



Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy Newsletter

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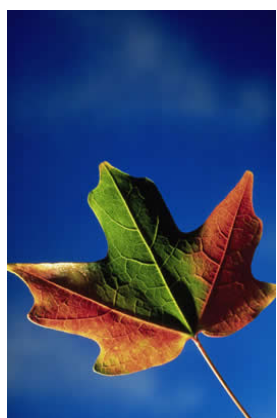
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Issue: #13

November/2008

Dear KYEA Family and Friends,



Happy fall to you! Welcome to the November issue of our KYEA E-Newsletter. The leaves are falling, the colors are turning, and KYEA is blossoming with new programs, a whole new year of KSYLF right around the corner, and lots of news and resources to pass on. Find out below how you can get involved with KYEA, and read all about other state and national opportunities available too! Also, don't miss our Spotlight On: Traveling Abroad. Do you think that because you have a disability that you can't travel to another country? Think again! It is totally possible and many young people are doing it. Check out all of this, and more, below!

KYEA NEWS

KYEA celebrates Disability Awareness Month with events

KYEA had a very busy October! In honor of Disability Employment Awareness Month, KYEA organized local community events to educate the public in Topeka and also traveled to other cities to celebrate Disability Mentoring Day.



With Disability Employment Awareness Month came a variety of events at the KYEA office. KYEA held an Open House to welcome guests to our home inside the YWCA building. Those who attended were given a tour of our offices, obtained information on KYEA programs and

Photo of the Month



TEAM. KYEA staff members pose for a group photo during the Open House held in October. (l-r) Heather Grace, Julia Fonseca, and Carrie Greenwood.

Check out these websites!

www.kyea.org

www.ncl-d-youth.info

www.gettinghired.com

<http://dmi-us.blogspot.com>

www.youthleadership.com

www.youthactionnet.org

www.groovability.org

Join Our List

Join Our Mailing List!

The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy is made possible by a grant from Kansas Rehabilitation Services and match funds from the Kansas Legislature.

other local programs, and were treated to free refreshments! Thanks to all of you who stopped by... we welcome guests to the KYEA office at any time. KYEA also conducted Disability Simulation Experiences. Those who attended were able to experience having a variety of different disabilities, from wearing a blindfold and using a cane to reading aloud a sentence that simulates a learning disability. Participants also experienced a mental health disability, physical disability, and hearing disability. The month of October concluded with a KSYLF Alumni Gathering in Topeka. Three alumni gathered at our offices to chat, get caught up, and eat pizza!



As Disability Mentoring Day was celebrated all across the US, KYEA traveled to three cities in Kansas to be a part of local events. KYEA staff presented the Disability Heritage Project to youth and adult groups in the locations of Dodge City and Garden City. We also traveled to Pittsburg and presented the DHP to a group of 90 students. View pictures and video of the day at the [SKIL WEBSITE \(www.skilonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=223&Itemid=1\)](http://www.skilonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=223&Itemid=1).

Thanks to everyone who attended our events in Topeka and to all who made our trips to local cities possible... it was a great month!



Kansas Youth Leadership Forum searching for potential youth leaders

It's that time again! KYEA is currently searching for potential youth leaders to attend our 9th annual Kansas Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (KSYLF). The 2009 KSYLF will be held June 16-20 at Washburn University in Topeka. The KSYLF is a motivational five day forum in which a group of students gather to learn about leadership development and disability pride. During the forum, delegates enjoy a week full of learning, fun, friends, and, most of all, a new sense of empowerment! Through various large sessions, delegates are able to hear from community leaders on such topics as disability history, advocacy, goal setting, leadership, resources, and much more. Students are also able to share life experiences, goals, and ideas during breakout sessions with small groups. Delegates participate in fun activities as well, such as a Day at the Capitol, Mentor Luncheon, recreation session, real life fair, and a barbecue. A talent show and dance, which are always delegate favorites, are also a part of the week!

