



Bridget Kirby
2013 Jingle Bell Run/Walk Youth Honoree
Chicago, Illinois

Bridget was diagnosed with juvenile idiopathic arthritis in December, 2010. Her diagnosis was a lengthy and frustrating process. It took a little over a year for Bridget and her parents, Kristin and Neil to find out what was happening. During that time Bridget was plagued with joint pain which was baffling for the entire family.

Today, Bridget is doing great and is able to go about her daily routine with minimal discomfort. Every once in a while her knees or ankles hurt during exercise, but after sufficient rest, she feels pretty good.

At the close of the 2012/2013 school year, this budding freshman was very active in sports, and even played soccer on the sophomore team. She was voted MVP by her teammates; which was a big honor. Way to go Bridget!

In her spare time Bridget likes to hang out with her friends, listen to new bands, and play sports; she's been into soccer since the age of five. She likes to play basketball and volleyball, but she admits to playing pretty much anything that's fun! Bridget also volunteers through her youth group, where she is an officer; and used her spring break to paint and reconstruct homes for families affected by Hurricane Katrina in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Bridget is the big sister to Colleen and Nora; and has room in heart for Maible, a golden retriever and three cats; Molly Maisy and Herman!

School is important to Bridget and Language Arts is her favorite subject; she acknowledges the wonderful teachers she's had over the past few years. When asked about her hopes for the future she said, "I would like to get into a good college and make the most of everything I am involved in!" We are confident that Bridget can and will do whatever she puts her mind to. She is courageous and a real inspiration to others! We are proud to have her as the 2013 Jingle Bell Run/Walk Youth Honoree.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (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.