the National Advisory Board on Improving Health Care Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities for Anthem, Inc.

The endnote will be given by Chris Worth, a self-advocate community organizer who was born with cerebral palsy and speaks on issues of sexuality. He works at Paraquad in St. Louis as an Organizing Team Manager. Chris has also worked with the Enable Project and as a tutor for other students through the H.E.L.P. Program at Marshall University where he earned a Master's Degree.

Make plans now to hear these and other great speakers in breakout sessions at the PFMO Conference, April 21-23, 2017 at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Sunrise Beach, Missouri! •

Left to right: Conference Speakers Julie Petty, Chuck Graham, and Christopher Worth



People First of Missouri
is Strong and Active

People First members
and chapters are busy learning,
giving, and growing.
We make a positive difference in
our communities.

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Message From the President

by Cathy Enfield, President

Self-Advocates, Advocates, and Friends of People First of Missouri,

As we begin a new year, we face many unknowns and uncertainties. We have new administrations in place at both the Federal level and here in Missouri that include many folks who have never served before. This makes many of us uneasy as we have no idea what actions they may take that will have a direct or indirect effect on our lives as citizens with disabilities.

We need to remember and be thankful that we live in a country where people's voices can be heard as we just experienced in the recent elections. We also need to be aware that we have voices too, and like no time I can remember, it is important that we make our voices heard now. If something is being contemplated that will make our lives more difficult, we must make our voices heard in protest - and not just once, but over and over again. Likewise, if

something is being recommended that will be helpful to us, we must make our voices heard to show both our support and our appreciation.

This is not the time to be afraid and it is certainly not the time to be silent. We will in all likelihood be fighting for our lives on some fronts. We must remember that no battle is too large or too small. We must speak out and we must stand together.

So as we celebrate and begin the New Year, my wishes for each of you are strength, solidarity and determination.

Happy New Year.

God bless you all, and God bless the United States of America.

THANK YOU,

Cathy



People First of Missouri

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Learning How to Reach Young Adults

PFMO chose a leadership goal for the coming year in its work on the Heartland Self-advocacy Resource Network (HSRN): to find new ways to reach out to youth in Missouri.

PFMO wants to invite young people who have never heard about self-advocacy to join us. But recruiting young people has been challenging. We want to know why and also what we can do to become an important part of their lives. So the PFMO Steering Committee is working on a new plan to help us discover and meet the needs and wants of the next generation of self-advocates.

To find out the answers to these questions, we need to be good listeners. We also need to find good partners to help us in our efforts. A sub-committee is in charge of making this happen.

The Youth Engagement sub-committee is choosing six chapters to have listening session meetings for youth with and without disabilities in their own towns. Each chapter will have a member who is the leader. This person will team up with a local transition coordinator to invite youth to a meeting where they will talk and we will listen, not the other way around.

Did you know?

Here are some interesting things to learn about People First of Missouri:

- Members of People First chapters are active on boards or committees of at least 25 other groups in our state like Missouri Arc, Missouri Protection and Advocacy, Victimization Task Force, Neighborhood Associations, Lions Club, Special Olympics, Jaycees, Neighborhood Advisory Council, Faith Voices Board of Directors, and many more.
- Our PFMO president, Cathy Enfield, serves as Vice President of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE), a national self-advocacy organization.
- At this time, PFMO has 24 active chapters and two new groups interested in forming.
- PFMO has mailed over 1,100 newsletters over the past year.
- In a recent survey, over 85 percent of PFMO Steering Committee members who participated said they or someone in their chapter had advocated for themselves at least once in the prior three months. Over 65 percent said they or someone in their chapter advocated to help another person during that time. And 59 percent said they had worked to change something about the place where they work, live or play. People First members are making a difference!

Planning is still going on, but ideas for questions we would like to ask include:

- What makes you excited about the future?
- What makes you mad?
- What makes you afraid?
- How do you and others your age communicate and make plans with friends?
- What groups outside of school are you involved with? (for example, 4-H, faith-based, etc.)
- Would you like a friend or mentor? (Peer support)

The committee will be connecting with Missouri 4-H for resources and support. It will also be coming up with new ideas for making the listening sessions fun. Some ideas discussed so far are using social media, videos, parties, youth presenters, and "selfie props" for pictures at the listening session events.