All students who are interested in attending the KSYLF must meet the following criteria:

- reside in Kansas
- have a disability as defined with the Americans With Disabilities Act
- be in the 11th or 12th grade as of December 31st of the current year
- have demonstrated leadership potential in school and the community

Students must fill out an application that will be reviewed through a competitive selection process. About 30 - 40 delegates will be selected to attend. Applications can be obtained by emailing KYEA at carrieg@kyea.org. The application deadline for the 2009 forum is **December 15, 2008**.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM- www.kyea.org/content/view/37/56/](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/37/56/)

[EMAIL KYEA TO OBTAIN A DELEGATE APPLICATION - carrieg@kyea.org](mailto:carrieg@kyea.org)

Volunteers needed for 2009 Youth Leadership Forum

Calling all former and potentially new volunteers! KSYLF is now accepting applications for volunteers for our 2009 Youth Leadership Forum. We are searching for committed, enthusiastic people who are willing to devote a week to this great program. Do you have the skills and passion to facilitate groups and motivate youth with disabilities? Then consider serving as a volunteer at the 2009 KSYLF to be held in June.

The goal of all facilitators is to empower and support each delegate as they discover inner strengths and abilities as individuals and as members of a group. Volunteers are assigned to work with a small group throughout the week. They also interact with the large group during many activities. Volunteers must stay on campus for the duration of the week that KSYLF is taking place.

Past volunteers, KSYLF alumni, and new volunteers are encouraged to apply! Volunteer applicants must fill out our application form, as well as two background checks, and send to the KYEA office. Applications can be obtained by emailing KYEA at carrieg@kyea.org.

[EMAIL KYEA TO OBTAIN A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION](#) - carrieg@kyea.org

KYEA Job Position Available: Program Coordinator

KYEA is currently hiring for the position of Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator coordinates, implements, and manages all programs within the organization. This is a full time position of 40 hours a week. To see the full job description, click the link below.

Applicants must have a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts or Sciences degree in a related field and/or three years of coordination experience. Applicants must also have knowledge of, and a commitment to, the independent living philosophy and an ability to work with people with disabilities.

To apply for this position, please email a letter of interest and resume to juliaf@kyea.org. Questions can be directed to Julia at 785-215-6655 ext. 3. This position will close on December 15, 2008.

[VIEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR POSITION DESCRIPTION](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/160/123/) - www.kyea.org/content/view/160/123/

New program brings new opportunities for youth

Are you a youth with a disability? Are you looking for new ways to get involved with KYEA? Then this is the time to do it! KYEA recently received a grant to expand on current programs and create some new opportunities for youth involvement. We are very excited about getting started, but need to hear from youth in the state who are interested in participating. Below are the different activities that we will be working on. Think about which parts you can help us out with:

1. Expand the Disability Heritage Project presentations from schools to the community.

The original goal of the Disability Heritage Project was to bring disability history and pride into the schools. Now it is time to take it beyond the classrooms. We will begin presenting the DHP to community groups, organizations, businesses, and more, as well as groups of all ages. How can you be involved? Get the word out about these presentations! Invite KYEA to present at your workplace or a community club that you belong to. We are also in need of youth to present these workshops across the state. If you would like to present disability heritage in your local community, then we can train you to do just that!

2. Partner with Southeast Kansas Independent Living to develop peer support groups in southeast Kansas.

Do you live in southeast Kansas? Would you like to meet other youth with disabilities in your area? Then join a peer support group! KYEA will be working to develop these groups in cities where SKIL offices are located. The groups will bring together young people with disabilities to support each other and learn together. The groups will discuss various topics and will participate

in activities. If this sounds interesting, then let us know!

3. Recruit and support 20 youth to attend the 2009 Kansas Disability Caucus.

This is your chance to attend one of the largest gatherings of the disability community in Kansas! The 2009 Kansas Disability Caucus will be held in August of next year, and KYEA is providing scholarships for 20 youth to attend. The Caucus is an opportunity to meet other people with disabilities in our state, learn about various disability topics, and have your voice heard on issues relating to the future of the Kansas disability community. Let us know if you want to attend the 2009 Kansas Disability Caucus!

