



**Staci Penner**  
**2014 Jingle Bell Run/Walk**  
**Medical Honoree**  
**Wichita, KS**

My name is Staci Penner and I am an occupational therapist (OT). I have been a practicing OT since 1997 when I graduated from The University of Kansas Allied Health School of Occupational Therapy. I have been married for 20 years and have two wonderful children, my son Damon age 16 and my daughter Laniese age 14.

During my professional career, I have worked with ages in several settings that have included pediatrics, acute care, rehab hospital, skilled care and long-term care. I have been able to work with and help patients with osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and juvenile arthritis throughout my career. Arthritis can be such a debilitating disease in all forms. I enjoy helping patients with arthritis be as independent as they possibly can through exercise, activity modifications and even finding adaptive equipment that will help.

I worked at Newton Medical Center from 1999 to 2006 and I have been in long-term care since 2006. I currently work for RehabCare at the Newton Presbyterian Manor as their Occupational Therapist. I love talking to geriatric patients or their family members, and helping them find ways to still be independent, and return to their own homes.

Arthritis is debilitating, but I like to show people that they can move beyond the limitations of their arthritis. Arthritis has affected my family for many years. When my mother was in her 40s, she was diagnosed with osteoarthritis that has affected many of her joints. She has had several surgeries to treat the affected joints she has, but she has also had to learn to fight the pain and the fatigue, and live life to the fullest. I was diagnosed with osteoarthritis in 2011 and have had to have surgery to remove bone spurs. My mom and I stay active and most summers our family is planning or going on a hiking trip to one of the National Parks. We do not let arthritis control us!

The biggest impact that arthritis has had on my life other than professionally is that my daughter was diagnosed with Polyarticular juvenile arthritis (JA) when she was nine years old. We have walked with her through the daily battle with JA for the last four years.

As an OT, I used the Arthritis Foundation as a resource for my patients and as an information source for my practice and latest research. Since my daughter's diagnosis, I have become very involved with the Arthritis Foundation, and especially have learned to love the advocacy part of the Foundation. I have always tried to teach my patients to be advocates for themselves, and to educate those around them about their needs and their arthritis. The Foundation provides great advocacy resources for all levels of advocacy! Just ask me and I would love to share my love for caring for people with arthritis and my love for the Arthritis Foundation.

We are thankful for the commitment Staci has shown over the years, and we are thrilled to recognize her as the 2014 Jingle Bell Run/Walk medical honoree.

**About the Arthritis Foundation**

The Arthritis Foundation ([www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org)) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the unacceptable impact of arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults and 300,000 children, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. To conquer this painful, debilitating disease, we support education, research, advocacy and other vital programs and services.