

Serving people with developmental disabilities since 1954

A Message from Steve Strom, *Executive Director*

It's back to school time once again for our traditional school students in Wake County. This is an especially exciting time for many of the high school students we serve. After finishing a successful summer of employment, many are ready to return to the familiar routines of friends and classes. One of the biggest concerns for individuals with developmental disabilities still in high school and their families as well is what kind of employment opportunities are out there for people with disabilities?

The Arc of Wake County's Project SEE program, now in its 30th year, has trained more than 400 teens and young adults in community jobs at grocery stores, faith communities, offices, food pantries, restaurants, bakeries, and nurseries. The individuals learn many of the necessary skills needed for future job success – punctuality, following directions, proper attire, working with others, and customer service. Our job site supervisors are very complimentary of the progress that the individuals make during the five week training program. This past summer one of our students was offered a job after Project SEE ended. You can read about Aaron's successful job placement in this newsletter.

As The Arc's board reviews how our agency can support individuals with their employment needs, I am happy to announce that The Arc of Wake County is the recipient of a grant from The Arc of The United States and The Walmart Foundation. The Arc of The United States received a \$3M grant from the Walmart Founda-

tion, in July 2009, to support efforts to improve outcomes for youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), including Autism, as they transition from school to adult life. The Arc sub-granted \$2.25M to local chapters of The Arc throughout the United States in support of the new initiative. The Arc of Wake County was one of only 45 chapters nationwide to receive one of these grants. The purpose of The Arc of Wake County's grant will be to expand our existing Project SEE program to a school year program. The Arc will partner with local universities to help us provide testing and outcome measurement to validate the effects of our program in transition outcomes. Our other partners will include Vocational Rehabilitation and Wake County Special Education teachers who will assist The Arc in recruiting candidates for the program.

We are proud to be one of the 45 chapters creating programs and setting high standards of best practices and creating models for other chapters to assure that youth with developmental disabilities achieve the outcomes they desire as they transition from school to adult life. The impact of the project will be better transition outcomes, specifically greater inclusion and involvement of youth with developmental disabilities in independent living, employment, post-secondary education or vocational training, and community, social and civic affairs. We will continue to keep the membership abreast of our progress over the next two years in our newsletter and our website.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Cooney, *President*
Lawrence Gould, *Vice President*
Sarah Smith, *Secretary*
Tom Stanley, *Treasurer*
Jennifer Pfaltzgraff, *Past President*

Monica Barnes
Nicole Caldwell
Andrew Delbridge
Crystal Foreman
Lisa Hanson
C.J. Harper
Rose Reaves
Blake Scott
Wendy Whitener
Dave Woody

STAFF

Steve Strom, *Executive Director*
Mike Brown, *Guardianship Specialist*
Kiersten Drummond, *Employment Specialist*
Michelle Foy, *Program Director, Retirement and Leisure Supports & Services*
Doug Gill, *Retirement Coach, Retirement and Leisure Supports & Services*
Helen Leblond, *Employer of Record Coordinator*
Rich Martins, *Program Director, Supported Employment*
Stacy Miller, *Guardianship Specialist*
Revonda Russos, *Adult Services Coordinator*
Kevin Swenk, *Employment Specialist*
Ben Tomczak, *M'n'M Singers Choir Director*

Arc Member to Compete in Special Olympics World Summer Games in Greece

Five athletes from across North Carolina have been selected to represent the United States at the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, according to Keith L. Fishburne, Special Olympics North Carolina president/CEO. As part of Special Olympics Team USA, these athletes will compete against athletes from more than 185 countries around the world. These World Games, will be held at the birthplace of the Olympics and are scheduled to run from June 25 to July 4, 2011.

The Arc's very own Monica Hernandez of Wake County will participate in Gymnastics. Monica is "Very excited to go to Greece and meet people and compete." She is proud to be on Team USA and "She is hoping to do good and win some medals." She thinks, "It will be very fun."



Pattie Lopez, her mother, says, "Monica has enjoyed being involved in Special Olympics for over 12 years in many different sports. She has gained so much enrichment in her life through the Special Olympics, and we are thrilled to be involved with this great organization. It is a wonderful way to get exercise and broaden your social opportunities. We encourage everyone to get involved either as an athlete or a volunteer."

Team USA will consist of about 300 athletes from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Athletes will compete in Athletics, Aquatics, Bocce, Bowling, Canoeing, Cycling, Equestrian, Golf, Gymnastics, Powerlifting, Sailing, Tennis, Basketball, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball. They will be accompanied by about 120 coaches and support staff who represent 39 states.

"Our five athletes from North Carolina are about to embark on a very memorable experience," said Fishburne. "Their performances will open eyes and change attitudes. We know they will make our state and country proud."

During the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, the "land of fair play." More than 7,500 athletes from 185 countries will compete in 22 different Olympic-type sports. More than 25,000 volunteers are needed and more than 40,000 family members will be on hand cheering the athletes on. Special Olympics athletes not competing in World Games will also play an important leadership role by acting as officials, assistant coaches, reporters and spokespeople.