4. Introduce a Disability Heritage Bill during the 2009 Kansas legislative session.

Should disability history and culture be taught in local schools? Of course it should! And KYEA is taking steps to make it happen! During the 2009 legislative session, we will be advocating for Kansas to pass a Disability Heritage Week bill. This means that, for at least one week, our state would celebrate disability history, and schools would be able to educate their students about the history of the disability rights movement. Would you like to help us get this bill passed? We are currently looking for youth (or adults) who are willing to help us advocate for this Bill. If you have an interest, or if you attended KSYLF and enjoyed your experience at the Capital, then we need to hear from you!

Exciting opportunities are ahead for KYEA. If you would like to be a part of any of the above activities, please contact our office toll free at 866-577-5932 or email juliaf@kyea.org.

Justin Cosco Scholarship Award available!

Each year, KYEA selects a recipient of the Justin Cosco Scholarship Award. The award began in 2004, but was renamed in 2007 after the death of an alumni of the first Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, Justin Cosco. This award is given to an alumni who has demonstrated progress toward their goals and growth as a leader. The following are requirements to receive this award (each nominee must meet one or more of these requirements):

- Be a KSYLF Alumni from the years of 2001-2007. (required)
- Have demonstrated leadership skills and accomplishments.
- Be in the process of completing and/or have completed the KSYLF Personal Leadership Plan.
- Have used community resources to pursue leadership goals.
- Be willing to participate in post KSYLF organizations/activities.

Alumni can either nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else. Nominations are due by April 1, 2009. One winner will be chosen and notified by May 1, 2009. The winner receives many benefits including a scholarship to the 2009 Kansas Disability Caucus, a plaque, recognition at the 2009 KSYLF Mentor Luncheon, and more!

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS AWARD - www.kyea.org/content/view/152/115/](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/152/115/)

KSYLF is now on Facebook and MySpace!

Are you a KSYLF alumni or past volunteer who has a Facebook or MySpace page? Then connect with other alumni and volunteers by joining our KSYLF group pages! What better way to stay up to date on the latest KYEA happenings, reconnect with old KSYLF friends, and meet alumni from other years.

[VISIT KSYLF ON FACEBOOK -](#)

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=30051815914

[VISIT KSYLF ON MYSPACE - http://groups.myspace.com/ksylf](http://groups.myspace.com/ksylf)



Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

All KYEA board meetings are open to the public, but attendees do not have voting rights during the meeting.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Anthony Schwager- KSYLF Alumni '04

Anthony Schwager, KSYLF Alumni 2004, was recently featured in the Lawrence Journal World with a large article on his successful bee business. For the past few years, Anthony has served as co-owner of a bee business, called Anthony's Beehive, with financial assistance from the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities. Anthony's Beehive has grown over the years and is now a thriving business in rural Douglas County. His business currently has 100 beehives and sells products such as honey straws, lip balm, and lotion. His items are currently in over 250 locations nationwide. Those of us who attended KSYLF '04 remember Anthony's goal of owning a bee business. You did it Anthony!



[VIEW ANTHONY'S FULL STORY IN THE LAWRENCE JOURNAL WORLD](http://www2.ljworld.com/stories/2008/nov/08/a_sweet_devotion/anthonys_story/) -

www2.ljworld.com/stories/2008/nov/08/a_sweet_devotion/anthonys_story/



Amanda Steiner- KSYLF Alumni '02

Amanda Steiner, KSYLF Alumni 2002, was selected as Ms. Wheelchair Kansas 2008 this past March and is currently fulfilling the duties that come with this title. She has been speaking with different groups in local areas and participating in events throughout the state. Amanda has been advocating for her platform, which is "Taking Away Independence: the Trouble with Accessible Parking." She even received an award for her speech on this topic while attending the Ms. Wheelchair America competition in Maryland this past July. Amanda represented Kansas at this national event and came away with great memories and the honor of receiving the Best Platform Award. Amanda will have the title of Ms. Wheelchair Kansas until March of 2009 when the next titleholder is selected. [See related story below.]

