



**Northwest Illinois/Wheaton, IL
Jingle Bell Run/Walk Honoree
Amanda “Mandy” Dominguez**

Mandy was first diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) in December, 2009. She also suffers from Still’s disease, Sjorgren’s disease, and Addison’s disease. Despite these tremendous medical challenges Mandy remains positive and refuses to give up.

After a bad car accident and a shoulder surgery Mandy felt that her health started to “go whacky.” After several agonizing months of doctor visits, tests and lab work, Mandy received her diagnosis. She said, “Getting an actual diagnosis was a blessing and curse at the same time.” Even though she had to give up teaching fifth grade, her pottery business and the joy of living life with spontaneity she remains upbeat.

Despite the difficulties of performing the daily chores of life like taking the stairs, doing laundry and dishes, cleaning, cooking and walking her dogs; Mandy views each day as a victory. She has decided to make the best of what life has to offer, and has accepted the challenges that she faces and works daily to adapt to her new lifestyle.

In spite of her RA and other medical conditions, including a knee replacement; Mandy has completed her Master’s Degree in Special Education, and still finds time to bring awareness to others regarding autoimmune diseases. Mandy enjoys spending time with her family and friends, playing with her two French Bulldogs and going to the movies and watching TV. She is creative, crafty, loves her Apple products and even finds time to write a blog – www.randomamanda809.blogspot.com. She also spends time working out, going for walks and attending Glen Ellyn Bible Church.

Mandy looks forward to the future with great anticipation and hopes to work with special education students; and increase her level of physical activity. When asked about the Arthritis Foundation and the Jingle Bell Run Mandy said, “The Arthritis Foundation has been, and continues to be an excellent resource for information and support. I love participating in the Jingle Bell Run. It is a fun, lighthearted activity that brings folks together for a common good during the holiday season. My friends and family look forward to it each year-- it has become quite the tradition.”

We are grateful for Mandy and those who support her. We are proud to have her as the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk 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.