

**YOUTH RALLY  
COMMITTEE, INC**

**Chairman & CEO**  
Paul Hastings  
San Francisco, CA

**Vice President**  
April Gimlen  
Alameda, CA

**Vice President**  
Vickie Schafer, MSN,  
RN, WOCN  
Lansdale, PA

**Vice President & CFO**  
Mary Beth Akers  
Saint Charles, MO

**2016 Board of  
Directors:**

Bret Cromer  
Aurora, IL

Jacquelyn Dunne  
Baltimore, MD

Jude Ebbinghaus  
Groton, CT

Michael Gerald  
Iowa City, IA

Douglas P. Kreitz  
Palo Alto, CA

Emily Mallar-Aubin  
Ithaca, NY

The 2017 Youth Rally will  
take place July 17<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>  
in San Diego, CA

October 15, 2016

WOCN North Central Region  
Barbara Provo  
N154N5332 Balsam Dr.  
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

Dear Barbara Provo and WOCN North Central Region,

On behalf of the Youth Rally Board of Directors, I thank you for your generous gift of \$425 in support of Abby Ryan for the 2016 Youth Rally on 7/24/2016. Our goal since inception is that no child is ever turned away related to inability to pay registration and/or travel costs, and your gift helped us achieve this once again in 2016.

Our campers (and volunteer team of counselors) live with a variety of congenital birth defects, chronic illness, or physical trauma that has caused disruption to their bowel and/or bladder systems. To our Youth Rally participants, their care providers, and their network of loved ones, your gift is more than monetary - it represents hope. For them, the Youth Rally provides an environment of learning and growth where these children, or varying physical abilities, gain independence and confidence while having FUN with others who are just like them!

The Youth Rally is a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and as such operates solely on donations from individuals, support groups, corporate sponsorship, and the ongoing fundraising efforts of its many volunteers.

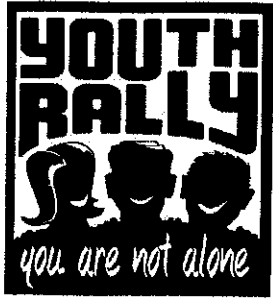
Words alone cannot express our many thanks for your support. Please note that your gift is a tax deductible one.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Akers  
949 Chestnut Oak Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63303  
[registrar@rally4youth.org](mailto:registrar@rally4youth.org)  
314.452.7759

Yes. There *IS* a camp for that.

[www.Rally4Youth.org](http://www.Rally4Youth.org)



Thank You!!!  
From Youth Rally  
2016

Dear Sponsor,

Youth Rally means so much more to me than I could ever write in one letter. This is the only place I ever get to meet/talk to people with the same birth defect as me. It is the only place I can freely talk about myself without having to worry about ignorant comments and questions, or worry about being treated differently. It gives me a sense of community and solidarity that motivates me to stay positive, strong throughout the year. Besides the support, the people here are lifelong friends of mine. This year we had the most amazing afternoon at Greenlake Park. Even though some girls' ostomies prevented them from getting into the water, we had loads of fun in the sand, playing ultimate frisbee, and playing cards while eating ice cream. It is so important for us to have days like that together, where we can feel normal instead of constantly judged for our bodies. The University campus is also really great! My roommate and I have the same condition, which helps our communication and friendship. The food and building activities are both fantastic. I've heard so many great things about the San Diego campus, and am overly excited to come again next year. Thank you so much for making this possible not only for me, but for the community it has brought me into.

Sincerely,

Megan Krupp

[www.youthrally.org](http://www.youthrally.org)  
[www.facebook.com/YouthRallyInc](https://www.facebook.com/YouthRallyInc)

## 2016 YOUTH RALLY IN SEATTLE, WA



2016 Youth Rally Campers – check out [www.YouthRally.org](http://www.YouthRally.org) for additional photos & videos!

**A PICTURESQUE SETTING** The 2016 Youth Rally was hosted at the University of Washington (UW) in Seattle where participants had the luxury of staying at the campus' new downtown dorms. This was the Youth Rally's 2<sup>nd</sup> visit to Seattle (the first was back in 2013) – and it didn't rain one time once the campers arrived. From the campus center were clear views of Mt. Rainier! Hot sunny days and cool nights were the setting for a jam-packed week of learning, fun, and adventure!

**THEY COME FROM ALL OVER** This year's Rally hosted 128 campers (picture above) between the ages of 11 and 17 from 38 US states, Canada, Ecuador, Venezuela and Belgium! Notably, 42 campers were experiencing the Youth Rally for their very first time! The Youth Rally staff is a 100% volunteer team of 80 individuals: 62 counselors (many of whom were former campers) and 18 specialty-trained registered nurses, some who also live with the same conditions as the counselors and campers.

Throughout the week, campers had the opportunity to learn more about their own condition as well as those of their counselors and peers. They participated in intimate rap sessions sharing their stories of growing up with medical and physical challenges. Participants got to learn from those who share their own diagnoses and management techniques as well as others within their same age range and gender identification to discuss the sensitive issues that often challenge the self-esteem of adolescents growing up with chronic conditions.

New this year, the campers were guided through "Digging Deep" – a personal journal they were each provided to inspire self-expression through the telling of one's own personal story; empowering hope, courage, and inner strength. The journaling exercises were facilitated in group sessions hosted by the author herself, Rose Offner. In addition to Rose, 2016 Youth Rally special guests included Dr. Bill Reiner, Pediatric Urologist and Adolescent Psychologist who specializes in working with chronically ill children and their families. Perhaps most inspiring however were this year's motivational speakers: Jada Sheeler – former YR camper, now counselor, who spent a semester abroad in Japan, learning every day as she immersed herself in this new culture; and Spencer Kimbro – Youth Rally camper who had recently returned home from Rio de Janeiro where he competed in the 2106 US Paralympic Track and Field trials.

**FUNASTIC** On fitness day each participant had the opportunity to challenge their physical self while sampling some of the many activities (climbing wall, basketball, archery, TRX, cycling, Volleyball, Yoga, the list goes on) available at the UW Intramural Activities Center. It's a mystery that anyone had energy left for the talent show – or the (first ever Rally) lip sync battle - that evening, but these kids love a stage and it proved to be another marathon night in the spotlight! On Thursday Rally took over the shores of Green Lake for a day of sunning, swimming, floating, paddle boarding, paddle boating, water cycling, kayaking and field games. We even had some special visitors while at Green Lake... from Ben & Jerry's! The week was topped off with Rally's highly-anticipated graduate dance which hosted an "Under the Sea" theme this year complete with mermaids, sharks, a photo booth, a face painter, a nacho bar, and an amazing array of decorations to set the tone for a first class party!

**WHERE THE SURF MEETS THE TURF** It is expected that all but those 26 campers who graduated this year will join us next July at San Diego State University in San Diego, CA. Many of those same graduates will be submitting applications for the 2017 Counselor-in-Training leadership program to begin their journey as the next generation of all-star counselors. In the meantime, all of this year's participants have formed lasting friendships, found lifelong mentors, made amazing memories, and thanks to modern technology and social media, will be able to communicate all year long!