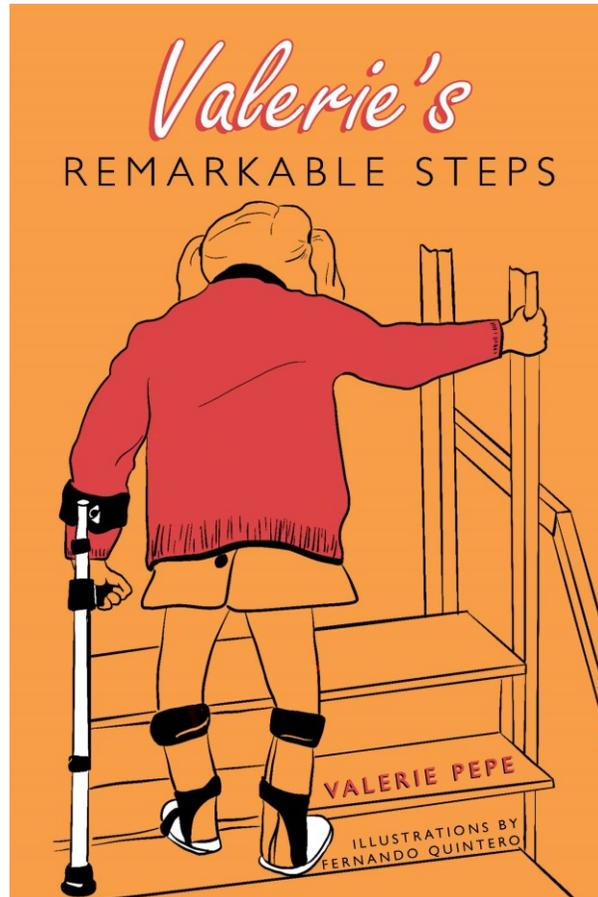


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For Immediate Release



Valerie Pepe was born with Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita, known as AMC. She is the author of two published memoirs: *Deformed: My Remarkable Life* (Mediacs, 2016) and *Deformed: My Remarkable Life Continues* (Mediacs, 2020). This is her first book for children. “After meeting so many parents and children at AMC conferences, I decided to write these stories, which are based on my life, just for children,” says the author. “They can be read aloud by adults to children, or by the children themselves.”

Title: *Valerie's Remarkable Steps*

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Valerie Pepe



Valerie Pepe is the Chairwoman of the AMC (Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita) Music Festival which raises funds and awareness about her rare congenital birth defect (one in every 3,000 births). She is featured in the documentary film, “The Sweetest Gift: Living with Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita,” directed by Margaret Chaidez and released in 2013. Valerie’s essays have appeared in *Woman’s World*, *DStripped Magazines*, *Snug Harbor* and *The Staten Island Advance*. She has a BA in English and an MS in Education from St. John’s University, and a Certificate in Creative Writing from New York University. From 2010-2012, she hosted the internet radio interview program, “The Val and Betty Show.” Valerie works as an Associate Staff Analyst for the New York City Housing Authority. She commutes every day to her job in Manhattan from her Staten Island apartment, the neighborhood where she grew up in an extended Italian-American family.

Born and raised in New York City, Fernando Quintero recently retired after a 40-year career as a Resident Building Superintendent and Heating Instructor for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). His love of drawing developed when he was asked to illustrate the complex heating plants in the instructional manuals he used to teach his students. *Valerie’s Remarkable Steps* is his first published illustrated book.