

AWARENESS

Quarterly

Since 1958, supporting services, education and advocacy for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families

FIRST STEP TO SUCCESS PROGRAM NOW PART OF CSC HEALTHY BEGINNINGS SYSTEM OF CARE! SERVICES EXTENDED THROUGH AGE 5

Gretchen Rauch-Herron, Director of Disability Prevention, just joined The Arc of Palm Beach County at the end of June, but she already has big news.

The Arc's flagship disability prevention program, *First Step to Success*, has historically served children from birth to age 3 who are at risk for developmental delay or disability but who do not qualify for the state's Part C Services. *First Step*, only approved in the past to serve children up to age 3, was approved in November to now serve children up to age 5. "This has tripled our case load almost overnight," Rauch-Herron reports. "It shows how great an unmet need is out there."

Designed to keep at-risk children moving effectively toward developmental milestones so that they are school-ready by age 5, *First Step* has enjoyed a 98% effectiveness rate in the past, proving that with early intervention, these children can have significantly improved outcomes. Reaching these milestones are key to a child's ability to learn, speak, and move at critical periods that research shows lead to optimal abilities later in life. *First Step to Success* is exclusively

funded as part of Palm Beach County's CSC (Children's Services Council) Healthy Beginnings System of care.

First Step to Success' staff members enjoy diverse backgrounds. Rauch-Herron holds an M.A. in anthropology, with Developmental Specialists Janet Gros in education, Ruth Acosta in clinical psychology, and Erin Kline in child life. "We all come from different fields of study but all share a love of serving children and a passion

for the field of child development," Rauch-Herron reports.

First Step to Success' mission is to focus on the children's attaining developmental milestones while promoting secure attachments between nurturing caregivers and their children. Parents, as well as siblings and other caregivers, participate in the process fully. The staff recognizes that the parents are the children's first and best teachers. "We work to support them as they support their child's development."

First Step staff, from left: Ruth Acosta, Erin Kline, Gretchen Rauch-Herron, Janet Gros and administrative assistant Helen Gartner



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In-home and Center-based Respite Care entering their 20th year at The Arc of PB County

In addition to in-home services, Respite Care runs a center-based Saturday program (from 9am to 3pm) year round, alternating between Boca Raton and Riviera Beach locations. There children participate in arts and crafts and group recreational activities. "The kids absolutely love it and so do the parents," Rosen states.

THEY DESERVE A BREAK TODAY: United Way Continues Full Funding for Arc Respite Care

As a parent of two girls with autism (one biological, the other adopted), Jackie Rosen knows firsthand how essential a break from time to time can be. As director of The Arc's Respite Care program, she oversees a team of more than 45 trained caregivers who attend to children with disabilities, who range in age from birth to age 18, in their own homes. The process begins with a phone call to 561-721-2818. Rosen

then conducts a home visit to collect information about the child's behavioral, feeding and sleeping routines, completes a participant profile, and then matches the child with at least 3 workers who would be adept in that situation. The family has the final say in who will be their respite worker(s). Recognizing the importance of respite care to reducing neglect and abuse and to sustaining healthy family relationships, The United Way/Children's Services Council joint

program for children with disabilities has fully funded The Arc for the coming fiscal year. "Since I get to go out and meet the families, it is gratifying for me to know we are reducing the stress the primary caretaker has," said Rosen. "I see them before they've had any help and really notice the difference afterwards." Rosen and her staff are thrilled when they receive notes or evaluations written by the families letting them know just how much the program means to them.

ABLE TRUST AWARDS JOB DEVELOPMENT FUNDS TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

One of Florida's premier agencies promoting the benefits of hiring persons with developmental disabilities, The Able Trust, has awarded The Arc a two-year grant to build on employment initiatives undertaken in 2009. The "It's Not Just A Good Deed, It's Good Business" project, spearheaded by Leadership Palm Beach County's Class of 2009, is now ready for launch. A hard-hitting DVD illustrates opportunities available to employers as a result of hiring individuals who have disabilities. Additionally, Arc job developers are specially trained to help

businesses identify appropriate job possibilities, carefully matching expectations and abilities. Director of Adult Programs, Pam Heyer, comments that "once hired, Arc clients enjoy intensive one-on-one training at no cost to the employer as part of Arc's supported employment coaching, breaking the work requirements into manageable pieces for the employee and ensuring that supervisors and fellow employees are working well together. "Then we fade away, and just provide more minimal follow along services to help our clients keep their job as

requirements change over time," Heyer says. The second initiative approved by The Able Trust is an on-the-job training model piloted in 2009 in a collaboration between The Arc and The Breakers Palm Beach. An Arc job coach worked intensively with The Breakers supervisors to train Arc clients for jobs in grounds keeping, housekeeping, food service and other key support services. At the close of the 8-week program, Arc clients who met standards were offered permanent positions. X of the initial X trainees were selected. In 2010 The Arc will again work with The Breakers and will be identifying additional major companies



PUTTING ON THE RITZ IN RECREATION!

"What a fun year it has been in the Recreation Department. Hello and Thank You!" exclaims Director Julie Lobdell. "The children in summer camp got a chance to pose as members at the Ritz Carlton Club in Jupiter. They enjoyed the beautiful waterfall pool, a scrumptious daily buffet, and professional instruction in golf, tennis, dance, drama, and art." Lobdell smiles as she remembers that "the children would shout joyfully and rock the van in excitement every day when we arrived at the Ritz." As if that weren't enough, the Ritz had a cookout several weeks later and awarded the Arc with a generous check in support of its recreational programming for children with developmental



The Arc's Recreation Director Julie Lobdell (center), summer campers and staff thank the Ritz Carlton Golf Club & Spa in Jupiter for hosting August's special session!