Are you a KSYLF alumni or past volunteer who has a bit of news to share? We are always eager to hear about your accomplishments and updates! Send them to us and we will publish YOU in future issues of our e-newsletter. Give us a call or send us an email... let us know what you have been up to!

[CONTACT KYEA - CLICK HERE](http://www.kyea.org/content/view/21/46/) - www.kyea.org/content/view/21/46/

Legislative advocacy trainings to be held in Independence and Hays

The Kansas Mental Health Coalition and Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns are sponsoring legislative advocacy trainings across the state. These trainings will also provide briefings on mental health issues. The upcoming trainings will be held in Independence and Hays. Would you like to learn more about advocacy and being involved in the legislative process? Then here is your opportunity. The following topics will be covered:



- The rights of persons with disabilities.
- The basics of the legislative process.
- Hot topics for the upcoming legislative session.
- How to share your message and impact the process.

Attendees will also hear from area legislators. Mental health consumers, family members, and anyone interested in advocating for the rights and needs of mental health consumers are encouraged to attend.

The two upcoming trainings to be held are:

Independence - December 1

10:00 am - 1:30 p.m.

Four County Mental Health Center (3751 W. Main)

Hays - December 8

12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

High Plains Mental Health Center (208 E. 7th St.)

If you would like to attend a training, contact Sheli Sweeney at ssweeney@acmhck.org or 785-234-4773 at least three days in advance of each date.

Ms. Wheelchair Kansas searching for contestants

The Ms. Wheelchair Kansas Program is currently searching for women of achievement, who are wheelchair mobile, to serve as contestants in the Fifth Annual Ms. Wheelchair Kansas event. This program is not a beauty contest, but rather a competition to select the most articulate, accomplished delegate to serve as a role model and spokesperson for people with disabilities in Kansas. The chosen titleholder will be able to share their platform (or passion) with various groups across the state, as well as get involved in community events. The 2009 Ms. Wheelchair Kansas event will take place on March 13-15 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka.

Contestants must meet the following requirements:

- be a US citizen between the ages of 21 and 60
- utilize a wheelchair for 100% of daily community mobility
- be a resident of Kansas for at least the past six months
- marital status is not a consideration
- have not held a similar title in another state
- be willing to raise money and obtain sponsors for the state and national entry fees
- be willing and able to travel throughout the state - this includes having access to reliable and easily obtained transportation
- be ready and willing to successfully advocate, educate, and empower all persons through various opportunities over the course of the year

Interested participants need to submit a completed application with a written letter of recommendation, a \$150 entry fee (which can be obtained through sponsors), and a portrait to be included in the program. Applications must be postmarked by January 7, 2009. For a

[VISIT THE MS. WHEELCHAIR KANSAS WEBSITE - www.mswheelchairkansas.org](http://www.mswheelchairkansas.org)

Families Together to host conference on inclusion

Families Together will be hosting their statewide conference next month. The conference will take place on Saturday, December 13, from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Wichita. Parents, youth with disabilities, school personnel, community service providers, and anyone who has an interest in this topic are all encouraged to attend.

The theme for this year's conference will be "Under Construction: Building Inclusive Schools and Communities." Topics that will be covered include: effective advocacy, autism and early childhood, ADHD and classroom accommodations, effective communication with healthcare professionals, transition and employment, bullying, and more. The keynote speakers will be Colleen Riley, Director of Special Education Services for Kansas Department of Education, and Stephen Hinkle, self-advocate and person with autism.

To register for the conference, you must fill out a registration form. These can be found on the Families Together website (see link below). Registrations must be received by December 5. For further information and details about conference scholarships, contact the Families Together office toll free at 888-815-6364.