Visit <http://www.sonc.net/compete/sport-events/world-games/> for more information about Special Olympics Team USA- NC.

Workshop for Dance Professionals: Teaching Dance to Children with Special Needs

The Arc of Wake County is partnering with Arts Together, a downtown private preschool, for a pilot project to train dance educators, dance artists and others in a multidisciplinary approach to creating movement-based art with youth who have physical or developmental disabilities, challenges with learning, or emotional or behavioral disorders. The primary goal of the project is to increase opportunities for youth with special needs to participate in making artful dance that communicates their unique experiences. The project provides both training and hands-on experience. This project is supported by the NC Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

Dance artist and friend of The Arc of Wake County, Virginia Hill will be leading The Arc's dance workshop on Saturday November 6th 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at Crossroads Fellowship Church. The Arc is looking for children with special needs between the ages of 5 – 11 to participate. Your child will receive a free morning of dance and movement instruction while professionals learn how to work with children of different abilities. Space is limited to 20- call to reserve a spot. Look for information on our workshop for 12 – 18 year olds in December!

The Arc Says Good-Bye To A Good Friend

Carl Leslie Byrd Jr., age 71, of Raleigh died June 9th 2010 after a short courageous battle with leukemia.

Carl was born and raised in Erwin NC. Carl attended Duke University and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill. He spent many years employed in NC State Government and was a devoted member of Hayes Barton United Methodist Church. Next to his family and friends, Carl's passions were golf, Duke basketball, and NC barbeque.

Carl is survived by his loving wife Virginia, of 49 years, and youngest daughter Kristin of the home; eldest daughter Leslie Koscielniak and husband Chip of Raleigh; middle daughter Donna Sauers and husband John of Hudson, Ohio. Carl is also survived by his five granddaughters of whom he was most proud: Allison Koscielniak, Elizabeth Koscielniak, Megan Sauers, Caroline Sauers, and Kimberly Sauers, as well as by his brother Kenneth Byrd of Greensboro.

In lieu of flowers the family would appreciate memorial donations be made to The Arc of Wake County (1300 Saint Mary's Street, #502, Raleigh, NC 27605).



Saturday, September 18th the Applebee's in Triangle Towne Center hosted a Flapjack Fundraiser to benefit The Arc of Wake County's self-advocacy group, People We Are. \$700 was raised during a delicious pancake breakfast that was enjoyed by many who came out to support The Arc.

Self-advocates sold the majority of the tickets for the event. The Arc hopes to schedule more small fundraisers such as this event. In doing so, we create opportunities for self-advocates to take more ownership of their program and therefore create a sense of empowerment.

THE VILLAGES
OF WAKEFIELD PLANTATION
presents the 2nd annual

Run, Walk, or Ride

5K run/walk/ride

Sunday, October 31, 2010

2:00 – 4:00 in the afternoon

The Run, Walk, or Ride is a great opportunity to enjoy an afternoon of fitness with family & friends while supporting programs that assist children with disabilities and their families.

For more information call 878-8787

To register online visit www.sportoften.com

COST: \$25

T-shirts: \$5

[Must register by October 9th if you are ordering a t-shirt.]

My Experience with Project See's Confection Connections

by Evan Balsler

My name is Evan Balsler, I am sixteen years old, and I have autism. During the project, Confection Connections, I learned how to make treats such as pretzels dipped in chocolate and roasted sugar-coated pecans. I also learned many skills about running my own business like making a mission statement and keeping inventory. We visited restaurants and examined their sanitation habits. At a cupcake shop, I had the world's worst cupcake. It had dry icing and the cake was stale! I realized we could do better! I think Confection Connections could really take off compared to a business like that one.



I consider this program to be a valuable learning experience for me and I think many others could benefit from this program as well. It was always clear to me what my job objectives were each day. The program was fun for me too. My favorite part about it was when we sampled the confections. It was only to make sure they were qualified for



customer consumption, of course! I especially loved the dark chocolate turtles! All in all, I think the project is a wonderful program and I would highly recommend that The Arc of Wake County would continue to run this program.

What is

Confection Connections

During Project SEE, The Arc of Wake County created a new learning opportunity for students interested in owning their business. With the help of our newest job coach, Maggie Zschiedrich, we launched a pilot project called Confection Connections. The program taught skills in candy production, packaging, labeling, sales and delivery and customer service. Special thanks goes to Hayes Barton United Methodist Church for the use of their kitchen for five weeks and to Crossroads Fellowship Church for the special candy making equipment used during the program.

This pilot was intended to give individuals the opportunity to learn what it's like to own and run their own business. Additionally, the program gave The Arc another successful opportunity to show the public that individuals with developmental disabilities can be involved in all types of community employment or business ownership with the right supports.

