

# MARCH 2025

- ORGANIZATION NEWSLETTER -

## FashionAbility *Gala*

We are beyond excited to share the incredible success of the 11th Annual FashionAbility Gala hosted by Inclusion Connections! Thanks to YOU and our presenting sponsor, UnitedHealthcare, this year's event was nothing short of amazing. Together, **we raised an outstanding \$912,010**—surpassing last year's total and making a real impact! **A huge shoutout to our TOP MODEL peer-to-peer campaigns, which contributed over \$200,000 to this achievement.** Every dollar raised helps us continue our mission to promote inclusivity, create opportunities, and celebrate diversity. We are so grateful for your generosity and support. Thank you for being part of something truly special!



FASHIONABILITY STUDENT PERFORMANCE



SELF ADVOCATE SPEAKER: KATIE PINE

We were sold out once again this year! With 700 attendees, the evening was filled with inspiration, laughter, and unforgettable moments. The audience was moved by powerful stage performances, a heartfelt testimonial from Katie Pine, and the always entertaining (and hilarious!) runway presentations. We were honored to present Legacy Awards to Laura Uzzell and Kathy Winegar in recognition of their longtime service and dedication to Inclusion Connections. We also extended a heartfelt thank you to our incredible committee members for their hard work in making this event a success—with a special shoutout to Linda Boring for her extraordinary dedication and countless hours of support. And of course, no gala would be complete without an epic dance party to end the night!

**Mark your calendars now for FashionAbility 2026 – 2.21.2026!**



TOP MODEL WINNERS:  
RACHEL MAST, CARRIE & ROSIE MCLENEY



SECURED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MOST INDIVIDUAL  
DONORS: RACHEL ZINK & CORY BLUE



Big things are happening for BelongKC. We're on track to break ground by the end of 2025 and are already planning for BelongKC 2! Recently, we hosted a meeting with 80 interested parents to discuss how the community will work and to answer their questions. The need for this supportive living community and the services we plan to provide is great and increasing every year.

# Student Spotlight

- MATT SANTAULARIA -



Matt started a new job in February at Crunch Fitness Olathe. He keeps the equipment clean and the work out area tidy and organized. He takes great pride in his work and is favorite among customers and staff alike. Matt enjoys working out and is active in the Special Olympics. He is very social and likes hanging out with guys doing “guy stuff.” He is an avid bowler and all-around sports fan. He’s the first one to volunteer to help unload supplies. Matt can be counted on to do the heavy lifting. Congrats to Matt on his new job!



Join us on May 3rd at 6 PM for a magical evening as 25 of our talented students bring this classic story to life in a one-night-only performance. Get your tickets today and support our students who LOVE to be on stage. We are seeking sponsors to help make this event a success!

### Get Your Tickets & Sponsorship Packages Here!

Join us on May 3rd at 6 PM for a magical evening as 25 of our talented students bring this classic story to life. We have an Amazon wish list with items we need for the show. You can view and purchase items from our wish list on the button below. Additionally, we are looking for the following items to be donated: **a square bale of hay, wicker basket with handle, leather or brown crossbody satchel, old broomstick.** If you can donate any of these items, please contact [Mackenzie.Carnes@ickc.org](mailto:Mackenzie.Carnes@ickc.org). Your support is greatly appreciated!

### Shop our Wizard of Oz Production Wish List

# Advocacy Day



On February 27th, young adults from Inclusion Connections visited the Capitol to support legislation and funding for IDD services that directly impact their lives. Christina Eidt, Bailey Tinder, Sam Charpentier, and Hank Wolf met with Senator Thomas, Representative Bohi, and Representative Johnson to advocate for more IDD Home and Community Based Services waivers and reduce the waitlist. Hank, currently on the 8-year waitlist, emphasized the need for increased funding to live independently. He voiced that he is eager to live independently and hopes to be able to join his friends in BelongKC. The waiver would provide him with the support he needs to live his best life possible.

# Volunteer Opportunities



Thank you to the group volunteers from the following organizations who have visited us in 2025:

**Cerris • Country Club Bank • Community America • Lineage Accelerate • Long Real Estate • Olathe Teen Council • Zurich Services**

If your company is looking for a fun and meaningful way to give back, please click below to fill out a group application. Individual volunteers are always welcome as well!

**Interested in Volunteering - Click [HERE!](#)**

# PawsAbilities Pop-Ups



**Olathe Health | March 20th**

20333 W 151st St. Olathe, KS

**Core First Bank | March 25th**

16201 W. 95th St. Lenexa, KS 66219

**Lenexa Winter Market | March 29th**

17101 W 87th St Pkwy, Lenexa, KS 66219

**Boneanza at Waggin' Trail Park | April 5th**

432 E 32nd Ave, North Kansas City, MO 64116

**KC Wine Co Sip & Shop | April 26th**

13875 S Gardner Rd, Olathe, KS 66061

**Lenexa Farmers Market | Saturdays from April 26 - October 25**



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# Social Opportunities

After hour events and classes at Inclusion Connections provide our young adults with opportunities to test out new skills, express their creativity and strengthen their social connections. The events already in progress for 2025 include the theater program, sport stacking and a painting class. We enjoyed an afternoon at the movies and are gearing up for an evening of tacos and mini golf.

In a world of increased virtual interactions, these events and outings provide a chance to connect face to face and are more important now than ever. Many young adults with IDD have limited chances to interact with peers and form human connections. Inclusion Connections takes pride in providing programming that facilitates those connections and enriches the lives of everyone involved.

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# Ways to Support Us!



**Colorful T-Shirts!** We are always accepting t-shirt donations as we upcycle them into our sniff mats and pull toys for dogs. We are currently in need of **YELLOW**, **PINK** and **PURPLE** shirts.

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**Looking for a FUN way to support Inclusion Connections?** Join us from noon to 2 PM on Sunday, March 30th to play a few rounds of Bingo at Craft Putt in Overland Park. All proceeds from this event will be donated to PawsAbilities. All ages are welcomed to participate. Seating is first come first served.

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**How does your workplace engage with the community?** We receive no government funding - can your workplace help? We love Grants, Supplies, Volunteers, and Corporate Donations! Contact Erin Galba at [Erin.Galba@ickc.org](mailto:Erin.Galba@ickc.org)!

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[Make a Donation Today!](#)