



**MICHIGAN MEDICINE**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

# U-CAN NEWSLETTER

December 2017

Hello,

Welcome to the December edition of the U-CAN Newsletter.

The month of December is the most celebrated month of the year, with 13 holidays celebrated in the month alone. It is the one month out of the year where so many different cultures, religions, nationalities and races come together to celebrate with family, friends and coworkers.

Listed below are five of the 13 December celebration and how they started.

**Hanukkah**- Also known as the *Festival of Lights*, is celebrated around the world for eight days and nights, commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple in 165 BC. Eight candles are lit with special rituals held on each day, represented by a branch on the Menorah to honor the holiday.

**Winter Solstice**- also known as *midwinter*, is an astronomical phenomenon marking the day with the shortest period of daylight and the longest night of the year. It is the moment at which, for the Northern Hemisphere, the sun is at its lowest, or most southern, position in the sky. In many cultures, including our own western culture, this is the first day of the season we call winter.

**Christmas**- an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ observed most commonly on December 25th as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. A feast central to the Christian liturgical year, it is preceded by the season of Advent or the Nativity and initiates the season of Christmastide, which historically in the West, lasts twelve days and culminates on the Twelfth Night.

**Kwanzaa**- Originally called *Nguzo Saba*, is a week-long celebration held in the United States and in other nations of the West African diaspora in the Americas. The celebration honors African heritage in was first celebrated in 1966 culminating in a feast and gift-giving. Derived from the Swahili word meaning "first fruits of the harvest, was created by Maulana Karenga, has seven core principles that Karenga believed represented the best within communities. It is observed from December 26 to January 1,

**New Year's Eve**- also known as *Saint Sylvester's Day* in many countries, is the last day of the year and celebrated around the world. The earliest recorded New Year's celebration is thought to be in Mesopotamia around 2000 B.C. Many of the rituals of the holiday have ancient roots and are similar around the world. It turns out that many are designed to ward off evil spirits as we enter the darkest time of the year, winter.

I want to update you on an article I wrote about in the August/September newsletter concerning Nicole Ver Kuilen, the amputee who did a 1,500 mile triathlon across the entire west coast called, "Forest Stump". The team completed the triathlon and is getting back to their everyday lives! You can read all about their journey and how it all came to an end. Check out the website: <http://alumnus.alumni.umich.edu/run-nicole-run/> for all the details. Congratulations to Nicole and her team!

The Amputee Coalition (AC) launched a new initiative this year called "Amplify". Its purpose is to make sure the voice of the limb loss and limb difference community is heard. Throughout the campaign, the AC will share stories of how people with limb loss and limb difference amplify their lives and spotlight the issues involved in getting prosthetic care covered. Access to quality prosthetic care is essential to life. Speak up for yourself and for others. No is not an answer or an option.

You can get involved with the Amplify initiative in many ways; by writing your insurer, to your legislator and to your local community. For more information, visit the website: <http://amplifyyourself.org>

### **Upcoming Meeting**

Our next U-CAN meeting will be held on **Tuesday, December 5th from 5:30-7:30 pm**. It's our annual holiday party and white elephant gift exchange. Bring a dish to pass and a white elephant gift (something from around your house that you no longer want or a gift you haven't used)! Wrap it up pretty and bring to exchange! Come out for all the great food, fun and laughter!

### **Upcoming U-CAN 2018 Meeting schedule:**

**January 2nd meeting - Please note that the meeting for this month has been cancelled, will resume in February**  
**February 6<sup>th</sup> - Year in Review and group discussion**

**Quote of the month:** "Happiness always sneaks in a door you did not think was open" - Anonymous

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### **Articles**

- See how this retired double amputee marine, Rob Jones, that set out to complete 31 marathons in 31 days, completed his incredible journey, today.com, November 14, 2017; <https://www.today.com/video/meet-the-marine-who-ran-31-marathons-in-31-days-on-prosthetic-legs-1095595587588>
- Meet the top 10 CNN Heroes of 2017 and vote for your favorite; One is an amputee who created her own support network and another is a gentleman from Detroit who started a youth boxing gym program, cnn.com, November 16, 2017; <http://www.cnn.com/2017/11/02/world/top-10-cnn-heroes-2017/index.html>
- Researchers discover new use for ultrasound technology to help amputees get greater control of prosthetics, techxplore.com, November 17, 2017; <https://techxplore.com/news/2017-11-ultrasound-technology-amputees.html>
- High-tech neuroprosthetic 'Luke Skywalker' arm lets amputee touch and feel again, digitaltrends.com, November 19, 2017; <https://www.digitaltrends.com/cool-tech/prosthetic-luke-arm/>
- Trampolining teenage amputee wins pride of sport award, itv.com, November 23, 2017; <https://www.itv.com/news/2017-11-23/inspiring-britain-trampolining-teenage-quadruple-amputee-wins-pride-of-sport-award/>
- Amputees can learn to control a robotic arm with their minds, medicalexpress.com, November 27, 2017, <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-11-amputees-robotic-arm-minds.html>

### **Research Corner**

- ❖ A company in located in Detroit is working on the development of a smart phone app that will help alleviate phantom limb pain. They are currently in the testing phase of the app and are looking for volunteers, preferably those with upper limb phantom pain who would be willing to help us test this technology. The test calls for a simple 20 to 60 second smart phone video of the participant moving his or her existing arm. The app will flop the video image, ultimately showing the participant a video where they can see two functioning arms and hopefully alleviate the phantom pain through a version of mirror therapy. The second phase will focus on lower limb phantom limb pain.