Whole Foods Cary- Giving Aaron a Chance

Whole Foods Cary, one of our newest Project SEE partners, recently reached out once the program concluded and offered Aaron Chen a job! Store team leader, Dan Thomas, saw the potential in Aaron and hastily gave him a chance to work part-time and show off his new skills before he was offered a job at a competing grocery store.

Aaron jumped at the chance and began working immediately at the store. Early on, his favorite part about his job was bagging groceries and putting them into the customer's cart. Kevin Swenk, his job coach, went on to say, "Aaron is actually doing a better job than some of the other baggers at moving from station to station and serving every customer as efficiently as possible." It has now been two months and Aaron hasn't looked back. "He excels at the job in almost every facet," stated Kevin. "Moreover, during his most recent employee review that the company does for every employee he met or exceeded expectations in every category." Dan even recently said "if Aaron wants to work here the rest of his life, he will have a job."



Aaron's outlook on life and work ethic has had quite an impact on the team members. You can see him smiling, talking, giving high fives, and even shadowboxing with his fellow team members as he begins his work day. But when it comes to work, Aaron is a focused man. Dan commented, "Everyone steps up their game when they're working with Aaron. He does not let his disability stand in the way of doing an outstanding job. He enjoys his work so much that he has to be reminded to take his break."



Project SEE 2010 launched its 30th summer this year. We had 17 students participate this year. These students were placed at Cameron Village Library, Catholic Parish Outreach, Crossroads Fellowship, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

and we welcomed new job sites: Whole Foods in Cary and the YWCA at Hargett Street.

The end-of-program celebration was held at Crossroads Fellowship. It was standing room only as family, friends and support staff came out. The party was catered by Edible Accolades. We were able to express our appreciation to the job coaches and jobsite supervisors who made this a successful placement for each student. Each of the job coaches spoke about the students they worked with and the challenges they faced. Many of our students pushed themselves to accomplish their work goals. The job coaches realized they had learned a great deal from their students and hope their students learned as much from them.

Students between the ages of 16 and 21 who have a developmental disability and are currently enrolled in the Wake County school system are eligible to participate. Students on the OCS (Occupational Course of Study) can use the paid hours from Project SEE toward their diploma requirement. Please call our office or visit our website www.arcwake.org/projectsee for more information. Next year's program will run from June 27 – July 29, 2011.

Please Help Make the Holidays Special for a Person with Disabilities

Every year, The Arc of Wake County asks its friends and supporters to help provide holiday gifts to more than 90 people with developmental disabilities. Individuals, local companies, and faith communities have generously supported this effort. We also welcome new supporters to this program as we find there are more people than ever in need this year. This number includes approximately 33 O'Berry Center residents and approximately 58 individuals who are currently receiving direct services from The Arc of Wake County. With so much attention focused on our economy, we are asking for your support of these individuals with the greatest need during this year's holiday season. The people on our list would otherwise not even receive one gift.



We are requesting \$30 or a gift for each person on our list. If you can help us spread extra holiday cheer this year by adding one or more of these people to your gift list or giving tree, please call The Arc office at 832-2660. You may be assigned names and gift ideas, or you can mail us a check made payable to The Arc of Wake County with a notation "Holiday Gift Collection '10" in the memo line. Monetary donations need to be received at The Arc by Friday, November 12, and gift donations by Friday, November 19. The deadlines are early to ensure gifts are purchased and wrapped, ready for a timely delivery. If your organization needs more time to get your donation together, please call the office to arrange a new date.

We request that you not wrap gifts. However, we will happily accept donations of gift boxes and wrapping materials.

Thank you for making the holidays brighter for all of the individuals The Arc of Wake County and the O'Berry Center serve.

Not a member? Join Today!

- Reduced cost at The Arc of NC's annual convention, and other conferences and special trainings.
- Participation in the affairs of the local, state and national chapters of The Arc.
- Representation in local, state and national policy forums.
- Opportunities to contribute time and talent through volunteering.
- Insurance programs designed to enhance membership in The Arc for which members or their offspring MAY qualify.

Visit www.arcwake.org

or call the office @ 832-2660 x100

MEMBERS:

Check above your address on this newsletter to see when your membership expires! The Arc counts on its membership to help support valuable programs and services in our community.

If you support The Arc of Wake County through your workplace giving campaign, thank you!

The agency code for The Arc is listed below.



Attention! The Wake County Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC) are looking for individuals (in particular younger adults) from the Developmental Disability community to join this committee. CFAC is a self-governing and a self-directed organization that advises Wake County on the planning and management of the local public mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services system. They meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:30pm at the Whitaker Mill Senior Center located at 401 E. Whitaker Mill Rd.

For more information about the Wake CFAC go to www.wakegov.com or contact Caroline Ambrose at 833-1117

The 2009 audit for The Arc of Wake County is available.
Please contact our office to obtain your copy.



919-832-2660

www.arcwake.org

at:

Visit our website

The Arc of Wake County
1300 Saint Marys Street
Suite 502
Raleigh, NC 27605