



Deshae Lott Ministries Inc

## Meet the Recipients of the 2013 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach Program Quality of Life Grants



### **Yesenia Parker** Recipient of a \$500 CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Quality-of-Life Grant

Last January, Yesenia received a cervical spinal cord injury as a result of a gunshot wound to the face at the hands of her own father, during a domestic dispute at their former home in Camden, New Jersey. As a result of this horrifying incident of domestic violence, Yesenia is paralyzed from the chest down and has only limited functionality. Prior to this event, she was an active little girl who was on a local dance team and enjoyed playing with her friends and watching *Hannah Montana*.

When Yesenia's Big Sister, Margaret Grandstaff, applied for the grant on her behalf, her family was living in a domestic violence shelter, and Yesenia's mother was taking care of all of her 24-hour needs for assistance, because home health care workers could not go to the shelter. During that time, Yesenia's mother, Shandar, could not work, and they were living off of Yesenia's Social Security and some very small amounts of additional government assistance.

The family will have many ongoing expenses for Yesenia's care. A fundraiser has been established to cover some of their medical expenses, but as those funds cannot be used for day-to-day living expenses, Ms. Grandstaff was trying to help them find some additional funding. The family is living now at New Community Harmony House in Newark, New Jersey, a transitional housing facility for homeless families. Mrs. Parker continues to suffer anxiety and depression, and Yesenia and her two siblings still have flashbacks. This family will have a long road back to some new semblance of "normal," and we are honored to do what we can to help.

**Dakota Hendrix**  
**Recipient of a \$500**  
**CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries**  
**Quality-of-Life Grant**

Dakota Hendrix is a 14-year-old boy diagnosed in infancy with Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, a progressive muscular disease resulting in steadily increasing weakness and eventual total disability and dependence on others for everyday life functions. Dakota needs assistance in all areas of life function indicated on the grant application form. His mother, Shirley Hendrix, applied for the grant on his behalf because bathing has become increasingly difficult for Dakota and his caregivers. She would like to install a roll-in shower in order to improve his personal hygiene, and thus to improve his quality of life as well as that of his caregivers. We awarded Dakota the full amount of the grant for this very needed and worthwhile project.



**Emily Haynes**  
**Recipient of a \$300**  
**CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries**  
**Quality-of-Life Grant**

Emily Haynes of Charleston, West Virginia suffers from Myasthenia Gravis, a condition characterized by fluctuating muscle weakness, particularly affecting the muscles that control her eyes, chewing, swallowing and the use of her limbs. Prior to her diagnosis at age 32 in October of 2005, she was a healthy and productive businesswoman who worked over forty hours a week and enjoyed snowboarding and other board sports. The steady deterioration of her condition has been deeply frustrating, and she has been dealing with the added complication of the onset of non-epileptic seizures. Her husband Jeffery has worked at part-time jobs since finishing school in December 2011, but the level of assistance that Emily requires at home combined with the frustrations they've encountered in applying for assistance has required Jeffery to stay home as her primary caregiver, and the two of them to live on her Social Security Disability of only \$946 per month.



They applied for last year's grant to help finance some much-needed modifications to their home. This year, they applied for the grant in order to help finance their attendance at the national Myasthenia Gravis conference for patients and caregivers, held in May in Miami, Florida. Although we could not finance the entire cost of the conference for both of them, we opted to reimburse them for the cost of the two nights' lodging at the conference rate: \$135 per night, times two, plus tax., to use for the conference if they could secure additional funding, or as needed if they could not. Ultimately, with our blessing, they have used the funds for prescription medications.

**Diana Mass**  
**Recipient of a \$500**  
**CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries**  
**Outreach Program**  
**Quality of Life Grant**



Diana is a repeat recipient of our Quality of Life Grant. Paralyzed in an accident in 1992, she is a quadriplegic, and after years of rehabilitation she made a decision in 2008 to go to school, choosing “to make use of my eyes and my mind and my voice, the things I still have control over.” Her background was in design and construction, in which she had worked as a consultant for 20 years. After relearning to use a computer with a HeadMouse, a laser camera and a reflective dot stuck to her forehead, she went on to take a Computer Aided Design and Drafting class. Those initial drafting classes led to more sophisticated training in the design and building of houses from the ground up using Building Image Management (BIM) software. She then moved on to civil drafting, learning how to design subdivisions and water drainage systems. She also studied 3D Industrial Design and Geographical Information Systems, or computerized mapmaking.

In the winter of 2011, she graduated at age 60, earned her certification in Architectural, Mechanical and Civil drafting. Her goal now is to use her skills to help baby boomers and disabled people with redesigned spaces that will accommodate needs that change with their life circumstances. Currently, she works as a volunteer at an Acute Rehab Center, helping people who have experienced heart attacks, strokes, and spinal cord injuries. Her experience helps her to establish credibility and fellowship with the patients, who feel more comfortable expressing their concerns about their drastically changed circumstances. She has also spoken in the State Legislature as a delegate for those with disabilities.

Diana continues to have difficulty meeting her financial obligations, and sought grant funding for a third time to help maintain her current level of independence in her own home.



**Ida Barkley Tranks**  
**Recipient of a \$500**  
**CMMS Deshae Lott Ministries Outreach**  
**Program**  
**Quality of Life Grant**

Ida Tranks of Charlotte, North Carolina has Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a progressive disorder resulting in difficulty with balance, muscle spasms, weakness and stiffness. Other symptoms include facial involvement that can cause inarticulate speech as well

as difficulty swallowing and breathing. She needs assistance with all aspects of daily life except for reading, writing, speaking, seeing, and hearing.

She lives with her 16-year-old grandson, Jay, whom she has raised from infancy. He now has his Learner’s Permit and is able to drive her around, so that has been very helpful. However, they still have limited access to additional assistance.

She applied for last year’s grant to help with hiring a female caregiver to assist with bathing and dressing. This year, she has used the grant funds to buy home hygiene equipment that will add an additional measure of dignity and privacy.