



**LIFE** as a **ZEBRA**  
FOUNDATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE LIFE AS A ZEBRA FOUNDATION SPEARHEADS “MICHIGAN INVISIBLE ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK” RESOLUTION FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW**

**Lansing, MI** – For the second year in a row, the Michigan Senate has unanimously adopted a resolution formally declaring the week of May 24-30, 2015 as Invisible Illness Awareness Week in Michigan. Senate Resolution 0063 (2015) was adopted on Tuesday, May 26, following similar action by the House of Representatives last week. Senate Majority Leader, Arlan Meekhof, introduced Katie Dama Jaskolski, co-founder of the Life as a Zebra Foundation, to the Senate floor.

Katie Dama Jaskolski, who has been diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS) and postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), and her sister Allie Dama, who has been diagnosed with polyarteritis nodosa vasculitis (PAN), started the Life as a Zebra Foundation after both women spent months with debilitating symptoms and running into dead-ends while searching for correct medical diagnoses. The sisters began blogging about their lives and journeys with these chronic illnesses, and growing popularity of the website led to the creation of the [Life as a Zebra Foundation](http://Life as a Zebra Foundation). The Life as a Zebra Foundation’s mission is to raise awareness for illnesses that are “invisible” to the outside world, as well as to raise funds for the research of these conditions.

The 2015 Invisible Illness Awareness Week is themed “Making the Invisible, Visible” to reflect the widespread scope of the issue and share the stories of people living with invisible illness. The purpose of Invisible Illnesses Awareness Week is to raise awareness of invisible illnesses among the general public and medical community, while reducing the stigma surrounding these illnesses.

Dama Jaskolski commented, "The adoption of Invisible Illness Awareness Week in Michigan for the second year in a row shows that we are continuing to make strides in keeping the dialogue open in our community and in our state about invisible illnesses, and that they are just as real, and can be just as debilitating as visible illnesses. One of Life as a Zebra Foundation's goals is to educate and raise awareness of invisible illnesses among the general public and the medical community and to reduce the stigma that surrounds these kind of illnesses. We are grateful for the opportunity to spotlight these issues on the state level for the second year in a row, to raise awareness, and to let others who are living with invisible illnesses know they are not alone, and that there is hope and help out there."

Individuals can participate in Invisible Illness Awareness Week by conducting outreach in their communities, providing information and resources, encouraging community members to model acceptance of individuals living with invisible illnesses, donating to invisible illness awareness organizations such as the [Life as a Zebra Foundation](#), and/or joining [Life as a Zebra Foundation's planned social media campaign](#). In addition to engaging on social media, individuals may also share their experience living with invisible illness with the Life as a Zebra Foundation by submitting their stories to [jen@zebration.org](mailto:jen@zebration.org).

### **About Life as a Zebra Foundation**

The [Life as a Zebra Foundation](#) was founded by two sisters, Katie Dama Jaskolski and Allie Dama, who each lived with debilitating symptoms while searching for correct medical diagnoses. Dama Jaskolski has been diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome and postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome. Dama was diagnosed with polyarteritis nodosa vasculitis.

The Life as a Zebra Foundation educates, advocates, and secures funds and charitable contributions for the prevention, treatment, and research of various hard to diagnose invisible illnesses. For more information, please contact Katie Dama Jaskolski at 517-256-1088 or [katie@zebration.org](mailto:katie@zebration.org) and visit [www.zebration.org](http://www.zebration.org).

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