



Newsletter 140th Edition

April 2025

OUR MISSION

To reach out and empower people affected by limb loss to achieve their full potential through education, support, and advocacy, and to raise awareness of limb loss by becoming actively involved in our community.

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### **EDITOR'S NOTE** – by Elaine Skaggs

Have you noticed how vibrant the yellow blooms of the Forsythia bushes are this spring? These flowers are commonly used as symbols of love, joy, and happiness and they are also a symbol of spring and the renewal of life.



How appropriate that we are starting off this spring with a new officer board, and excitedly looking forward to a very successful year. We have added 2 additional members in anticipation of expected growth over the next year, and some exciting new events will be introduced, making way for more people to become more involved in our networking and social activities.

Now I would like to introduce you to our new board...

### **Member at Large** - Mallori Puchino



Hi, I'm Mallori Puchino and I'm coming up on my 10 year ampuversary later this year. I am a left below knee amputee after a decade of mis-diagnoses and exploratory procedures. My husband and I own a kettle corn business that we run when we aren't at our regular design jobs. I have a retired service dog named Colt who is my life. As one of your Members at Large this year, I'm looking forward to being an active voice for our community. I hope to help plan some events that will see us more active in the community and to be able to coordinate some exciting new opportunities for us.

### **Member at Large** - Cedric Griffin



Hi, my name is Cedric Griffin, or OneLegCed. I was born in Columbus Ohio but have lived in Louisville KY since the age of 1. Fun Fact about me is that I enjoy playing golf, being active whether it be going for walks or playing sports and being around family. I am an above knee amputee. I became an amputee August 12 due to a car accident where I was thrown from my vehicle. I've been a part of the group since 2023 and have loved every moment. My journey has had its ups and downs. In the beginning, I embraced my amputation as part of who I am. Adjusting to daily tasks was difficult, and I had to relearn a lot of things. But over time, I've gained confidence and learned new ways to do things. One of my biggest challenges was learning to walk with a prosthetic, dealing with phantom pain, and regaining confidence. It took time and patience, but I've made progress and feel proud of how far I've come. A major victory for me was returning to work, driving again, participating in sports, etc. It was something I worried I wouldn't be able to do but with great support, I pushed myself and made it happen. Being a part of this group I'm hoping to share my experiences with anyone who's struggling, especially when it comes to mental health, adapting to daily life. If my journey can help someone else, I'm happy to share! If I could share one piece of encouragement with other amputees it would be, "You are so much more than your amputation - don't let it define you."

### **Treasurer** - Billy Parker



Howdy everyone, my name is Billy Parker. All my friends call me Billy P, so please feel free! I became an amputee in 2007 because of a workplace incident. I was a welder/fabricator for around 21 years. I was caught in a machine and lost both arms above the elbow. My introduction to Moving

Forward was in 2016 when I came and did a speaking engagement for the group, and I really liked everyone that I met so much and for what Moving Forward stood for that I ended up joining the group in 2016. Instead of welding for a living now, I travel the US as a motivational safety speaker, telling my unique story of unsafe work practices keeping everybody safer at work and at home. I believe I found a greater purpose when I lost my arms and not only do I love Moving Forward, I also met my beautiful wife Kelly there, something I will be forever thankful for. I wanted to be an officer with Moving Forward simply because it's another way of helping out. Helping Moving Forward to grow even bigger than we are is something that I know we can do. It takes a team and I believe everybody that's involved in the group and all those that join us in the future is a part of that team. I look forward and I'm very excited to see where Moving Forward is going.

**Secretary - IN** - Latisha Judkins



Hello, my name is Latisha Judkins! I'm honored to fulfill the needs as one of the secretaries for the Moving Forward Limb Loss group. I've been a right below the knee amputee for 3 years. I have learned and conquered so many challenges with the help of this group over the past couple of years! I want to continue to thrive and help other amputees continue to do life. Also I think it's important for even caregivers to strive with their loved ones in this time of a life change. This year I'm here to help grow our Moving Forward Limb Loss family, to give my all to my fellow members, and to uplift other amputees in their future journey. We can do anything and everything!

**Secretary - KY** - Brianna Heitzman



Hi, my name is Brianna. I've been an amputee for 5 years this coming December. I've been in our Support Group for 3 or 4 years now. I was very depressed and in a bad place and a friend suggested that there had to be a support group for people like me and I looked it up and sure enough there was this group. I immediately got involved, I wanted to feel like I belonged!!! I hope to grow our group with lots of members as a board member. I want to see others desire to belong as well.

