



NEWSLETTER

Edition I , Volume I

Congratulations Ms.

Wheelchair Maryland 2008!

Bethesda, MD, November 3, 2007 - Introducing Ms. Wheelchair Maryland 2008, Denise Thomas. Ms. Thomas accepted the crown from her predecessor, Cathy Porter. The crowning took place Saturday evening during an intimate dinner gala at the Doubletree Hotel in Bethesda, Md. During Ms. Thomas's year-long reign, she will travel the state promoting the Ms. Wheelchair Maryland and Ms. Wheelchair America programs as well as her platform: Advocating for Safe and Reliable Transportation on behalf of Individuals with Disabilities.

Next July, Ms. Thomas will represent Maryland in the Ms. Wheelchair America 2009 competition to be held in Rockville, MD. Ms. Thomas is an extremely accomplished, multifaceted, young woman. Over the past 23 year Ms. Thomas has resided in the state of Maryland. Throughout this period of time Denise has devoted the majority of her personal and professional time advocating for the rights of all individuals with disabilities.

Denise's motivation is that though she may have a disability, she is not defined by that disability. She has contributed insight, ideals and knowledge in several key areas within the disability community.

Areas which impact the daily lives of individuals with disabilities have been the focal point of Denise's activism. She is actively involved in making noticeable changes in the areas of, independent living, housing and transportation.

Currently, her profession is a Program Manager for a local non-for-profit agency which serves persons with Developmental Disabilities. Denise has always been a trailblazer within her community. In her spare time Ms. Thomas serves as a Commissioner of the Montgomery County Persons with Disabilities Commission.



Crowning Events...

Since the beginning of her reign Ms. Wheelchair Maryland 2008 has participated in a number of events throughout the state. Here is a glimpse at a few of the activities which she has actively become involved in over the past two months:

November 2007

- **Thanksgiving Dinner Party with Goodwill Industries of Chesapeake, Inc.**

For over eighty-seven years, Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, Inc. has helped others help themselves. Goodwill has collected reusable items for resale in its retail stores, trained people for work and living skills, and instilled dignity and purpose in countless peoples' lives. After Thanksgiving Dinner, Denise and a few of the Guests dance, talk and pose for photos...



- **World Congress Disabilities Expo.**

WCD Foundation for Education, Inc, with the support of leading professional societies and organizations developed an intensive three-day educational experience, information and ideas on today's most important issues will be exchanged between people with disabilities, their families and caregivers, physicians, direct support professionals, allied healthcare professionals, educators and adapted physical education specialists.

Denise took the opportunity to network with others who work in the disability field. She also assisted in the promotion of the Ms. Wheelchair America and statewide programs...



December 2007

- **Dateable, Inc.**

DateAble, Inc. is a non-profit 501-c-3 organization founded by Dr. Lucy R. Waletzky in 1987 to combat the social isolation experienced by people with disabilities in her practice. DateAble is also involved with several advocacy issues, groups, and events. This was a night filled with fun and blackjack. Denise takes a photo with three of the handsome bachelors of the evening...



Upcoming Events...

Here are a few of the future events which Ms. Wheelchair MD will be present. All of the following events are fun outings that can be enjoyed by everyone. For those events marked FUNDRAISER, please contact the MWM Program to speak to someone about the event detailed and the purchase tickets. We would appreciate your support.

January 2008

12- NBC Health Expo.

21- MLK Parade in Baltimore

23- Presentation at Inwood House

February 2008

23- Mardi Gras Party [FUNDRAISER]



About Us...The Ms.

Wheelchair Maryland organization emphasizes one's advocacy and public speaking skills, as well as personal perception and projection. The Ms. Wheelchair Maryland "Pageant" is open to all women who use a wheelchair on a daily basis, are permanent residents of Maryland and who are between 14 and 60 years old. The Ms. Wheelchair Maryland program is a sisterhood of dynamic women who are dedicated to promoting disability awareness, education, and empowerment. The person selected to hold the title serves as a spokesperson whose responsibility it is to speak to the general public and the disability community about her life as a person with a disability, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and a platform issue of her choosing. Moreover, Ms. Wheelchair Maryland competes nationally with other state titleholders in the annual Ms. Wheelchair America Program...

To invite Denise Thomas to speak to your group or organization or to provide sponsorship for her to participate in Ms. Wheelchair America 2009, please contact State Coordinator Robert Watson at (301) 888-1177 ext. 4 or robert@dateable.org.

Ms. Wheelchair Maryland is made possible through individual, group, and/or corporate donations. Donations should be sent to Ms. Wheelchair Maryland, Inc. 15520 Bald Eagle School Road Brandywine, MD 20613