



Kirstianna Guerrero
NMATeen2020@gmail.com

785-430-1088

Disabled & Proud Foundation of Kansas
PO Box 67102 Topeka, KS 66667

To all the allies and advocates of the Disability Community,

The month of July marks important history in the disability rights movement as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law July 26, 1990. Later that year the first Disability Pride Day was held in Boston. The First Disability Pride Parade was held in Chicago in 2004. July is now recognized as Disability Pride Month, a month for us to remember the history that got us to where we are now and celebrate the lives we live today.

It is my pleasure to introduce that the 1st annual Disabled and Proud Parade of Kansas will be taking place July 23 2022 in Downtown Topeka Kansas. We will circle the Capital Building and then gather on capitol lawn for a resource & activity fair, speeches and more!

The Mission for this event is to unite in celebration of the beauty and diversity of the Disability community while creating visibility, awareness, and acceptance for all people with disabilities throughout the State. To kickstart this passion I have founded a nonprofit with this same mission in mind to host the parade. (and who knows in the future what other celebratory and advocacy efforts we may be able to bring.) Introducing: The Disabled & Proud Foundation of Kansas!

What does Disability Pride mean?

Taking pride in your whole self including your disability, which means understanding your limitations while embracing and accepting who you are with love. It is essentially a specified version of self love involved in accepting and honoring the beautiful uniqueness of all people.

Disability pride emerged in response to ableism to promote human rights among negative views of disability, Sharing with the world that disabilities can be an important part of who we are- not a flaw.

What inspired this and why me?

I am a young adult born and raised in Topeka Kansas. I have had epilepsy since birth and have always been intrigued by the unique experience of living with a chronic illness. Due to complications with epilepsy in 2020 I am currently a full time wheelchair user. In 2018 I was selected as a delegate for the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum by the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy. There I learned what the Disability community was, the rich history we have, and what advocating for yourself means. Through their other programs I discovered my passions of public speaking, advocacy, and the importance of self love. Later I discovered Kansas Miss Amazing, a nonprofit that works to empower girls and women with disabilities to build self confidence and public speaking skills. Through my involvement I cultivated my passions and started to reach even more people through the platform of being a National Representative. Through My Mentors in both of these organizations, I was inspired to take the action and determination to bring this important movement to Kansas!

I am excited to lead this initiative, but an event this monumental is not about one person, it takes all of us to showcase the importance of celebrating and accepting people with disabilities. There are many ways to get involved. From Sponsors, Parade Floats, Resource & Activity Fair Presenters, and Volunteers. We need you to help us showcase and celebrate who we are! Your support not only helps us start this event, but to continue it in the years to come.

Thank you dearly for your generosity and support!

Kirstianna Guerrero

National Miss Amazing Teen 2020

President of The Disabled & Proud Foundation of Kansas