

You deserve
Good things!

*Tap the
power of
you!*

Sure, money, luck and connections can jump-start a dream. But you don't need them to succeed, because you have something even sweeter: an unstoppable mix of determination, hope and can-do attitude.

People who succeed are people who keep going.
People like you!



Everyday Heroes

Proof that it only takes one person to make a difference

"We help all kids be proud of who they are!"

Laura Talmus's daughter, Lili, felt socially isolated due to a rare birth defect. And when she passed away at 15, Laura honored her brave girl by spearheading a movement to create a culture of belonging in schools

"Sweetie, I'm so sorry, but I can't come get you," Laura Talmus told her daughter, Lili. "Is there a teacher you can sit with?"

It wasn't the first time Laura had received this call from her daughter, who was eating lunch alone in the bathroom. When Lili was young, it hadn't been a big deal that she had a rare cranial-facial anomaly that made her look different from other kids. But by middle school, the sleepovers had ended and invitations to birthday parties had disappeared.

In search of a new start, Lili decided to attend a boarding school, but one horrible night, Laura awoke to a call from the school: At age 15, Lili had passed away in her sleep from unexpected medical complications.

Grief-stricken, Laura knew one thing: She wanted Lili's life to make an impact.

"If I were to start a cause in her memory, it wouldn't be about her facial differences," she shared with friends. "It would be about what I wish she'd experienced: a world beyond differences."

At the time, no one was using the term "social

isolation," or a lack of social connection—but that was exactly what Lili had experienced in her life. And when Laura's friends created a video about Lili's experience, showing it to over 165 people who came to her posthumous 16th birthday bash, the outpouring of love and support was incredible.

People are really moved by her story, Laura thought. This video is too powerful not to share!

It turned out that Lili's classmates had been trying to think of a way to honor her memory too. Together, with Laura, they decided to show the video to an auditorium of middle schoolers.

The response was overwhelming, and soon, Laura and the young teens were getting invited to speak to other groups. *The isolation Lili experienced is affecting students all over, Laura realized. We need to get this to more kids!*

Inspired and holding Lili's memory close, Laura launched Beyond Differences (BeyondDifferences.org) to spread awareness and provide solutions for schools so that everyone feels a sense of belonging, with programs such as Know Your Classmates, No One Eats Alone and Be Kind



"I'm a better person for loving a child with differences," says Laura, whose daughter, Lili (left), inspired the movement

Online. Today, it's grown into a national movement reaching over 10,000 schools.

Beyond Differences trains teen leaders to be activists for inclusion—like Helen Colvin, a high school sophomore, who says, "Lili's story really inspired me to make everyone feel seen and included."

"Lili is my North Star, and I have hundreds of stories that keep me going," Laura says. "For example, the caretaker of a child with physical disabilities who has, sadly, never had a friend at school, told us that, after our program, a group of classmates approached this boy and asked him to play during recess. Watching children in the audience open up, vow to make new friends and tell their families about this 'extraordinary' girl named Lili fills my heart. I'm a better person for loving a child with differences. I can just hear Lili's sweet voice saying, 'Mommy, I'm proud of you!'" —Hannah Chenoweth

Has a person or animal come to your rescue? Email the story with your name, phone number and a photo to: WWFeatures@WomansWorldMag.com. Or mail to: Everyday Hero, Woman's World, 270 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. By submitting your story, you are granting Woman's World permission to use it and your photo in the print magazine, on our website and/or in future special issue publications. Due to high volume, we are unable to return submissions received.

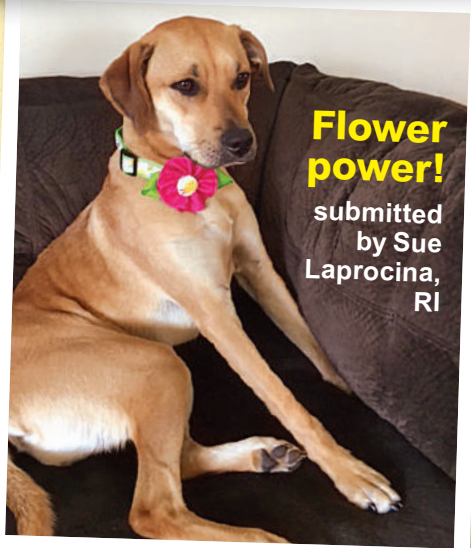
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Love & Laughter



**Messy hair,
don't care!**

Jensen,
2 months,
submitted
by Michelle
Mackinen, GA



**Flower
power!**

submitted
by Sue
Laprocina,
RI



**"It's May! You forgot to
set the alarm again!"**



**"Never give up,
for that is the
place and time
that the tide
will turn"**

—Harriet Beecher
Stowe



**"Hats off
to you!"**

Lila, 3,
submitted by
grandmother
Loren
Parrish, PA

When I was putting on a pair of pants that were slightly too tight, I jumped up and down to try and squeeze into them. I landed on my foot at an odd angle, and I could tell immediately that I had fractured something. As if that wasn't embarrassing enough, when I went to get an X-ray and told the tech what happened, she

**Was my
face red!**

—T.Y., Rockville, MD



**"I'm one in
a melon!"**

Theodore,
13 months,
submitted by
grandmother
Paula Gibson,
PA



**Cutest
cousins!**

Zylah, 3, Ariana,
4, submitted by
grandma
Ann Brand, MI

**Send us photos of your cutest
'babies' and you may see them in an
upcoming issue of Woman's World!**

Please include the name and age of the child or pet, as well as your name, address, phone number and relationship to the child or breed of the pet. Send to: Love & Laughter, *Woman's World*, 270 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632 or email to LoveAndLaughter@WomansWorldMag.com.

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