If you have ideas to share, please talk with your chapter's Steering Committee members and Advisor. •

SAVE THE DATE!

Spring into Action

People First
of Missouri
Conference 2017

When: April 21-23, 2017

Where: Tan-Tar-A Resort • Osage Beach, Missouri

People First of Missouri hosts a statewide self-advocacy conference every other year. This coming year, our theme is “Spring into Action.” Please plan to join us for fun, learning, seeing old friends, and meeting new ones.

Mark your calendar today!

Needed: Sponsors, Exhibitors and Advertisers

People First of Missouri needs you to help make this year’s conference successful. We’re looking for organizations, businesses and individuals who will support PFMO by becoming sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers. This helps keep registration costs affordable for self-advocates who want to attend and provides a limited number of scholarships.

Here’s how you can help: Talk to businesses and people in your community about the conference and ask if they would be interested in supporting the people in your chapter and People First of Missouri. If they say “yes” or “maybe,” ask them to visit our website where they will find information about sponsoring, exhibiting, and advertising at:

MissouriPeopleFirst.org

PFMO Chapter Updates

Boone County

People First of Boone County had a busy but awesome Fall! October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month and National Bullying Prevention Month and we recognized it in many ways. Here are some of the highlights:

- We held our first annual Walk & Roll-a-Thon. It was a lovely day for a get together and walk on an accessible pathway around the lake at Bethel Park in Columbia.
- We cosponsored a disability issues candidates’ forum with other organizations in Columbia. Local candidates for state representative and senate seats were there to answer questions and chat with us afterward.
- We asked Mayor Treece of Columbia to issue a proclamation establishing October as Disability Employment Awareness month in the City of Columbia. He did, and Ward 6 Council member Betsy Peters read it at our October chapter meeting.
- Some of us attended the employment summit organized by the Missouri Arc. Jason and Jeff had the opportunity to meet and chat with Victoria Thomas from the U.S. Department of Justice. Another of our members, Jodie, spoke at the summit about her experience of transitioning from a sheltered workshop to a job in the community. A group called the Columbia Employment Consortium recognized three local businesses for their inclusive hiring practices. People First of Boone County hand delivered plaques on behalf of the Consortium.
- We marched in the Mizzou Homecoming Parade wearing our “Unity in Diversity” t-shirts, carrying our banner, and handing out candy and brochures with information about People First.

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PFMO Chapter Updates, continued

Boone County, continued

In November we had a holiday feast and elected officers. People First of Boone County officers are Jeff Johnson, President; Jason Mize, Vice President; Katie Kinder, Secretary; Donald Zawadzki, Co-Secretary; Barb Hecke, Treasurer; and Arnold Larson, Sergeant at Arms.

In December, we cosponsored a dance with Columbia Parks and Recreation instead of having a regular meeting. Happy New Year all!

Independence

This fall we worked primarily on understanding our rights and responsibilities for voting. We discussed the issues and candidates and made sure each of us could get to the polls to vote, which we did.

In October, we enjoyed a small Halloween party, and later we held our annual Christmas celebration.

The Independence Chapter wants to wish all of People First and our many friends a very Happy New Year.

Photo below: Newly elected officers of People First of Pike County.



People First of Missouri

Pike County

Pike County has new officers! Jermaine Davis, Vice President; Tim Thompson, Sergeant at Arms; Brandon Foiles, Secretary; Eddie Eastin, Treasurer; Jessica Duke, Statewide Steering Committee Member; and Kristina Spears, President and Statewide Steering Committee Member. We held a Christmas party and election on December 7th. Everyone is very excited about the new officers and looking forward to the upcoming year! (see photo below left)

Randolph County

Randolph County People First recently held elections and welcomed a new President, Brian Roselius, and a new Secretary, Brittany Lancaster. Randolph County People First held a fundraiser in conjunction with Pizza Hut that was moderately successful. The chapter is making plans to hold a painting class fundraiser around Valentine's Day at Moberly's "Stroke of Magic" that we anticipate will go well.

