

February 17, 2025

Dear DSAIA Community,

When the DSAIA Board initially approached me about the idea of merging DSAIA into NDSC's operations, I was immediately intrigued and interested. My excitement has grown over time as we have discussed what this could look like, and the NDSC Board has enthusiastically supported this idea.

My first DSAIA conference was in 2013 when I was the new Executive Director of the DSA in Cincinnati. I left that weekend deeply impressed by the passionate and talented group of individuals devoted to creating a network of Down syndrome organizations and empowering them with resources to serve their communities better. Over the years, I've spoken at most of the DSAIA conferences, brought dozens of staff and board leaders from Cincinnati to the conference, learned a great deal from exceptional leaders, and tried to add value to our community whenever opportunities arose.

Fast-forward to my new role as Executive Director at the National Down Syndrome Congress, and I am incredibly excited about the opportunity for DSAIA to merge with NDSC. Many members of our Staff and Board have served in various leadership capacities with local Down Syndrome affiliates. They, too, are excited to dream about all the possibilities for impact to enhance our efforts in empowering local Down Syndrome Affiliates to serve better their local communities and the individuals with Down syndrome we all care about.

Our intention is to honor the legacy of DSAIA, stay committed to the mission that has tied together DSAIA, and continue with the core programs that have served board and staff leaders and their communities well through the years. In addition, we will continue to look for innovative ways and best practices to help all of us be better.

This spring, we will ramp up the efforts of three committees to support the DSAIA program. We will also begin a search process to find a DSAIA Program Coordinator to lead our affiliate's program. This individual will be fully integrated into the NDSC Staff Team. Given the nature of our team, this new staff member will be relieved of many administrative duties that past Executive Directors of DSAIA have had to manage.

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas you want to discuss with me, please don't hesitate to contact me at jim@ndsccenter.org. I look forward to our future together!

Sincerely,

Jim Hudson
NDSC Executive Director