



Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter  
September 2023



## Time to Listen and Hear!

So, I am sitting on a plane, looking over our beautiful city contemplating life as I travel back home to Chicago. It is so peaceful. You see the city with the frame of moonlight shining through the clouds. Tampa Bay's glistening and the stillness of life.

It was my intention to reflect quietly about the loss of our cousin, Coleman Ewell, but in light of his death during suicide prevention month I decided to reflect on the importance of maintaining peace during our storms. Life is fragile and people often suffer in silence. We never truly know what each of us are going through and how we are managing our personal and professional challenges. You get the hellos and obligatory how are you doing, most of the time - BUT sometimes you are fortunate enough to meet someone who will pause and share their time with you. As I sit here in silence I wonder in our QUICK paced life. ARE we doing the best we can for each other? I do not have an answer for that, of course, but as I stare out the window of a plane, left alone with my thoughts, that is what comes to mind.



People, ALL people, regardless of what it looks like on the outside manage life. It is my hope and prayer as we end this Suicide Prevention month that we all reflect on how much it matters to truly ask someone how they are doing, AND most importantly to listen to the response.

Time to Listen AND Hear!



Homeland  
Security

September is Suicide  
Prevention and  
Awareness Month

[Learn More](#)

## More Reflection

Joy and Pain come together in tsunami waves. Our family is experiencing that now. The pain of loss of a promising, talented, loving and handsome young man and the joy of seeing our daughter reach a milestone in her journey. We had a photoshoot for senior pictures last week right after we lost our cousin. It was strange. In truth it felt like we were going through life in slow motion. Joy and pain jointly pulling at us.



We wandered into the studio and were met by the friendliest photographers I have ever met. They were excited about the photo shoot and were eager to make our daughter smile. If you have met a person on the spectrum-that is not always the easiest task. The photographers snapped away and were patient until we got the “money” shot. I could not believe it.

Standing in front of our daughter at this very moment our family prayed for

- Seeing her truly glow.
- Reflecting on her journey and what it took to get here.
- Obstacles and the continued cycle of Joy and Pain!.

I just had MORE Reflection and felt a wave of gratitude for all those people

- WHO said hello
- WHO asked how we were doing
- WHO offered a hand
- WHO gave our family respite
- WHO listened
- WHO heard us
- WHO provided professional services
- WHO were vested in our family

THANK YOU! For all the pain - there is joy and so much more!

## 22,000 person waitlist- REALLY

So let's talk about the Agency for Persons with Disability. The agency better known as the APD is required to support persons with Disabilities as they age out of the K-12 environment and become adults. Florida is pretty low on the list of supportive services but when you are told by a plethora of professionals to “apply” for the APD and you “may” receive assistance IF you “get off” the waitlist of 22,000 persons - your only reaction is REALLY!?! Is there a camera in the room? It is ironic - right?

The truth is I have literally met dozens of families struggling to support their loved one and NOT asking for a hand out. Rather, these families want what every other family desires, pure support when they are unable to provide it. Many families do not qualify for federal benefits because they make too much money. Many children transitioning into adults are not “disabled” enough to qualify for benefits. Many families prepared well but not for the long haul. So what do we do? Advocate.

I was pleased to learn that Florida's next speaker, Representative Daniel Perez is equally appalled by the current waitlist. Moreover, I appreciated his candor in sharing that he has a sibling on the spectrum and how that impacted his own parents. Integrity matters. I take Representative Perez at his word. If you care like I do, drop him a note of encouragement.

# POLITICO

Florida's next speaker has three wishes

[Read About It](#)



FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Contact Information for Daniel Perez

[Contact Daniel Perez](#)

## Bright-spot!

I would be remiss if I did not share our bright-spot this month! Our older daughter is now in the second year of her Ph.D program. I cringe now at calling her by her preferred future name Dr. AWESOME and for the flack I will receive from the English major who now believes she is smarter than her parents. In all seriousness we could not be more proud.



We recently traveled with our daughter to Europe as she was given the opportunity to present in Cologne, Germany. The highlight of the trip was watching her face at the performance of, As You Like It. Beautiful to see when someone we love finds their true passion and that passion mirrors what will become their life's work. Four more years to go - Whoo-Hoo

Bright-spot!

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