Congratulations again to Brian and Brittany on their new positions. The officer installation ceremony was held during the December meeting.

St. Charles

The St. Charles chapter is teaming up with the Developmental Disabilities Council again for the annual campaign. Sarah Miley is participating in all the conference calls with this committee.

Some of our members attended the TASH National conference in St. Louis, at Union Station. We met a lot of new people, saw some familiar faces, and learned a ton.

Our chapter has gained 5 new members and we are now currently at 60 members.

PFMO Chapter Updates, continued



Pictured above: The St. Joseph chapter celebrated Christmas with games, food and donated gifts for two people.

We will be spending most of January and February gearing up for some spring sessions at our local libraries to speak on inclusion and disability awareness. We will also be setting up our life skills goals, guest speakers, and working towards the People First conference this spring.

St. Joseph

Christmas came a little early for People First of St. Joseph. The presents at the end of the table in the pictures above were for John and Steve, two people the chapter adopted for Christmas.

Christmas Bingo was a hit with everyone. We had soup and many desserts that members brought in for supper.

We will be electing officers at the next meeting. Everyone is looking for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Wishing the same for every one of you from People First of St. Joseph. •

A SPECIAL GREETING for 2017

As we look forward to a new year, I want to send out a very special greeting on behalf of all of People First of Missouri to some very special folks who had some rough times this past year. So to Roger and Becky in Jefferson City and Phyllis and Gary in Rolla, we want to wish you all a New Year filled with hope and better times. Our thoughts and prayers and good wishes go out to you even more this Holiday Season.

Happy New Year,
Cathy Enfield

Make sure your chapter is included in the next issue!

Send an update about what your chapter has been doing by emailing:

underwooddm@umkc.edu

Articles and pictures are welcome!

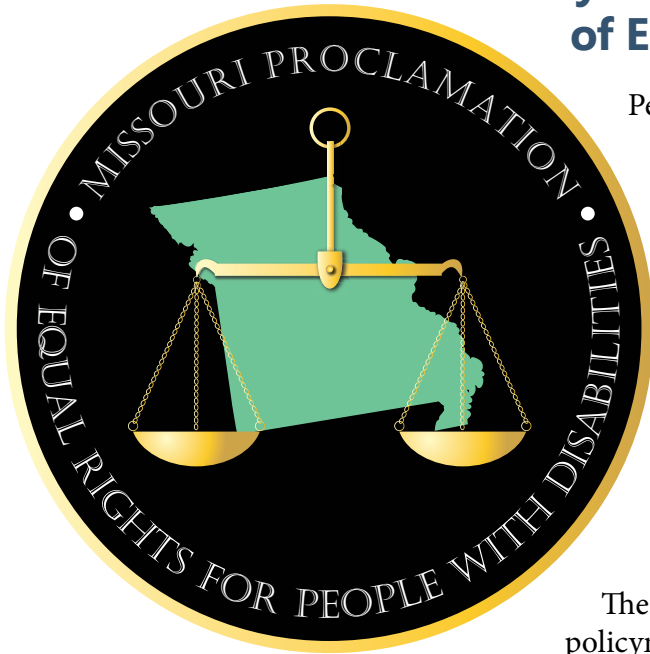
Do you support the Missouri Proclamation of Equal Rights for People with Disabilities?

People First of Missouri is a member of the task force that developed the Proclamation. The statewide group includes 16 disability-focused organizations. It met four times over more than a year and got feedback from people across the state on best wording to help the group agree on a final document.

You can read the proclamation by visiting our website at MissouriPeopleFirst.org. Then, if you agree with the Proclamation, please sign on as a supporter by clicking on the link at the end of the Proclamation or by using this address:

surveymonkey.com/r/SupportMODisabilityRightsProclamation

The group will be using the signatures from supporters later as we ask policymakers to think about equal rights before making decisions that affect people with disabilities.



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