



Felicia Reinhard
2015 Jingle Bell Run/Walk – Kankakee
Adult Honoree
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Felicia Reinhard was diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis in late 2013. At just 24 years old, Felicia has tried to remain positive and to live a relatively normal life.

Felicia started feeling poorly about a year before her diagnosis. Her doctors could not figure out what was causing her pain or why she was getting sick so often. After basic testing, her doctors noticed some abnormalities and knew something was wrong. It took a year and many more tests for Felicia to receive an official diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis.

Life has become much harder for Felicia after her diagnosis. She used to be very active but can no longer do things she once loved, like horseback riding. It became too painful and difficult for Felicia to ride horses or even take care of her horses in the stable. Felicia has had to cut back on physical activities she enjoys personally and at work, but that doesn't mean she can't be active at all. Felicia takes a water arthritis class and has started to swim, "Water has always been one of my big loves, so to be able to still do that is so important to me!"

Through all of these obstacles, Felicia is proud of her continued positive attitude, "Although there are days I really struggle, for the most part I am still the same happy and cheerful person I have always been. I have not let my illness break me." Felicia has found many outlets to share her story. She is a photographer and shares her experience as a young adult with arthritis through writing and social media. Felicia even started an organization that photographs kids and teens with disabilities free of charge.

Felicia has many hopes for the future. She hopes her treatments begin to work and the progression of her disease is slowed. She also hopes to continue to inspire others through her journey and remind people there are always things to smile about and to live for, "This disease does NOT define me. I define me!"

Felicia is very excited to be an honoree this year, "I would love to share my story with more people also fighting these diseases. We need cures and we need awareness!" Felicia is thankful to be connected to strong and amazing people also fighting arthritis through the Arthritis Foundation and she is a true champion of YES!

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. We have been leading the fight for the arthritis community for nearly 70 years 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 make each day another stride toward a cure.