[REGISTER FOR THE FAMILIES TOGETHER CONFERENCE - www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)



Award: Educator of the Year in Arts and Disabilities

Do you know a wonderful person who, through the arts, has made a difference in the lives of Kansas youth with disabilities? Nominations are currently being accepted for Educator of the Year in Arts and Disabilities. Accessible Arts is searching for teachers, artists, therapists, or community members who deserve recognition for their creative and inclusive arts approach. Maybe this person is your teacher, or your child's therapist, or even someone who works at your local community center. Take the time to reward them for their efforts.

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Length and Extent of COMMITMENT to arts opportunities for Kansas youth with disabilities.
- CONTRIBUTION to integrating arts into basic education of Kansas youth with disabilities.
- DEMONSTRATION of innovative teaching strategies for working with youth who have disabilities.
- INVOLVEMENT & LEADERSHIP in the community working directly with Kansas youth with disabilities.
- ADVOCACY and program development efforts

This award will be presented on March 11, 2009 in Kansas City, KS. The deadline for nominations is **December 31, 2008**. For further information, contact Accessible Arts at 913-281-1133.

[VIEW AND PRINT NOMINATION FORM - www.accessiblearts.org/Nominations%20Frm.htm](http://www.accessiblearts.org/Nominations%20Frm.htm)

Union Station exhibit demonstrates visual disabilities

Union Station Kansas City is currently hosting Dialog in the Dark, a unique traveling exhibit that demonstrates living with a visual disability. Dialog in the Dark is a groundbreaking new Exhibition where guides who are blind or visually-impaired groups on a life-changing journey.

The Exhibition encourages teamwork, communication, trust, and understanding. Dialog in the Dark is not an ordinary exhibit - it's an experience that awakens senses, challenges prejudices, and deepens a sense of self-awareness as participants are led through a series of fully-darkened galleries that replicate everyday environments.

This exhibit will run through Sunday, March 29, 2009. It is located at the caliber of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Bodies Revealed in the Bank of America Grand Gallery. Tickets are limited. Advance reservations are strongly encouraged, as tickets must be reserved for specific dates and times.

[VIEW MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DIALOG IN THE DARK](http://www.dialog.unionstation.org) - www.dialog.unionstation.org
[WATCH A PREVIEW VIDEO](#)

Kansas Wheelhawks to host local tournament

The Kansas Wheelhawks will be hosting a wheelchair basketball tournament on January 10-11, 2009 in Lawrence. The tournament will be held at Holcom Recreation Center (2700 W. 27th St). Food and drinks will be served. Admittance is free and the public is encouraged to come by and watch the games. This is not just your average basketball game... wheelchair basketball tournaments consist of serious, competitive play. Come on out and see for yourself!

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WHEELHAWKS AND OTHER ACCESSIBLE SPORTS](http://www.kansasaccessiblesports.com) - www.kansasaccessiblesports.com
[LEARN MORE ABOUT WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL](http://www.nwba.org) - www.nwba.org

Free dental clinic to be held in February

The Kansas Mission of Mercy will be holding a free dental clinic on February 20-21, 2009 in Manhattan. The clinic will be held at the United States National Guard Armory, which is located just east of Manhattan on U.S. Highway 24. The clinic will serve children and adults. Services will include fillings, cleanings, and extractions. This is a FREE clinic. There are no eligibility or income requirements. Doors will open at 5:00 pm and attendees will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis.

NATIONAL NEWS

Be a part of the 2009 National ADAPT Youth Summit in Chicago

The dates for the 2009 National ADAPT Youth Summit have been announced. The Youth Summit will be held on April 26-30, 2009 in Chicago, IL. The week will be focused on "Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Supreme Court's Olmstead Decision." Young people with disabilities, who are between the ages of 18 and 30, are encouraged to apply. Participants will experience the following:

- Meet disability rights activists of all ages.
- Learn more about ADAPT and its issues.
- Learn how ADAPT organizes campaigns.
- Practice nonviolent direct action to create change on issues that matter to YOU and your community.