**Co-President** - Elaine Skaggs



I've been an amputee for 10 years as of April 11, 2015, and a member of Moving Forward Limb Loss Network and Social Group since the summer of 2015. This group was instrumental in my recovery, both physically and



emotionally. Being around people who have already experienced things you are facing as a new amputee, is beneficial beyond words, and oh so encouraging. I have made so many new friends, and found resources that I otherwise might not have learned about. But most importantly, being a part of Moving Forward has given me so many opportunities to help other people adjust to living life as an amputee. My goal for this year is to bring more awareness to the Moving Forward Limb Loss Network and Social Group, and to help more people.

**Co-President** - Kelly Grey-Parker



My name is Kelly Grey-Parker. I have been an amputee nearly my entire life after contracting Meningitis and becoming septic when I was one year old. I grew up with a ton of support from my awesome family and friends, but I was the only amputee. It wasn't until I made the difficult decision to have a revised amputation on both legs (at the same time) when I was 29 years old that I met other amputees! I have 2 amazing teenage kids and my husband of almost 3 years, that I cherish dearly. I will be celebrating 20 years at my job

this year.

Why do I want to be an officer of Moving Forward? It wasn't until after my revision that I truly embraced showing my prosthetics. Prior to that I had always worn long pants and tried to walk and move as normal (from my eyes) as possible. Once I realized how much people were inspired by me showing off being an amputee and how it made me more approachable to other amputees, I stopped trying to hide my legs. My mission has been and continues to be to find ways to motivate other amputees and their caregivers to embrace the amputee world. I also strive to help others get out into the community and in return help the community to be more accessible for all of us! I am honored to continue my service as one of the Co-Presidents.

These seven people are the most dedicated people I know and each and everyone of them has a heart for serving, and a passion for helping other amputees. We are blessed to have them as friends and leaders of our group. Without a doubt, extraordinary things are about to happen.



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **APRIL**

**APRIL 1 - APRIL 30 - All day Every day!** April is Limb Loss/Limb Difference Awareness Month. Be sure to check out the Amputee Coalition website for activities that you can take part in to bring awareness to people who experience limb loss and limb difference. Tell your story, get involved in advocating for insurance change, or produce art that reflects your story in many different mediums.

**SATURDAY April 12, 1:00pm** - We will have our first Restaurant Outing at Havana Rumba, 12003 Shelbyville Road, Louisville KY 40243. Come join us for a great time of fellowship and fill out a survey concerning this establishment's accessibility.

**MONDAY April 21, 6:00pm - 7:30pm** The IN meeting will take place at PAM Rehabilitation Hospital, 2101 Broadway Street, Clarksville, IN 47129. We will meet in the cafeteria just inside the front entrance to the right.

**SATURDAY April 26, 2:00pm - 4:00pm** Louisville meeting at Baptist Health Rehab Hospital, 111800 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, KY 40299. As part of Limb Loss/Difference Awareness Month, this day is 'Show Your Mettle' Day. We would love for you to come show your mettle by showing your metal!!

### **MAY**

**SATURDAY May 10, 8:00am - 2:00pm PLEASE NOTE!!** The projected date for our **YARD SALE** has changed. It will be held on May 10 at 10202 Hornbeam Blvd. Louisville KY. This will be a fund raising activity for the Moving Forward Group. If you have items you would like to donate, or if you would like to volunteer to help, please contact one of the board members. Time to clean out those closets!!

**MONDAY May 19, 6:00PM - 7:30PM** - The IN meeting will take place at PAM Rehabilitation Hospital, 2101 Broadway Street, Clarksville, IN 47129. We will meet in the cafeteria just inside the front entrance to the right.

**SATURDAY May 24, 2:00pm - 4:00pm** - Louisville meeting at Baptist Health Rehab Hospital, 111800 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, KY 40299.



## **Hash Brown Potato Soup**

This hash brown potato soup is easy to make in the slow cooker. I like to serve it in a bread bowl. It's perfect for cold weather!

