

## 2021 NSDA Virtual Leadership Workshop | Letter of Welcome

**NSDA Leaders**, welcome to our **2021 NSDA Virtual Leadership Workshop**! Since 2005, the NSDA has hosted an annual Leadership Program. As was the case last year, we cannot meet in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we still want to connect online. You are here because of your commitment to our NSDA mission and we thank you for your service. At the core of the NSDA are our amazing volunteer leaders who drive and shape our organization. From our Board of Directors to our Regional Representatives, our local Support Group Leaders, and our Area Contact Persons, we are all moving in the same direction.

This is the NSDA's 17<sup>th</sup> annual leadership program. This is no minor feat when you consider that we are a small non-profit, patient-driven organization. The fact that we continue to invite our leaders to participate in these events points to the high value that the NSDA places on our support volunteers.

Like all previous Leadership programs, this year's agenda promises to be informative, interactive, and inspirational. For 2021, we have selected a theme acronym of: **RAISE**: Research Awareness International Support Expansion. We are mindful that our outreach is international and that we have expanded our mission to include related voice disorders.

The NSDA support network is one that promotes leadership development and empowerment. Some of you are with us today for the very first time. Some of you have been with us for every one of our seventeen Leadership programs. Regardless of the tenure you have held within the NSDA organization, each of you is valued and appreciated. Because of the tireless efforts of people working together as a team, the support arm of the NSDA is alive and well. We are grateful for our progress and we look forward to making further strides in the future.

The NSDA believes that it is our challenge and our duty to ensure that our 300+ volunteer leaders have the knowledge and support that they need to be educators, spokespeople, and support providers. The NSDA's goal is to equip its leaders with the most comprehensive and relevant information they need. View the leadership resources on our website, look at the documents in the Materials Packet, and listen to the topics being discussed here today. You will realize that we have the printed resources and the staff and volunteers which are needed to carry out our important work.

Remember that you are not alone. We are in this fight against SD and related voice disorders together. Make your voice heard and find your place in service. The NSDA is here to help in any way that we can. We celebrate your essential activities which breathe life into our organization. You are our ambassadors and you carry our NSDA banner high. **NSDA**: Nothing Stops Determined Advocates. We need the NSDA and the NSDA needs us.

The NSDA is a community which cares about you and your voice. We may not know why we were given an SD diagnosis. What we do know is that each of us has a tremendous opportunity to make a difference for the NSDA community. Let us be grateful to be on the SD journey together. "Anything is possible when you have the right people there to support you." (**Misty Copeland**)