What is ADAPT? It is a group that organizes the disability community and uses civil disobedience and similar non-violent direct action tactics to achieve its goals. ADAPT focuses on promoting services in the community instead of putting people with disabilities in institutions and nursing homes.

ADAPT is currently accepting applications from youth who are interested in attending the 2009 Youth Summit.

Internship available for college students with disabilities

Are you searching for an internship this summer? The Emerging Leaders Summer Internship Program is currently accepting applications. Emerging Leaders is a highly competitive program that places college students with disabilities in fulfilling summer internships and provides them with leadership development opportunities. Emerging Leaders partners with businesses to help them find outstanding young talent, while also considering diversity and inclusion in their hiring practices. Student applicants are matched with businesses through a careful screening process that helps ensure that the internship placement is a good fit for all involved. Internships are located in several geographic locations, with a wide range of companies.

To be considered for an internship, a student must be an enrolled undergraduate or graduate student with a disability, who has completed at least 60 credits, and is maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA. The deadline to apply for an internship is December 31, 2008.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EMERGING LEADERS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM - www.emerging-leaders.com](http://www.emerging-leaders.com)

New webinar series shares transportation options



Transportation is a large issue for many people with disabilities. A series of webinars and audio conferences are now available to provide information on this very topic. The goal of "People on the Move: Using All Transportation Options" is to increase accessible transportation in areas across the United States. These trainings are open to

individuals and advocates who use public transportation, human service providers, transportation providers, and school personnel. The trainings are free and participants receive support materials and resources on a variety of topics related to increasing accessible transportation options.

Various trainings will be held and you may choose the topic that interests you the most. Available topics include sensitivity training, trip planning, paratransit eligibility, transportation options, and more. Remember, registration is required. For more information, call Easter Seals Project ACTION toll-free at 800-659-6428. Visit the "People on the Move" website for a list of dates and topics (see link below).

[VIEW A LIST OF TRAININGS -](#)

http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ESPA_people_move&autologin=true

New website and online community launched to connect employers and people with disabilities

There is a new website available that has a goal of connecting people with disabilities to employers and to each other. GettingHired.com is the first employer subscription-based online job portal, career center, and social networking community for people with disabilities. The website is fully accessible. It enables the nation's 22.3 million working age people with disabilities to connect - without limitation - to peers, mentors, employers, advocacy groups and a network of national service providers who offer resources for career advancement to people with disabilities. Employers, advocacy organizations, and people with disabilities are encouraged to visit the site and sign up for free today!

If you are a person with a disability who is preparing to work and build your career, then this is the website for you. The site identifies and highlights individual skills, talents, and backgrounds. It then matches individual qualifications to specific job requirements, which leads to successfully getting a job.

Upcoming conference focuses on domestic violence against people with disabilities

Have you experienced domestic or sexual violence? Do you want to help other people with disabilities to get through these situations? In December, an important conference will be held to talk about assisting women with disabilities who have experienced domestic or sexual violence. This conference is titled "Building Bridges Across Disciplines: Developing Safe and Accessible Services for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence who have Disabilities or who are Deaf." It will be held on December 16-17, 2008 in Nashville, TN at the Nashville Convention Center and Renaissance Marriott Hotel.

This FREE two-day conference will provide participants with the resources to assist their community to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and Deaf individuals who have experienced domestic and sexual violence. Participants will discuss disability, Deaf culture, and violence against women, and how each of these affect each other. The conference will feature experts in the fields of violence against women, disability and Deaf services, as well as those who address both of these topics.

Staff and individuals from the following are encouraged to attend:

- Disability Organizations & Deaf Service Organizations
- Domestic Violence Organizations
- Sexual Assault Organizations
- Other Social Service Providers and people with an interest in this area

There is no registration fee. For more information, visit the website below or contact sharrell@vera.org or 917-478-4590.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE](http://www.accessingsafety.org/index.php/main/safety_menu/national-conference) - www.accessingsafety.org/index.php/main/safety_menu/national-conference

SCHOLARSHIP

Kansas Foster and Adoptive Children Scholarship Fund

Are you a youth in Kansas who is a foster child or who has been adopted? Are you planning to go to college? There is a scholarship available to help you do just that! The Kansas Foster and Adoptive Children Scholarship Fund was created to provide scholarships for any type of further education beyond high school. This includes college, junior college, vocational, technical, or other trade schools. Those persons who are able to apply must be a student who is, or has been, a foster child in the state of Kansas, including foster children who have been adopted.

