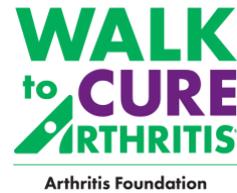




Amanda Barnes
2016 Walk to Cure Arthritis – Chicago
Youth Honoree



At just five years old, Amanda Barnes woke up one morning unable to walk. After a visit to her pediatrician, Amanda was referred to the rheumatology department at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago. Two weeks later, she was diagnosed with polyarticular juvenile idiopathic arthritis.

Since her diagnosis over four years ago, Amanda has had good and bad months. Currently, arthritis affects five of Amanda's joints, but it has been up to 27 joints. She has tried a myriad of treatments, including injections and occupational therapy. Amanda has had severe side effects from some medication, but thankfully has been stable on her current medications the past year.

Amanda needs to wear wrist splints, go to occupational and physical therapy and to use a wheelchair for activities that require a lot of walking. But, even through her trials, Amanda has triumphed. She walked a 5k with Girls on the Run last year. In 2015 Amanda attended Camp JAM away from home for three nights. Amanda also has a kind heart, as she wants to be a phlebotomist so she can help kids who are scared while getting blood drawn.

Amanda gets frustrated sometimes when people don't understand arthritis. She said, "People can't 'see' my arthritis, so many times people think I am faking the pain for attention." This is one of the reasons Amanda wants to be an honoree, so she can help spread awareness that arthritis affects kids. She also wants to help other kids going through the same things and to find a cure for arthritis.

Amanda is a true Champion of Yes! Thank you for sharing your story and serving as the 2016 Walk to Cure Arthritis – Chicago Youth Honoree!

About the Arthritis Foundation The Arthritis Foundation, www.arthritis.org is the Champion of Yes. We exist to conquer arthritis, which strikes one in every five adults, and is the nation's leading cause of disability. For nearly 70 years, we have upheld our unwavering promise to meet the unique and urgent needs of families living with juvenile arthritis (JA). We lead the fight for the arthritis community to help conquer everyday battles through life-changing information and resources, access to optimal care, advancements in science and community connection. Our goal is to chart a winning course, guiding families in developing personalized plans for living a full life – and making each day another stride toward a cure. Our tools and resources help more children say Yes to making life better. Visit www.KidsGetArthritisToo.org, the online home for the 300,000 families living with arthritis.