UATP, CPD to Take on the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge

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Kim Maibaum (center) and friends.

My name is Deanna and I was nominated by a friend, Wendy Shelton, to complete the ALS ice bucket challenge. It’s been well over a week, but I waited to complete the challenge so I could introduce to you my friend Kim Maibaum.

When Kim was 50 years old, she was diagnosed with ALS, more commonly known as Lou Gehrig’s Disease. ALS attacks your muscles and nerves. The symptoms initially begin with mild muscle stiffness followed by severe weakness and then paralysis of the muscles of the limbs and trunk. Eventually, ALS will affect other vital functions such as speech, swallowing and for many the inability to breathe without a ventilator.

Unlike you and I, if Kim has an itch she is unable to scratch it. If her arm or leg position is uncomfortable she is unable to adjust it. One of the few things ALS does not affect is the mind. Kim’s mind is as sharp today as when she was diagnosed.

The average life expectancy for a person diagnosed with ALS is 2 to 5 years. Only 10 percent of those living with ALS will live longer than 10 years. Kim falls into that 10 percent category. On Sept. 16, 2014, Kim will have been living with ALS for 10 years.

While born and raised in New York, Kim is a Utah State University graduate and Cache Valley resident. She was an interpreter for the deaf (American Sign Language) for 22 years before having to quit because of her illness. She has been an interpreter for many influential people including President Clinton during a rally for Senator Ted Kennedy.

The State of Utah only pays for 17 hours per week for Kim’s care providers. This leaves Kim to pay for the remaining 6 days of the week, and she’s exhausted her financial options.

You can learn more about Kim, ALS and donating to her care fund at www.keepkimhome.blogspot.com. You can also 'Live a Day in the Life of Kim' by watching this video.

Thanks for your support and participation!