Applications are accepted year round; however, awards of scholarships will be made on June 1 and November 1 of each year. To apply, students must fill out an application form provided by the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

[PRINT THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION](http://www.myspace.com/syvhelp) - www.myspace.com/syvhelp

GRANTS... START SOMETHING NEW!

Everyone has the ability to start something new... even young people! All programs, projects, and organizations had to start somewhere. Do you have an idea for a new project in your community? You can make it happen, and there are many grants available for young people to make a difference. Grants provide some of the money to make your idea become real. Sound good? Then check out the grants below to find one that is a match for you!

Key Change Grant: Making a Difference with Music

DoSomething.org and the GRAMMY Foundation® have teamed up to give out \$25,000 in community action grants to fund teen-led projects that use music to make a difference. This can be a project that you've already started or an idea that you've been thinking about. All projects should be around the theme of using music to make a difference in your local and/or global community.

To be eligible to apply:

- The applicant must be 19 OR UNDER.
- The applicant must be a U.S. or Canadian citizen.
- Applicants can only win one grant from Do Something in a twelve month period (excluding the Do Something Award).

To apply, interested youth must fill out an online application, which includes questions about the project, as well as the importance of the idea. Applicants must also include a budget detailing how the money will be used and a recommendation from a non-family member. The application deadline is **December 15, 2008**.

[APPLY FOR A KEY CHANGE GRANT - www.dosomething.org/grants](http://www.dosomething.org/grants)

Plum Grant: Do you want to make a change in our world?

Are you a young person, age 25 or under, who wants to see BIG change in the world? Did you recently create a project, program or organization? Do you need \$500 to further the growth and success of your program? If you answered "YES!" to all of those questions, then you are eligible to apply for a Plum Youth Grant. Plum TV and Do Something want to see you and your project reach the next level. Plum Grants are given out WEEKLY!

To be eligible to apply:

- The applicant must be 25 OR UNDER.
- The applicant must be a U.S. or Canadian citizen.
- Applicants can only win one grant from Do Something in a twelve month period (excluding BRICK Awards).

To apply, interested youth must fill out an online application. Applicants must also include a budget detailing how the money will be used and a recommendation from a non-family member. Applications are accepted on a daily basis and are given out weekly.

[APPLY FOR A PLUM GRANT - www.dosomething.org/grants](http://www.dosomething.org/grants)

Mix It Up Grant: Breaking Barriers in Schools and Communities Across the US

Have a great idea about how to bring people together and break down the walls that divide your school? The Mix It Up Grants Program offers \$500 grants to support small-scale, youth-directed

programs and projects that address social boundaries in schools or communities. If you have an idea for an activist project, then this might be the grant for you! All projects must be youth-driven (led by someone 13 or older), challenging, and creative. They must bring different groups of people together and must be a project that will last for a long time. Mix It Up Grants are given out all of the time. There is no deadline, so apply anytime.

[APPLY FOR A MIX IT UP GRANT](http://www.tolerance.org/teens/grants.jsp) - www.tolerance.org/teens/grants.jsp

SPOTLIGHT ON: TRAVELING ABROAD

Have you ever thought of traveling to another country? Where would you go, who would you see, what would your purpose be? There are so many options when it comes to traveling abroad, and people with disabilities are learning that, they too, can take part in experiencing the world outside of the United States. And so can you!



Below, we take a look at a unique organization that focuses specifically on creating opportunities for people with disabilities to travel abroad. Whether you would like to be a foreign exchange student in another country, or you would like some tips for your next vacation to Europe, this organization has it all. We also feature a young person with a disability who is currently traveling the world and sharing her story along the way.

