Teens today...PFMO leaders tomorrow

What do young people today think about self-advocacy? People First of Missouri has been working to find out.

PFMO made this one of our top Heartland Self-advocacy Resource Network (HSRN) project goals after doing a needs survey two years ago. Since then, a small group has worked to reach out to Missouri youth. This past spring, members of two People First chapters and an advisor led three listening meetings. They met with 41 high school students from four different schools. A transition coordinator, teachers, and aides also came. Jason Mize, Katie Kinder, Jeff Johnson, and Mark Satterwhite of Boone County chapter and Alicia Meyer of Booneville chapter led the group.

The students talked about dreams they have for their futures. They said they see themselves having a car, a job, and living in their own places. But they didn’t seem to know what to do to actually make their dreams come true. People First members talked about what a person needs to do to get a car and their own place, like make money by getting a job. They also talked about self-advocacy.

Because of the sessions, the PFMO work group is now leading a Project

- Continued on page 3

Other helpers in this effort have included Kelly Ray, John Burris, Lora Olson, Garrett Lawrence, Johanna Wortman, and Mary Gupton.

Photo below: PFMO youth outreach team leads high school students in Project STIR
Message From the President
by Cathy Enfield, President

Hello again People First members. I hope all of you are having a great fall. Fall is a time of special beauty with the many trees we love in Missouri and a time of fun gatherings and getting ready for winter. It is also the time of year we generally hold elections and this year is no different.

People First is holding its election of Officers in November. I will be running for President along with a slate of great candidates. I hope you have all had a chance to go over the list of those running for office and discuss it in your Chapters so your Steering Committee Representatives will know your chapter’s preference when it comes time for them to cast your ballots.

November is also a time for voting at the local, state and national level and while this is not an election year there will still be some elections taking place. I encourage you to be sure to vote on everything that affects you locally.

Also, it’s not too early to start thinking about next year’s state and local elections. Some candidates are preparing to run already, so now is the time to learn about them and talk to the Representatives and Senators in your District.

Fall is a great time of year not only because of its natural beauty, but also because it reminds us of the rights and freedoms we enjoy and how important it is for us to do our part and vote to make sure we can continue to have them.

Happy Fall everyone!

Your President,
Cathy •

People First of Missouri
2017 Officers

Cathy Enfield
President
Roger Crome
Vice President
Judy Moffett
Treasurer
Katie Kinder
Secretary
Johanna Wortmann
Sergeant at Arms

Contact Information:
PO Box 30142
Kansas City, MO 64112
(800) 558-8652
missouripeoplefirst.org
missouripeoplefirst@gmail.com
facebook.com/missouripeoplefirst
twitter.com/MOpeoplefirst

Statewide Officer elections coming up November 18

These candidates are running for statewide office. Steering Committee will vote at the next meeting on November 18. The full guide is available for chapters to view online and print at Missouripeoplefirst.org/news.

President
Cathy Enfield
Alicia Meyer

Vice President
Roger Crome
Jason Mize
Marilyn Whittle

Treasurer
Abria Edwards
Patty Goss
Katie Kinder
Randy Todd

Secretary
Kelly Ray
Jonathan Spencer

Sergeant at Arms
John Burris
Jennifer Floretta
Garret Lawrence
Brian Roselius
Johanna Wortmann

SABE Rep candidates
Roger Crome
Abria Edwards
Patty Goss
Jason Mize
Kelly Ray
Johanna Wortmann

STIR (Steps Towards Independence and Responsibility) class for nine of the students. They will meet after school eight times to talk about many skills the students will need to advocate for themselves and get ready for life after they graduate.

The PFMO leaders are excited about what the students are telling them and already learning.

“We really want to train youth to become the future of People First and other organizations like it,” said Alicia Meyer, outreach team member and Boonville chapter President. “We asked the students about a time they advocated for themselves. One said she works closely with her legislator to get laws passed that affect people with disabilities. We’re excited that we really can make an impact on the next generation!” •

Photo below, left to right: Lora Olson, Jason Mize, Mary Breight, and Alicia Meyer

Message From the People Newsletter
Statewide Steering Committee Updates

First, what is Steering Committee? Steering Committee is a group of self-advocate leaders from People First chapters across the state. Each chapter elects two of its members to represent it at meetings that happen four times a year. Advisors are invited too.