### **Ingredients**

1 (28 ounce) package frozen hash browns, thawed

42 ounces chicken broth

1 (10.5 ounce) can cream of chicken soup

1 large potato, peeled and diced

½ cup chopped onion

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened

⅓ cup shredded Cheddar cheese, or to taste

2 tablespoons bacon bits, or to taste

2 tablespoons sliced green onions, or to taste

### **Directions**

Place hash browns into a slow cooker. Add chicken broth, condensed soup, potato, onion, and pepper. Cover and cook on Low until potatoes are tender and soup is hot, 3 to 5 hours.

Drop in softened cream cheese and stir with a whisk until melted and mixed in. Ladle into bowls and garnish with Cheddar, bacon bits, and green onions.



## **LET'S GET INVOLVED!!**

So Every BODY Can Move is dedicated to creating an equitable world where every person – no matter their disability – has access to mobility and independence. Our relentless advocacy work, coalition-building, and state-by-state legislative change is disrupting discriminatory healthcare treatment for the disability community and creating insurance coverage for recreational prosthetic and orthotic care one state at a time.

So Every BODY Can Move believes movement is medicine and physical activity is a right, not a privilege. However, in the United States today, state, federal, and private health plans routinely deny access to prostheses and orthoses necessary for physical activity, sport, and exercise as “not medically necessary.” So Every BODY Can Move is disrupting this healthcare inequity by mobilizing grassroots advocates to champion local, state-by-state legislative change. Our ultimate goal is to create coverage for this medically necessary prosthetic and orthotic care in 28 states by the 2028 Los Angeles Paralympics, so we can then pursue federal reform.

No one orthotic or prosthetic device can replace the vast array of fundamental human movements lost from amputation, disease, or disorder. That is why specialized orthoses and prostheses designed for use in high-activity environments – such as running, hopping, skipping, jumping, swimming, dancing, bicycling, and more – are needed to prevent damage and minimize injury to both body and device. Without them, equal access to physical activity cannot be achieved.

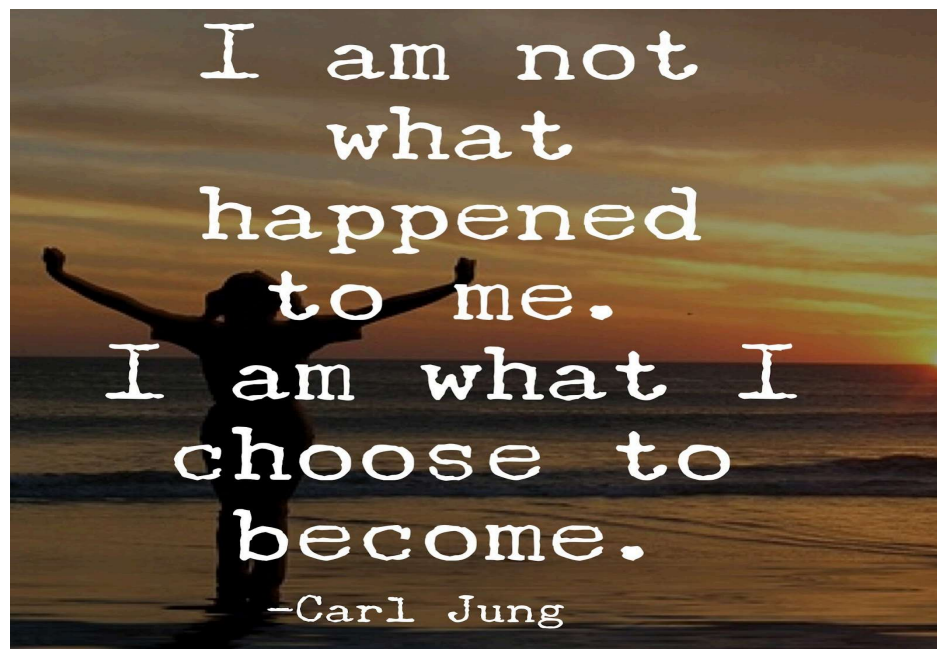
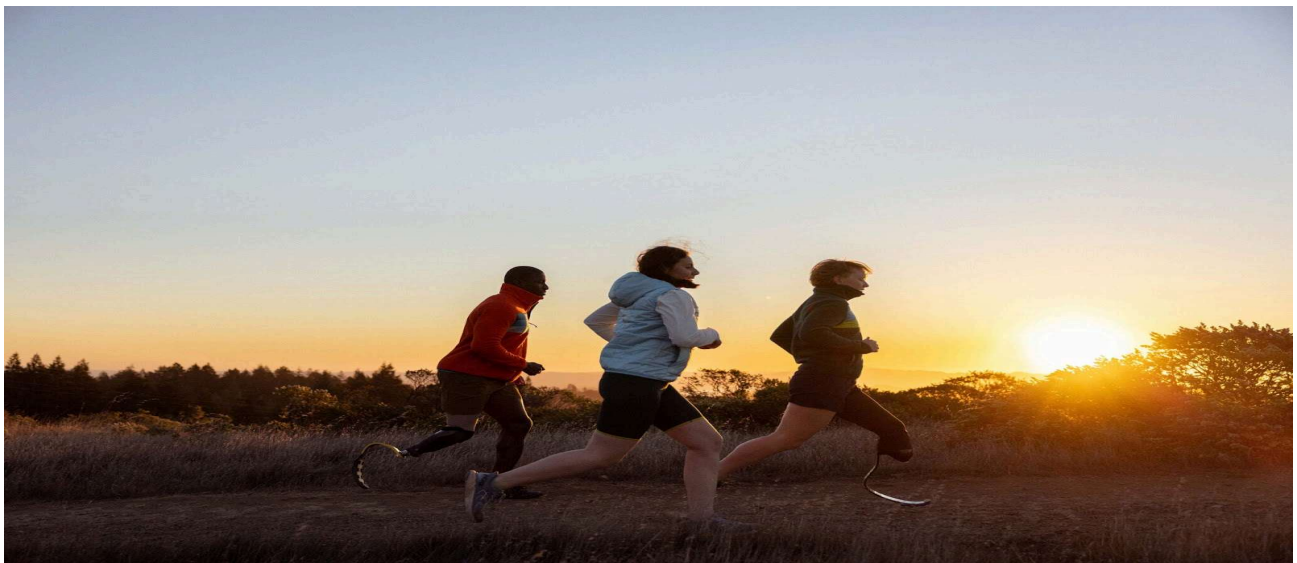
Why aren't prostheses and orthoses for physical activity already covered by insurance? They should be. In fact, the So Every BODY Can Move Initiative is designed to highlight and clarify that prostheses and custom orthoses for physical activity are, in fact, already included in the EHB benefit covering medically necessary O&P care. Unfortunately, many commercial payers have taken a more restrictive view that only one prosthesis or orthosis is covered to ambulate, or walk. However, one custom orthosis or prosthesis cannot replace the vast array of fundamental human movements lost because of mobility impairment needed to perform Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), including exercise and physical activities to maintain and improve health. More than one prosthesis or custom orthosis is often necessary to restore human function to the maximum extent possible.