If this sounds like something that you would like to do, then make it a goal, and work towards it. When you do, we want to hear all about it!

Mobility International USA Provides In Depth Information on Traveling Abroad

Mobility International USA (MIUSA) is working to bring people with disabilities, of all cultures, together as one community. Their goal is to empower people with disabilities around the world to achieve their human rights through international exchange and international development. MIUSA is a cross-disability organization. They focus on educating people about exchange opportunities, informing exchange organizations about the Americans with Disabilities Act, bringing people with disabilities from different countries together, and providing basic information about how to travel outside of the United States. MIUSA also has exchange programs of its own that many young people with disabilities have participated in.

[VIEW MIUSA EXCHANGE PROGRAMS](http://www.miusa.org/exchange) - www.miusa.org/exchange

MIUSA provides many resources on how to successfully travel abroad with various disabilities. [VIEW THESE RESOURCES](#) -

www.miusa.org/ncde/disabilityresources/specificdisability

MIUSA also allows for people who have traveled abroad to share their story. You can read all about their experiences and set your own plan of travel.

[READ PERSONAL TRAVEL STORIES](http://www.miusa.org/ncde/stories) - www.miusa.org/ncde/stories

Recently, this organization published videos of the great things about traveling to a different

country. The videos are free and easy to access. View some of the video topics below:

[All Abroad!](http://www.miusa.org/publications/videos/allabroad) - www.miusa.org/publications/videos/allabroad

[Building Bridges Training Video](http://www.miusa.org/publications/videos/bbvideo) - www.miusa.org/publications/videos/bbvideo

[Emerging Leaders](http://www.miusa.org/publications/videos/emergingleaders) - www.miusa.org/publications/videos/emergingleaders

[Loud, Proud, and Passionate](http://www.miusa.org/publications/videos/loudproud) - www.miusa.org/publications/videos/loudproud

[Loud, Proud, and Prosperous](http://www.miusa.org/publications/videos/proudprosperous) - www.miusa.org/publications/videos/proudprosperous

[VISIT THE MOBILITY INTERNATIONAL USA WEBSITE](http://www.miusa.org) - www.miusa.org

Follow Amber Smock as she travels across the world!

Amber Smock is just an average person. She is currently the youth leadership coordinator for Access Living in Chicago. She is also co-founder of Feminist Response in Disability Activism (FRIDA). Amber has severe hearing loss and became involved with the deaf community at the age of 20. This average girl has some big goals and is traveling the world to fulfill them! Amber is currently traveling the world to meet, learn from, and bring women with disabilities to take action on human and civil rights. Some of her stops have included Korea, Australia, New Zealand, as well as various states within the U.S. Follow Amber's travels by visiting her blog at the link below.

[VIEW AMBER SMOCK'S BLOG](http://ambertracker.blogspot.com) - <http://ambertracker.blogspot.com>

Links For Further Information

[Mobility International USA](http://www.miusa.org) - www.miusa.org

[Able Travel](http://www.able-travel.com) - www.able-travel.com

[Making Study Abroad Happen for You](http://www.ciee.org/program_resources/knowledge/disability.aspx) - www.ciee.org/program_resources/knowledge/disability.aspx

[Diversity Study Abroad](http://www.diversityabroad.com) - www.diversityabroad.com

[Epic Enabled](http://www.epic-enabled.com) (travel to South Africa) - www.epic-enabled.com

[Disability World](http://www.disabilityworld.org) - www.disabilityworld.org

[Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality](http://www.sath.org) - www.sath.org

[World Institute on Disability](http://www.wid.org) - www.wid.org

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Everyone has something important to say. Add your voice to the world!"

We hope you have enjoyed this new issue of our e-newsletter. We always welcome feedback and ideas from our friends, so please email me anytime at carrieg@kyea.org. Also, please check our website often for more updates.

Enjoy the upcoming holiday season!

Sincerely,

Carrie Greenwood
Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy