



The NGO Give us wings, is an organization for people with dysfunctions, handicap, rare disease and other special needs. The NGO was officially registered on 13 th of October year 2010 as an initiative of parents of children with special needs and activists active in the field of disability. The structure is very unique. The members of the NGO are mostly underage children with disabilities registered with a membership card in the archive of the NGO. Also the parents are active members as their legal representatives.

The NGO give us wings has an active structure for promoting the rights of the children with disabilities in Macedonia, and as part of the portfolio we can list the following activities:

- Creating an interactive platform for communication – web site and a give us wings facebook pages. On this web site many of the activities can be found as well as information about the services that the NGO is offering to the children with disabilities

- Donation of 28 Christmas gift packages to the children hospitalized in the Children Clinic in Skopje-Oncology department.

- A project for 16 TV series on national TV for raising awareness of the needs of marginalized and socially endangered families with members with disabilities. Their stories were told to the Macedonian public, and donations lines were open through the operators in Macedonia. All funds raised through the donation lines were donated to the 16 families, and significant orthopedic aid and equipment was provided according to their needs.

- Organisation of a 3 day training session for therapists on Therapeutic swimming for children with disabilities in 2011. The training session was facilitated by certified experts in the field with more than 10 years of experience from Serbia- Bojana Milichevich and Bojan Pochucha.

- * From May, 2011 , we established a free service for therapeutic swimming for children with disabilities 5 days a week in the sport center 'Boris Trajkovski' Skopje. The NGO Give us wings managed to provide free facilitation and a support from the Self Government of Skopje as well as payment for the therapists. More than 150 children went through the program which is still ongoing and still free of charge for children with different types of disabilities.

- * In the period Between 17-19 October 2012 a Conference was held in the sports center Boris Trajkovski called "Freedom in water". The conference was organized by the association Give us wings in cooperation with the swimming club "Natasha" and agency of public relations "Pristop MK". The lecturer was a well-known expert Mr. Nott Johan Lambek- expert on the field of Halwick Method.

- Public initiative with the Ministry of Health in Macedonia, for providing 2 very important medicines for epilepsy and children with Tuber Sclerosis complex through the public health system in Macedonia.



- Donation of a significant amount of Ripamicin – a very expensive drug for children with TSC for 3 families.
- On 02 and 03 , 2012 , we held second training session on therapeutic swimming for children with disabilities. The training was facilitated by the expert of the Halwick method Mr. Veselin Lukovic. The training was held in the Sport Center Boris Trajkovski.
- In 2012 the NGO give us wings established a cooperation with the Organization for hypotherapy in Serbia, and we financed a training for a special therapist for Hypotherapy. Natasha godzirova has become the first certified trainer for therapy with horses for children with disabilities.
- The NGO give us wings in 2012 became an active member of a public platform for poverty, and submitted a legislative changes proposal to the Government regarding the social wealth fare of marginalized communities.
- On October 2012, give us wings organized a first training session for therapeutic method with of a use of horses-Hipotherapy. The seminar was facilitated by Natasha Godzirova, first Macedonian certified trainer.
- Participation in a public educative seminar of physical therapy, organized by the NGO for Physical Therapist in Macedonia. Give us wings held a brief session on the services of the NGO and how can those services affect the development of the children with disabilities.
- Project for renovating a public institution for providing a physical Therapy for children with cerebral palsy, Majcin Dom- Skopje. With this project Give Us Wings managed to involve 12 well established1 companies in donation for this center, and we managed to rise more than 50000 dollars in materials and workforce for renovation of the premises. We managed to create a new and well equipped space for children with disabilities.
- Donation of 40 Christmas gift packages to the children with disabilities for 2013.
- In 2013 the association Give Us Wings managed to establish a new concept of a cultural event with an inclusive content. Many artists and celebrities took part in the awareness event held in the National Opera and Ballet in Skopje. The event is traditionally held every year, and the interest is very high from the wide public. On the event we have more than 50 participants with disabilities who express themselves with different forms of expression in join acts with Macedonian celebrities and artists. On this event we had the first fashion show where side by side with famous Macedonian woman a models with disabilities took part. Every act in the show is inclusive. This event is an outcome of many inclusive workshops organized between celebrities and children with disabilities. This event is one of a kind and contributed a lot in a positive perception of the people with disabilities and their abilities.
- The association Give Us Wings, decided to purchase a Horse for implementation of the hypnotherapy by the certified trainer Natasha Godzirova. The purchasing of the horse and the



needed equipment will provide an opportunity for creation of another free service for the children with disability.

- On **09.10.2013** the association Give Us Wings signed a agreement of cooperation with the University pshysical health for including the students as trainees in the service of fre hydrotherapy for children with special needs

- In the period of **16.10.2013 – 17.10.2013** Give us wings provided another certified training session on hydrotherapy- Halwick Method, for the students of the university and the new trainers for therapy in water for children with disabilities.

- The association Give us wings provided a donation on specialized handmade toys for work therapy for children with special needs, in the public kindergarten Srnichka, in order to improve the inclusive environment for children with special needs.

- As part of the regular New Year event give us wings provided 30 gift packages for children with special needs and a Christmas party for the kids and the families.

-Give Us Wings in 2014 became a member of an alliance of associations for rare disease. As an active member they implemented activity for legislative change with the Government of R. Macedonia. On an initiative od Give us wings the Government of R. Macedonia made a decision of creating a fund for medicines for children with rare disease. The law is a new tax, 1 denar from each cigarette box, goes to the fund for medicines of children with rare disease. This is a huge fund now, and provides medicines for over 5000 children in Macedonia.

-As part of the annual training session for Halwick method in the period of 03.10.2014 – 05.10.2014 a new seminar was organized. 5 new trainers and 15 trainer assistants were trained to work with the children with disabilities. In cooperation with the NOVA International Schol students from the high school committed on community service activities with the children with disabilities through the free service for therapeutic swimming.

