



WHERE DIFFERENCE DOES NOT EQUAL DISABILITY

We would love your submissions!



We welcome Hand Campers, from Fireflies through Pathfinders to submit a poem about their life, their Hand Camp experiences, or both.

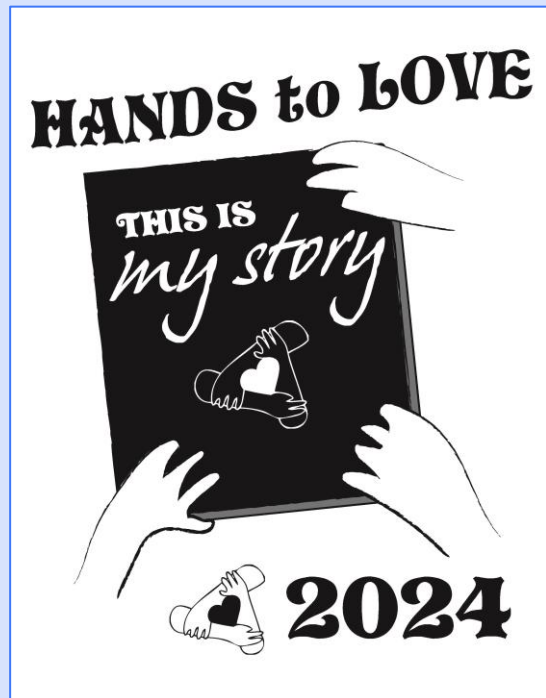
They are welcome to write the poem by hand, as long as it's legible; or they can type it. They can also submit a drawing that illustrates their poem.

The contest winner will have their poem printed on the canvas art bag that is given away at Hand Camp! All entries are due by January 31st, 2024.

Please send submissions to info@handstolove.org.

Lastly, please keep all original copies of submissions until a winner is announced.

We can't wait to see your ideas!



HAND CAMP IS COMING!
April 12 -14, 2024



NOW OPEN!

VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS

[Click here to register as a volunteer.](#)

H2L INNOVATION STATION

by Laura Faye Clubok, MS, OTR/L

On The Other Hand Therapy

Columbus, Ohio



The first ever Practitioner Group for Occupational Therapists with Upper Limb Differences is a collaboration between Laura Clubok, MS, OTR/L and Amber Jenkins, OTD, MLS, OTR/L. Laura is a Pediatric Occupational Therapist and owner of *On The Other Hand Therapy* in Columbus, Ohio. Amber is an assistant professor and doctoral capstone coordinator in the OT and Health Science Department at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, Missouri. This is The Wonder of Zoom - Amber and Laura have not yet met in person!

Laura was born with a left-hand difference and grew up in a suburb west of Boston, MA. Amber was born with Poland Syndrome, which included a right-hand difference, and grew up in rural Kansas. The group members have a variety of upper limb differences and are either Occupational Therapy practitioners or Occupational Therapy graduate students in Master's degree, Clinical Doctorate, or PhD programs.

The group started meeting in May of 2023 and has met five times. It has 6-10 regular attendees across four different time zones! Areas of discussion have included: research on health outcomes for people with upper limb differences, overuse syndrome, graduate school curricula and accommodations, social emotional wellness, education for families, and resources. We have so much in common as both upper limb different adults and occupational therapists, so it can be difficult to shut the conversations down after 75 minutes!

Amber reflects, "I've been in OT education for 17 years, but this group has afforded me an invaluable opportunity to learn from others with similar conditions and support students who aren't just going to be OT's, but OT's with limb differences. This is a highlight of my career!" According to Laura, "this group is a dream come true," as she finds the connections and discussions helpful, motivating, and powerful. In addition, because Laura didn't know any other adults with upper limb differences when she was going through graduate school or as a new practitioner, she finds it so fulfilling to be offer mentoring and suggestions for the younger members who are currently in or recently completed graduate programs.

The group has made a powerful impression on the graduate students as well. Madelyn Hubbs, a 2nd year in the Masters of Occupational Therapy program at Maryville University in St. Louis, MO, reports "No words can express my gratitude for having the privilege of gaining knowledge from such phenomenal practitioners. I cannot wait to see what this group accomplishes one day, and I will always be grateful for these connections that have changed my life!"

Grace McClelland, starting the OTD program at Xavier University in Cincinnati this fall, notes, "with OT school starting soon, I am grateful to have found a group of amazing people where we can share our thoughts and struggles. It is always exciting to see where our conversations take us each meeting. It has been so nice to connect with new and familiar faces across the country, especially those from H2L!"

If you are an occupational therapist practitioner or graduate student with an upper limb difference or you know of one, kindly reach out to otontheotherhand@gmail.com and let us know!



Hands to Love is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We strive to provide all Hands to Love events and activities at the lowest possible cost to our special families. These services are available with thanks to the generous support of our donors, like you! Thank you for helping us make a difference in the lives of the families we serve. To give, please click [HERE](#).



H2L Online Boutique

Click [HERE](#) to order your H2L swag!

10% off all orders pre-camp!

Proceeds from all sales go to Registration and Travel Scholarships!



If you have contributions or ideas for future newsletters, please contact Amy McClelland, Newsletter Editor amy@handstolove.org

WHY WE GIVE

by Tiffany Southern



In 2014 I heard about a camp in Florida that was centered around kids with upper limb differences. We were interested and curious about what this camp entailed, so we tracked down the website and applied for a spot at the next camp. When we received the acceptance letter, we were so excited. We were also nervous since we hadn't ever run into anyone with the same difference as our camper, Piper. However, we were up for the adventure so, in April 2015, Piper and I hopped on a plane and flew from our hometown of Salt Lake City, Utah to Florida.

When we arrived at the camp on the first day, we were greeted by so many people! From the very start, we could tell this was a special place. We were given a Family Pal, Trevor; he and his parents were so welcoming and helped us navigate this wonderful world known as Hand Camp. Piper made friends within minutes of being there, and I met so many wonderful parents who had similar concerns and experiences to what my husband and I had been through raising a limb different child.

Piper was 13 years old the first time we went to camp, and it changed our lives. The activities they were able to participate in, the lifelong friends they made, and the freedom to just be a kid who didn't worry about what others would think of their hand was amazing. I also never realized how much the support and understanding of other parents meant to me until our first Hands to Love Camp. It was just Piper and me that attended, and we both cried the day we left, but Camp became our time together that we looked forward to every year thereafter.

Piper has since moved on to college and unfortunately, due to final exams being around the same time as camp, we haven't been back in a couple of years. We both have plans to start volunteering once they have graduated, and I look forward to the day when we get to step back onto the campground again.

I've mentioned this to others at past camps, but I didn't know the impact that one weekend would have on both my child and me. After that first camp experience was over and we were on our way back home, Piper told me that this was the first time they had ever felt normal. That statement, and the confidence that this camp has given my child, is why we give support every year. I don't want any child, or their family, to not be able to experience the comradery that we felt and the support and friendships we've made while at camp. Every child deserves to feel included, empowered, welcomed, and loved, and Hands to Love gives that to everyone who walks into H2L Camp.