At the meetings, reps learn more about how to lead. They work on projects for the whole state and bring important information back to their chapters. They keep their chapter connected to People First of Missouri and other chapters. Hotel rooms and meals are provided for members while they attend these meetings. Chapters provide their own transportation.

Steering Committee last met July 22-23, 2017. At the meeting, the group talked about many things. Reps shared ideas about what was good and what could have been better about the Spring PFMO Conference. The members had many great things to say about the conference, but wanted to spend more time planning the next one that will happen in two years. The reps also liked the idea of joining with the other states we worked with in the Heartland Self-advocacy Resource Network (HSRN) to do a regional self-advocacy conference for chapters across the state. Each chapter elects two of its members to represent it at meetings that happen four times a year. Advisors are invited too.

We also held nominations to choose people to run for statewide officer positions and SABE regional representative. The voting guide is available on the PFMO website at MissouriPeopleFirst.org/news. Please look through the guide at your chapter meeting this month and talk about how you would like your rep to vote at the election on November 18.

Barriers to Employment Paper

The full Steering Committee reviewed a white paper on employment concerns for people with disabilities who live in Missouri. Reps agreed to take the paper to their chapters and get other ideas at their meetings. If your chapter hasn’t looked at this yet, please find it on our website under “News - At your Next Chapter Meeting.”

Together, you can talk about whether your chapter agrees with the paper or has other ideas to share. Then email your thoughts to Danielle at underwooddm@umkc.edu.

Transportation and Jobs Survey

The Missouri Department of Mental Health - Division of Developmental Disabilities has asked for our help. They want to know more about the problems we face with transportation and jobs. If they can learn more, they may be able to help more or better.

Your chapter can find the questions on our website in the "News" section or by clicking here. Please use the questions to talk with your chapter about the challenges members face related to jobs and transportation and email your survey to Danielle at underwooddm@umkc.edu or have your chapter representatives or Advisor bring the completed survey to Steering Committee.

PFMO Chapter Updates

Boone County

This summer we began planning for our second annual Walk & Roll-a-thon. The event was held on October 14 at Stephens Lake Park in Columbia. (see flyer, right)

In August, we partnered with Boone County Family Resources’ staff Mary Bright and Boonslick Chapter President Alicia Meyer to plan Project STIR classes for local high school students. In September, we began offering classes at the local high schools. We have been focusing on outreach to youth and feel this is a really good way to do it. We are thankful that Alicia is making the commute from Boonville with support from Sisters Supporting Living, and spending her time and energy with us and the students. We are also thankful for Mary's support and the partnership with Boone County Family Resources. (see article on page 1)

Boonslick

Boonslick People First had a very productive summer. Our members have been very active, taking part in planning fundraisers, dances, and helping with our volunteer projects. Our recent service projects include collecting items for our local YMCA Kids' Summer program and doing a school supply drive for needy families. Members also enjoyed a barbecue to celebrate all we have done. This fall, we organized a drive to deliver much-needed supplies to those affected by recent hurricanes. Also we will be hosting our annual fall formal and doing election speeches to select new chapter officers.

Independence

The Independence Chapter had a summer filled with anxiety and uncertainty just like all Self Advocates as we watched and waited, called and e-mailed to fight off the efforts of those in Congress who wanted to pass laws to decrease Medicaid and Health Care.

For the moment we seem to have won but we know the fight isn’t over yet. We were able to hold our annual End of Summer Picnic in September and enjoyed being together and being happy that we still have our benefits. Our chapter remains stable and committed to the values of People First.

Lake Area

Lake Area People First is still going. We have been having about 20 to 30 people at each meeting. In September we watched a movie that everyone enjoyed. We had a speaker come and talk to the group about using the Oats bus to attend meetings or doing other errands, and needing to plan and call ahead to set it up. In October, had a Halloween party at the end of the month and will have an election of chapter officers in November.

- Chapter updates continued on next page -
PFMO Chapter Updates, continued

Marshall
Three of our members attended the Real Voices, Real Choices conference at Tan-Tar-A in August. While we were there, we learned a lot new things and got to view the partial eclipse on August 21st. It was an exciting experience to be able to view the eclipse. We want to thank the Mental Health Foundation for providing the scholarships so our members could attend this conference and hope more of our members will be able to attend in the future.

