



WHERE DIFFERENCE DOES NOT EQUAL DISABILITY

## MY BIONIC ARM

BY HANNAH EWING, H2L LEGACY

I have considered getting a prosthetic over the years but did not become serious about it until recently. Growing up, I had figured out how to accomplish everyday tasks without a prosthetic, so I debated whether it was worth getting one. Over the past year, I began writing down different tasks that would be easier or that I might be able to do for the first time if I had a prosthetic arm that could function as a hand. I began researching options and came across Ottobock's Bebionic Hand. I loved how many different hand grips it had for completing a variety of tasks. I also loved the techy look, as well as the option for a cosmetic sleeve.

I began the process by reaching out to a local prosthetic clinic, Gainesville Prosthetics. They were incredibly helpful in giving me information and starting the process. We made measurements and molds for the cast, and they came to the doctor's office when I needed to get an official referral for a prosthetic. They were able to give the doctor the exact information he needed to speed up the process and get it covered by insurance.

Three months after beginning this process, I received my first prosthetic - the Bebionic arm.

The first few weeks were definitely an adjustment, as it was both an odd feeling to wear it and a weight I wasn't used to on that arm. However, after wearing it a few hours every day for a couple weeks, the soreness faded and I felt well-adjusted to the feeling of having it on.

I'm still in the process of learning how to use it, and with working full time, my time to devote to learning is more limited. When I'm able to work with it, I have



enjoyed experimenting with holding a cup or bottle with the prosthetic arm, opening doors, carrying groceries, holding papers, and so on. I know that many tasks will always be easier without it; however, I'm excited to see how it will support and assist me in the future. I am so grateful to Gainesville Prosthetics and Ottobock for allowing me to have my first bionic arm!

# GIVING TUESDAY

It's a simple idea: whether it's making someone smile, helping a neighbor or stranger out, showing up for an issue or people we care about, or giving some of what we have to those who need our help, every act of generosity counts; and everyone has something to contribute toward building the better world we all want to live in.

Giving Tuesday, created in 2012, is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of radical generosity by designating a day that encourages people to do good.

## H2L GIVING TUESDAY



NOVEMBER 28,  
2023

## WHY I GIVE

BY AARON ARMBRECHT



Hands to Love Camp holds a special place in our hearts. Eloise, our oldest daughter, has an upper limb difference, and the camp has been a remarkable source of support, growth, and empowerment for her.

It's not just Eloise who benefits; her younger sister, Margo, who doesn't have a limb difference, gains valuable insights and a deeper understanding of her sister's experiences by attending alongside her. She loved Fireflies 1!

Donations are vital to make the camp more affordable and to enable other children, like Eloise, access the specialized care they need. These funds ensure that the campers have a positive and inclusive experience. With each year, we witness the profound impact the camp has on our family by fostering stronger sibling bonds, empathy, and inclusivity.

We're looking forward to another enriching and unforgettable experience next April at Hands to Love Camp, where our family continues to learn, connect, and thrive.

Hands to Love is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We strive to provide all H2L events and activities at the lowest possible cost to our families. We rely on the donations of generous supporters like you in providing services to upper limb different youth and their families.

Thank you for helping us make a difference!



SCAN TO GIVE!

## H2L INNOVATION STATION



Hello, Hands to Love Families! I had the immense pleasure of attending Hand Camp for the first time this past spring! I enjoyed meeting and chatting with so many parents and campers. For those of you whom I did not get an opportunity to meet, I'm delighted to introduce myself and hope to be able to meet you in person next year!

Born with a thumb and four "nubbins" on my left hand, I earned my undergraduate degree at Harvard University and my master's degree in occupational therapy at the Boston School of Occupational Therapy at Tufts University.

My choice of career as an Occupational Therapist (OT) stemmed from my experiences navigating life with my difference, and I am very proud to be in my 25th year of practice as a registered and licensed occupational therapist (OTR/L). In my private practice, *On The Other Hand Therapy*, I have worked with hundreds of typically-developing children and children with physical, cognitive, and behavioral challenges. I also present to educators and parents on a variety of topics and run motor groups for preschoolers and kindergarteners in local area schools. You can find me online at my website for families raising children with upper limb differences, [www.ontheotherhand.org/limb-difference/](http://www.ontheotherhand.org/limb-difference/), and please follow me at @ontheotherhandtherapy on Instagram!

At Hand Camp, Tamara Harrell, a certified hand therapist who has volunteered with Hand Camp for years, and I talked with many parents about challenges and issues they face while raising their children with congenital and acquired limb differences. In this monthly column, I will be exploring topics that arose during those parent porch meetings. If you have questions about OT for your child with a limb difference, please feel free to reach out to me at the above contacts, and I will do my best to answer it in an upcoming column. You will find our October Focus, Adaptive Equipment, on the following page. I hope you enjoy it!

~ LAURA FAYE CLUBOK

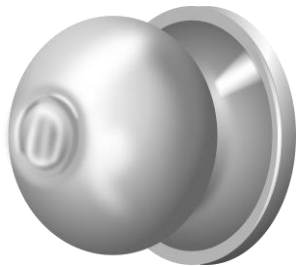
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IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR OUR H2L NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE REACH OUT TO AMY MCCLELLAND, EDITOR [amy@handstolove.org](mailto:amy@handstolove.org)



## ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT

At Hand Camp, some parents reported that their children refused to use adaptive equipment. My suggestion is to normalize adaptive equipment by first incorporating it in contexts where there is no choice whether or not to use it.



For example, one of the most helpful changes you can make in your house is replacing round knobs (doors and faucets) with lever handles. Twisting round knobs requires wrist rotation, which can strain both typical and atypical hands. This change benefits everyone in the house because, not only can multiple body parts (hand, elbow, nub, and sometimes even a foot) manipulate levers, but younger children tend to have better dexterity with levers. If changing every handle and faucet is too costly, start with the ones your child uses most, such as their bedroom, bathroom, and front / back doors. Over time, you can add more doors and faucets.



The more you incorporate adaptive equipment into the regular functioning of your house, the more receptive your child may be to using adaptive equipment in other contexts. Other examples are adaptive cooking devices and exercise equipment, which will be covered in future columns.

~ LFC

## HAND CAMP H.E.R.O.E.S.



**HEART**

**EMPOWER**

**RESILIENT**

**OPTIMISTIC**

**EMBRACE**

**SELFLESS**

Our HEROES have been identified and nominated by their fellow campers, or other members of the Hands to Love community for the work they are doing to further the mission and vision of the H2L organization. If you know someone who embodies these traits, we invite you to nominate them! Our HEROES committee reviews each submission to ensure the nominee meets the criteria. To nominate someone, click [here](#).

HANDS TO LOVE'S  
**BOUTIQUE**  
GRAND OPENING



*Click link to open!*

**OUR MISSION** IS TO PARTNER WITH FAMILIES TO ADDRESS THE UNIQUE PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH UPPER LIMB DIFFERENCES THROUGH FUN, SUCCESS-ORIENTED EXPERIENCES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY.

**OUR VISION** IS TO DEVELOP STRONG, CONFIDENT PEOPLE WHO LEAD IN THE WORLD!