



# Soaring



## Our Biggest Fundraiser Of The Year Is Coming Up!

Join us on Friday, May 18th back at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest in Brooklyn Park for another great evening of food, fun, and inspiration. Funds raised will support critical needs for Wingspan—whether it is replacing handicap accessible vehicles in our aging fleet, installing ramps, a roll in shower, wheelchair friendly flooring, or sustaining our important programming, YOU can be our hero.

We'd like to thank the sponsors who have already committed their support. The Horberg Family is our \$5,000 Diamond level sponsor! Associated Bank & Associated Risk and Benefits Consulting are our \$3,500 Emerald sponsor. Joe Eickhoff (including a match from Dell Employee Engagement Fund) is our \$3,000 Sapphire sponsor in memory of Joe's beloved wife, Wendy. Geritom Medical is our \$2,500 Platinum sponsor. Our \$1,500 Gold level sponsors include Gala Chair Donna DeMatteo, the Hamer Family, John and Jan Thames, the Landreville Family, the Mooney Family, and In Loving Memory of Robert James. Our \$1,000 ClickBid sponsors are BMO Harris Bank and Wealth Enhancement Group. Silver sponsors at the \$600 level are Angela and Ryan O'Neill, Dale and Jeri Peterson, and the Margaret Yanez family. Our \$500 Social Hour Sponsors are Bill and Betsy Cook, and Stagetime Productions is a \$500 Entertainment sponsor. Our \$300 Bronze sponsors are Anchor Bank, Darlene and LeRoy Bergerson, Rose Sherman and John Wilson, and David and Jessica Widdifield. All sponsorship levels come with tickets. Do you know someone who would like to sponsor this wonderful event? We'll announce new sponsors regularly in our e-blasts and in our FaceBook posts.

If you or someone you know can help us out with a donation to our live and silent auctions, let us know. We welcome unique experiences, gift cards, and baskets. As always, you can make a donation to our Fund-A-Need even if you are unable to attend. Call 651.888.3112 or email [dgray@wingspanlife.org](mailto:dgray@wingspanlife.org).

For the third year in a row, the 35W bridge will be illumined in blue the night of our gala in honor of Wingspan. We especially encourage Wingspan families to attend the gala. It's a great opportunity to interact with our Board, our staff, and to meet other families served.

**Empowering Abilities. Nurturing Spirits. Caring for Life.**

## Our Guest Artists for Power of Love 2018

Our emcee, Erin Schwab, knows how to work a song--and an audience. She's built that up over a career in musical theater with the likes of Tina 'n' Tony's Wedding and the national tour of School House Rock Live! Her warm approach and ability to work a crowd can be heard at local gigs at places like Crooners Lounge & Supper Club, Honey Mpls, or on her album, Martini's & Cleavage. Most recently she performed in the Ordway's production of Jesus Christ Superstar. Erin will perform with Dr. Jay Fuchs--a prominent music educator and a popular entertainer, music director, singer, piano player, composer, author and bandleader who performs over 100 gigs each year. He founded and directed the popular Twin Cities' band Metro Jam. Jay is also a "first call" music director for many productions in the Twin Cities, including major awards shows, theater productions and corporate events.



## Thank You To Our Made In the Shade Sponsors, Donors, and Participants

It was another fun-filled day at Thomas Beach, Lake Calhoun on September 15th, 2017! Over \$34,000 was raised to support critical needs for Wingspan group homes and programs. Save the date Saturday, September 15th for Made in the Shade 2018.



## On The Move At Wingspan

Shelda Thompson started working at Wingspan in 1999 as a medical assistant, assisting the House Supervisor for Atlantic House in Maplewood. In 2001 she became the House Coordinator. A few years later, Wingspan bought Troseth House in Roseville and the consumers moved from Atlantic to Troseth. Shelda became a Program Director in September of 2017. Her responsibilities include supervision of our group homes on 11th Avenue, 1250 Hoyt, Portland Avenue, and Troseth. Shelda says, "I really enjoy the work I do. I get to help the individuals that I work for and make a difference in their lives in some small way. I see the growth that they make every day. I love spending time with the consumers doing what they want to do... going grocery shopping, clothes shopping, going out to eat, or just driving in the van in the neighborhood that they grew up in and listening to them talk about the different places that they used to go to as a kid."

## Highlights From Our Executive Director

Now that the 2018 Winter Olympics Games are over, I've been thinking about our Wingspan champions and everyday heroes. While the staffing crunch in our field persists, I am so very grateful for our staff at Wingspan. Program Directors, House Coordinators, In Home staff and Direct Service Professionals—who work long hours and cover extra shifts to ensure that our clients receive quality, compassionate, person-centered care 24/7. Our administrative teams at our Plato office all working in concert to support our important work. And of course I extend my gratitude to our Board, our donors, and volunteers—giving us their gift of time and resources, each of whom contributes in an important and personal way.

I also want to express gratitude to our advocates and legislators who understand our struggles and work tirelessly on our behalf to effect change. I offer special thanks to Senator John Hoffman (DFL) District 36—a great champion for Home and Community Based Services-- who came to our Made in the Shade event in September and also met with clients and staff at our Sherburne office in February. Senator Hoffman offered strategies on how to approach and educate our legislators regarding the issues facing people with disabilities and their caregivers. Thank you also to Representative Roz Peterson (R) 56B for visiting with her constituent Mike T., several Wingspan DSPs and staff. We discussed the staffing crisis, low wages for our industry and the impact these issues have on our clients and staff. All of the people I've mentioned have a will to win, and within each one beats the heart of a champion. How fortunate Wingspan is to be surrounded by so many praise-worthy people who value our mission and deserve gold medals year-round.



Therese Davis



As I mentioned in the last issue, last summer we purchased a new house for our Crisis Respite Home and I'm pleased to report that this program is now operational thanks to the diligence of Program Director Camille Willner. This program provides a place for people in crisis to learn new skills in preparation for returning to the community and the life they really want to live. Camille and Sharron Aken, the new Program Coordinator for the home, have decided to name this home "Harmony" in the spirit of positive change for all who pass through.

One final note, the 2018 legislative session began February 20th. Please let your legislators know that you would like them to support Home and Community Based Services for people with disabilities.



## Welcome To Our Board!

**Board of Directors**  
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**Story Contributors**  
 Therese Davis  
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Wingspan is privileged to welcome back to the Board, Donna DeMatteo—long time Wingspan ambassador. Donna is our current Board Vice Chair and 2018 Gala Chair. We also welcome our Treasurer, Roz Allyson, Managing Partner at Mahoney Ulbrich Christiansen & Russ, Angela O'Neill, Senior VP at Associated Bank, and Preston Koenig, Associate Financial Advisor at Wealth Enhancement Group. We are grateful to all ten Board members for their time, expertise, generous financial support, and commitment to our mission of “helping those challenged by age, ability or health to recognize their unique gifts, talents and dreams.”



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