Orthotic and prosthetic services are often directly comparable to surgeries and procedures that enable mobility or physical activity. For example, ACL surgery, while considered an elective procedure, is typically covered because the treatment is necessary to restore the body to its full potential. Between 100,000 and 300,000 ACL-related procedures occur in the U.S. each year.<sup>1</sup>



Yet, comparable care for patients in need of orthoses or prostheses that also enable the body to perform physically is not covered. Health plans should not be able to deny a prosthesis or custom orthosis for an individual with limb loss or limb difference that would otherwise be covered for a person without a disability seeking medical or surgical intervention to restore or maintain the ability to perform the same function.

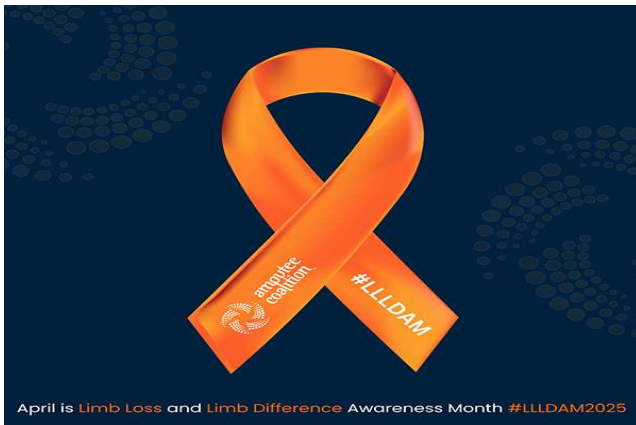
Challenge the status quo. Join us as we advocate for systemic change. If you have any questions or want to learn more about So Every BODY Can Move, reach out to our team for more information. Learn more about this initiative and how to get involved [soeverybodycanmove.org](http://soeverybodycanmove.org).





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