

Text of request to Kowalski's Market 'moase@kowalskis.com' sent 1/15/21

Mr. Oase:

I am writing to request that Kowalski's Market adopt the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program (www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us). This program is in alignment with Kowalski's civic business philosophy as demonstrated by Kowalski's support for a senior shuttle program with Newtrax. Scott Olson, Community Transportation Coordinator, Newtrax, Inc., provided your name and contact information. Scott stated that I can inform you that he and Mike Greenbaum support this request.

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program is a way for individuals with a hidden disability (e.g. individuals with dementia, autism spectrum, hearing deficits, brain injury, Parkinson's disease, general aging-related decline, etc.) to discretely self-identify as someone who might require extra assistance, patience, or time from colleagues and staff, by wearing a lanyard, lapel pin, or bracelet bearing the sunflower logo. Wearing the Sunflower does not entitle anyone to special privileges. Anyone can get a free Sunflower item from participating businesses or services. Businesses and service providers who participate in the Sunflower program donate the Sunflower lanyards to customers who request them. The employees of the participating businesses or services are trained to provide special assistance to people wearing the Sunflower. Details about the Sunflower are available at www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us and <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us/our-history>. Personal stories about the value of wearing the Sunflower are found at <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/blog/category/sunflower-stories>

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower originated for use in airports, but in the UK, the Sunflower is now recognized in many sectors: transportation (all major UK airports, buses, trains), retail services, financial services, National Health Service clinics, football leagues, etc. As of the beginning of 2021, at least 10 major airports in the US participate in the Sunflower program. MSP began participation in the program in November, 2020. <https://www.msairport.com/airport/accessibility/hidden-disabilities-sunflower-program>.

In contrast to the UK, airports are the only US sector currently participating in this program. The Dementia-Friendly Airports Working Group (DFAWG), based in Minnesota, believes that the greater use for this program is to increase hidden disability awareness and civil behavior in the general population. To this end, DFAWG has begun to identify US business and service sectors that might participate in this program, and allies in the hidden disabilities communities who might assist with these requests. As the organizer of the Dementia-Friendly Airports Working Group www.dementiafriendlyairports.com and a longtime shopper at the St. Paul Kowalski's store on Grand Ave, I hope that Kowalski's will adopt this program.

I am certain that many of your shoppers will appreciate your recognition of their special needs for civility and occasional extra assistance. Be assured that wearing the

sunflower does not entitle anyone to special privileges or complicate retail functions. This is a link to the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program as used in Tesco stores in the UK <https://www.tesco.com/help/invisibledisability/> I am copying this email to Ruth Rabét, originator of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program ruth@hiddendisabilitiesstore.com, to facilitate your exploration of this program.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sara

aging activist

Sara Barsel, Ph.D.

Dementia-Friendly Airports Working Group, organizer

Roseville Alzheimer's & Dementia Community Action Team, co-organizer

Roseville Community Health Awareness Team (CHAT), co-organizer

Travelers with Disabilities Committee – Metropolitan Airport Commission (MN), member

TSA Disability & Medical Condition Coalition, member

Ramsey County Citizens Advisory Council Adult Services Committee, retired co-chair

Phone: xxx (home landline with message machine)



Actively working to improve travel conditions for people living with dementia and their care partners.

www.dementiafriendlyairports.com