Kelly Ray and John Burriss attended the People First of Missouri statewide Steering Committee meeting in the St. Louis area. While there, we held nominations for statewide officers. Kelly Ray was nominated for statewide Secretary and also to run to become the candidate from Missouri for SABE Representative. John Burriss was nominated to run for statewide Sergeant At Arms. We want to wish them both good luck in the November election.

We participated in the Marshall High School homecoming parade on September 22, 2017. This is a way to get our chapter out in the community, so people know we are here and see us giving back to our community.

North Kansas City
At the August meeting we discussed the trip to the Real Voices, Real Choices conference. In September, the NKC chapter had its annual picnic. Six of us met at Macken Park and enjoyed hot dogs, meatballs, chips, and potato salad.

Pike County
People First of Pike County has been busy this fall! We volunteered at our local fair in the kitchen and stuffed backpacks for the Back to School fair. We also set up a Caramel Apple Stand during Heritage Days as a fundraiser. We had a BBQ and get together in October just for fellowship and fun!

St. Charles
Our chapter attended Real Voices, Real Choices in August, along with working on letters to local businesses in our community to help improve accessibility.

In October, we will be holding nominations for all chapter officer positions, state Steering Committee representative positions, and a coalition member. We will have our election in November.

Johanna Wortmann and Jennifer Floretta were nominated to run for statewide Sergeant At Arms. We wish both of them luck!

We have made our 2018 plan for the year with our life skills topics, guest speaker list, and committees. We are hoping for a very successful and exciting year. Our chapter now has 65 active members.

Several chapters had members who attended the Real Voices, Real Choices conference at Tan-Tar-A in August, including Marshall chapter members, left to right: Kelly Ray, John Burriss, and Lari Hutson.

PFMO Chapter Updates, continued

St. Louis
People First of St. Louis has been working to fight against the funding cuts proposed by the Missouri General Assembly. We recently had a protest in downtown St. Louis to increase awareness about issues facing the disability community. Among the many members who spoke, we were pleased to have Representative Cora Faith Walker and Alderwoman Megan-Elliyah Green join us. Representative Walker spoke about the reduction in Consumer Directed Services (CDS) hours and the cutting of people with disabilities from the CDS program. Alderwoman Green spoke about the need for major city investment to improve sidewalks and build curb-cuts so that people who use mobility devices will not be forced to risk their lives in order to access their neighborhood. She also talked about our city’s need to invest in more community based employment opportunities, and the inherent inequality of sub-minimum wage. We had a turnout of 40 people for the rally and were able to have a major presence on social media to raise awareness about issues that are important to our community.

In September, we had an open house to follow-up with people from the rally and those who heard about it in order to increase our membership. Finally, we are building on our past street canvases with the Coalition for Truth in Independence. We are planning a campaign that would try to reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities in the city by investing in, as pointed out by Alderwoman Green, our pedestrian infrastructure.

Tiger Country
We are getting three or four new members and are looking forward to doing more in our chapter. We hope to do a fundraiser before winter. We are looking for a new advisor. Our chapter members did not go to the Real Voices, Real Choices conference because people did not want to get mixed up in all the traffic that was coming here for the eclipse. Good luck to our People First members running for office.

Photos above: from left, St. Louis chapter members Roschonda Bowens, Debbie Dandridge, Dahnyel Walters (also pictured in right photo), Stacy Vann, and William Gamblin work to let others know about the effect proposed Consumer Directed Services funding cuts would have on their lives and independence.
What does your chapter need now?

People First of Missouri is here to support local chapters. What can we do to help your chapter grow stronger? You can let us know what training topics are most important to your group by taking a new online PFMO survey. You can even take it using your phone. We'll use the information you give us to make new plans to improve our chapter resources. You can find the survey online at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PFMO-Training-Needs

Thanks! ✌️

How have you shown Self-Advocacy?

Our organization was created to help people with disabilities learn about self-determination and self-advocacy and then live it. And just like anything else, the more we practice, the better we get. It's important that we keep track of the stories of self-advocacy and self-determination in Missouri. Why? For one thing, we can teach others by sharing our own experiences. Also, it helps to show our supporters how far we've come and how their support is making a difference in the lives of Missouri self-advocates.

What has happened in your life in the last three months that gave you a chance to be a self-advocate? Please share your stories here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PFMO-SA-SD-Activities

✌️