If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact:

Pat Grant

Pocket Lightning, LLC

Phone: 586-722-4978

[pmgrant@wowway.com](mailto:pmgrant@wowway.com)

- ❖ A Multidisciplinary Design team at the University of Michigan is working with a nonprofit organization called E-NABLE to improve the designs of their 3D printed prosthetic device for **Transradial** amputees. As part of their efforts to improve the device, we are interested in gaining feedback to drive the needed adjustments.

If you are interested in providing feedback about your experience using an upper limb prosthetic by participating in a brief interview, please contact:

Jackie Katz, [jkatz@umich.edu](mailto:jkatz@umich.edu)

- ❖ **Saginaw Valley State** University Occupational Therapy students are searching for participants for a study involving phantom limb pain and mirror therapy.

**Participation requirements:**

- 18 years of age or older
- are at least 3 months post-amputation
- currently experiencing phantom limb pain (PLP)

- ❖ **Researchers** at Indiana University's Department of Health Sciences are conducting a study to better understand the experiences that individuals with amputations have with massage therapy.

Participation requirements:

- Individuals who are 18 years or older and have at least one amputation
- Individuals who have or have never received a massage therapy treatment
- Completion of an online survey, between 20-30 minutes

You can access the survey at: <https://redcap.uits.iu.edu/surveys/?s=HAWRN4JJ87>

In appreciation of participants' time, each who completes a survey will be entered to win a \$25 Amazon gift card

**If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact:**

Dr. Niki Munk:

Phone: 317-278-8658

Email: [nmunk@iu.edu](mailto:nmunk@iu.edu)

## **Upcoming Events**

- **Free Gait Training Clinics for individuals with lower extremity amputations, STAR Rehab, Grand Blanc, MI.** For more information, contact 810- 733-3375. The last clinic date for the year will be on: **November 30<sup>th</sup> 4:30- 6:30 pm**
- **Dance Mobility- Amputee and wheelchair Ballroom Dancing class, Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm at Fred Astaire Dance Studios in Bloomfield Hills- 2172 Franklin Rd.** The Dance Mobility program provides free amputee and wheelchair ballroom group lessons led by Fred Astaire's professional, certified dance instructors with experience in teaching amputee and wheelchair ballroom dancing. Participants are welcome to bring their own dance partner or they will be paired with a volunteer partner. The class is free but you do need

to make a reservation. For more information or to reserve a spot, please call: 248-454-1715 or go to the website; <https://www.fredastaire.com/bloomfield-hills/>

- **Parent & Child Network Holiday Party, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 11:30 AM -2:00 PM, held at the O & P Clinic-2850 South Industrial Hwy, Suite 400, Ann Arbor.** Food, fun and games for the whole family. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Carla Vollmer at: 734-975-7432 or [cvollmer@med.umich.edu](mailto:cvollmer@med.umich.edu)
- **Wheelchair Basketball Clinic, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 1:00-4:00 pm, Peace Lutheran Church, 8260 Jackson Rd,** children ages 5-18 years of age. To register for the clinic or for more information, please contact Becky McVey at: [rmcvey@med.umich.edu](mailto:rmcvey@med.umich.edu)
- **Yoga with the American Ninja Warrior, Zach Gowen, University of Michigan Orthotic & Prosthetic Center, February 17, 2018, 11:30 am – 1 PM.** Wear loose clothing and come out and join us for some fun and stretching. For questions or for more information, please contact Carla Vollmer, 734-975-7432, [cvollmer@med.umich.edu](mailto:cvollmer@med.umich.edu)
- **Oakland County Parks and Recreation** has adaptive recreation and assistive devices. Check out their website for more information; <https://www.oakgov.com/parks/recreation/Pages/Adaptive-Recreation.aspx>  
They also have events throughout the fall, please visit the website for more information;  
<https://www.oakgov.com/parks/Pages/events.aspx>
- **Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living** offers sports, recreation and art all year round. They have a year round bowling league and a fitness gym that is open from 9 am- 4 pm Monday- Friday. For more details or for more information, check out their sports and recreation site:  
<http://www.annarborcil.org/offices/recreation/about-sport/>  
and their calendar of events: <http://www.annarborcil.org/events/>
- **Amputee Coalition Travel Adventures** To check out trips planned for 2018 or if you would like to plan your own trip and want more information on accessible travel, visit the website: <http://easyaccesstravel.com/>

Don't forget about U-CAN when it comes time to donate! It helps keep the group going and fund all the great activities we do; <https://leadersandbest.umich.edu/find/#!/give/basket/fund/311702>

I wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.  
See you in 2018!

Carla