-Signing a agreement of cooperation for including kids with disabilities from the municipality Kisela Voda in the therapeutic swimming with the support of the Municipality of Kisela Voda.

- On **27.11.2014** we organized the Second Ball of \Diversity. An inclusive event. This year the ball became part of the national program of the Ministry of Culture of Macedonia and cooperation the Macedonian National Theater. With the same concept of inclusive art acts celebrities from Macedonia and children with disabilities took part in the event and created Magical evening. On this event the fashion show was raised on a new level. A creator with disabilities was supported by well-known Macedonian fashion label to lunch her first new collection which was presented on the ball. Also with the support of the association Positivo, a chocolate auction was held at the end of the event. The event was under a patronage of the first lady of Macedonia Mrs. Maja Ivanova

-In 2015 we signed an agreement with the Association of the visually impaired persons in Macedonia for inclusion of children with visual impairment in the therapeutic swimming.



- A charity event organized by the association for horseback riding Dona. At the event there was a exhibition of hats which were sold and the raised funds were given to the association Give Us Wings and our projects. Also an art workshop was held at the event for children with disabilities and all the art drawings were put on sale for raising money. The money from the event were used for training another person for certified trainer for horseback riding for children with disabilities and purchasing of another Horse.

- In September 2015 give us wings supported the congress for physical therapists in Ohrid. Give us wings presented the servicer which are provided to the children with special needs for 5 years free of charge. Give us wing also provided experts for expert lecture on Halwick Method- Proffesor Dr. Rajko Vute- Professor for sports activities and rehabilitation of children with special needs on the University in Ljubljana- Slovenia. Mrs Ariana Illi, licensed therapist of horseback riding for children with special needs from Serbia. Profesor Memmet Ozek – Neurosurgeon from Istanbul Turkey .

- Co-organization on a special expert conference on inclusive education for children with disabilities on the private University FON in Skopje. On this conference many experts took part on different aspects of the inclusive education and scholarships for special needs students were announced.

-Establishing a new service for Music therapy for children with disabilities, another free service using music as a therapy tool for children with disabilities funded by Ohdiska Banka –Skopje.

- Partnering on a join project for Dysleksija with a partner organization Ajnshtajin. Project for raising awareness on dyslectic children in education and training sessions for professionals.

-The association Give Us Wings is a partner organization and supporter of the Parent Recourse center, the organization for supporting families and provider of free services (parent to parent support, legal aid, psychological aid and specialist aid) , supported by UNICEF

Future planed activities

- Club house – a club for children with special needs for different interactive approaches for treatment and socialization of children with disabilities in an inclusive environment.
- Organization of 2 conferences and training sessions for therapeutic swimming halwick method.
- Creation of a network of disability organization for join activities
- Regular donations
- Campaign for raising awareness for children with disabilities.



Recommendation Letter for Rebeka Jankovska Ristevski – President of Give Us Wings Skopje

President of the association Give Us Wings, Rebeka Jankovska Ristevski is one of the greatest advocates for the rights of people with disabilities. She is the first public figure (celebrity) who spoke honestly about her child having a rare disease (tuber sclerosis). Her public appearances prompted and encouraged many parents in Macedonia to stand and advocate in behalf of their children. She became the face of the people with disability in Macedonia. Her public appearances were one of the breakthroughs in the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities and helped many parents to face the conditions of their children. As a person she was always altruistic. Since the beginning of her musical career she participates in numerous humanitarian and charity activities, concerts and events. As a result of her community engagement she has won many awards. In November 2010. As a follow-up of her charity work, together with other parents and activities she initiated and founded the association Give Us Wings.

Since March 2011. As a journalist and advocate for the rights of children with disabilities as a writer and producer she started a new cycle of TV Shows on national tv AB Channel which aim to help people with disabilities, raise awareness and funds to help families in need. 16 families were filmed, their stories were told to the public, and significant donations were made to improve their condition.

Rebeka is responsible for most of the projects in the association and has initiated a large number of activities. She has unselfishly used her celebrity status and contacts, as a result of her rich musical career, to gather donations for the needs of disabled people and managed to ensure the smooth and continuous existence of therapeutic swimming through several municipalities in Skopje over the 5 years.

She is the Producer and Artistic Director of the Ball of Diversity, an event of which we are particularly proud of.

In 2015 she was the winner of the International Prize for Humanity of the prestigious event Hello Awards in Serbia.

Her appearance in the media always raises awareness and contributes to the more frequent presentation of topics related to persons with disabilities. As a mother she faced many struggles related to her son's condition, but that made her more determined to help the community and provide revolutionary services for the children and people with disabilities in Macedonia. Over the years she managed to create a team of experts and activities to spread the mission and vision of the association Give Us Wings in Macedonia. She is a highly moral and ethical person and with her involvement she has managed to motivate many people and companies as well as public figures to join her in the promotion of a better and quality life for people with special needs in Macedonia.

As an advocate she was part of countless conferences and round tables on legislative changes and approaches for people with disabilities in Macedonia. Her involvement as a president in Give us



Wings is on a pure volunteer base. So far she gave and contributed of the establishment of the organization more than we could have ever imagined.

She is a visionary in always providing new services and always free of charge as a support of the families. Loved and respected she is the only public figure in Macedonia advocating for this marginalized group and we do believe she is the type person who can benefit tremendously from engaging in meaningful projects and inquiry under a more formal system as your funding program. We wholeheartedly recommend her, and without any reservations. We think she will enrich your institution with meaningful contribution no less than she has done so here in our association.

Sincerely

Board of Give us wings represented by

Maja Lazarevska

General Secretary of Give us Wings