DID YOU GET YOURS?

"Yep, it's here!," exclaims Arc Advancement Director Kim Hanson when asked if the Annual Fund appeal had arrived yet. "It's always exciting to see what everyone's contributions make possible when added together," she continues. "It might be \$10 for hand splints to enable a child to straighten her

forearm or \$100 to cover a DiVosta Supported Living coach to travel to 13 clients who need just a little extra support to live independently," she reflects. "The \$125,000 we raise in these annual gifts every year give us the flexibility to put funds where they may be most needed at any given time. They may not seem as glamorous as a major grant, but their impact is enormous," Hanson reports. It's easy to support The Arc. If you prefer, please go to

www.arcpsc.org and click "donate now." The secure site will ensure immediate application of your gift. "You can make a gift in honor or memory of someone, too," Hanson notes. "There is a comments section where that information as well as any additional comments can be entered."

HELP US GET OURS! through the 2009-2010 Annual Fund. Pledges are payable through September 30, 2010.

disabilities. The good news doesn't stop there. Lobdell reports that in September, The City of West Palm Beach dedicated the whole facility at Vedado Park to host programs for all ages. Sample programs include Arc Teen Nights Out, Game Night and Laser Tag. Vedado Park played host to an adults' Monster Mash Dance in October where "ghouls and goblins" rose to the occasion. Winter Camp for school age children at Vedado will mark the season with an array of jolly activities like caroling, tree decorating, and a visit with Santa. "The City has always provided us with funds and space, but now, an entire center! We are so grateful to them and are very excited to host additional programs here at Vedado," says Lobdell. The City of West Palm Beach is a leader in supporting the Arc in Palm Beach County and includes children and adults with special needs in many of their programs.

The Recreation Department hosts a variety of programs for children and adults year round. About 100 children and 150 adults attend programs each year. "I love to see my children grow up, become more independent, develop an interest in art and sports, be aware of fun places to go and be a part of the community they live in," concludes Lobdell.

In further recognition of the Recreation Department's contributions, The United Way/ Children's Services Council has increased its support of Arc Recreational programming for the coming year.

KUDOS TO ARC STAFF

The holiday season marks a time of much celebration. Apropos of that, there is something very special to celebrate at The Arc of Palm Beach County and that is the commitment of the staff to fulfilling The Arc's mission. According to Michael Papa, Executive Director, The Arc has been able to sustain and, in some cases, grow its programs in a declining economy, a fact which he attributes almost entirely to increased effort, imagination and collaboration on the part of the staff. He lauds "their incredible commitment. It's their efforts and their extending themselves even further than they have in

the past," said Papa. "We're doing a whole lot more with quite a bit less," he reflects following two years of severe public funding cutbacks and an economy in crisis. While staff members have been not only true to their missions within the confines of their own duties and responsibilities, Papa now recognizes an increased crossover among programs where staff are extending their efforts and supporting one another. "Program directors are looking for ways to create cross connections and synergies between what had previously been separate and distinct operations," Papa elaborates. "Now they're

looking for ways to leverage one another's skills and resources, abilities and understandings, in ways that can produce more than we could as individual programs." Keep up the good work, Arc staff. This is a great way to head into 2010.

It is hard to imagine The Arc without Ellie Trachtenberg. For 35 years, first in her role as head of Friends of the Retarded (founded 1976), then in her later years as an avid collector of pennies that she turned in for crisp new \$100 bills whenever the jar was full, Ellie was a stalwart supporter of The Arc's adult residents. We will miss her.

In Memoriam
Eleanor Richmond Trachtenberg
1915-2009

Eleanor Trachtenberg visits with some of the original residents at the Trachtenberg residence, named in her honor in 1985.



REALIZING ITS POTENTIAL: 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND REUNION SHOWCASES POSSIBILITIES THAT HAVE BECOME REALITIES!



On May 2, 2009, Potentials School alumni, current families, and original donors were invited back to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the founding of the first school in Riviera Beach. More than 150 guests enjoyed great food, including an absolutely amazing cake, a slide show featuring all alumni and current students, and a speech by our earliest graduate Jonathan Gorenflo (below, right). The distribution of yearbooks, inclusive recreational activities for alumni and their families, dancing to the music of the Recreation Department's DJs, as well as a raffle, rounded out this fun-filled event. Potentials Schools (the second opened on Boca Raton's FAU campus in 2004) serve children with developmental disabilities in an intensive classroom experience combined with a full complement of therapeutic interventions, all supported by state-of-the-art technology. Potentials' educational philosophy is that its children can benefit from a comprehensive, integrated approach that addresses their academic, therapeutic, and medical needs, and that this early opportunity to be in an environment so conducive to communication serves to diminish frustration, support cognitive development, and in more than 80% of the cases eventually results in a successful transition into the mainstream classroom. Potentials' full-time staff includes Special Educators, Physical and Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists, a Registered Nurse and six Classroom Aides. Professional development for the staff is crucial, and is supported in large part by annual donations to The Arc. In June, The Arc hosted a county-wide "Principles of Neuro-Development



Inclusive hockey, parachute bounce, music, food, fountains and catching up with old friends made the day

Treatment" Workshop by Lois Bly. "I can't say enough about how this will help improve my skills and clinical reasoning as a therapist," said one participating staff member. In November, Potentials staff members opened their training session on Shaken Baby Syndrome not only to other Arc programs, such as the Respite Care staff, but to other agencies throughout the region as well. "We are committed to furthering the mission of all individuals and agencies working with our population or other populations in need," comments Michael Papa, Executive Director of The Arc.

Jennifer Peterson, Principal of Potentials School, explains how gratifying the program is to those dedicating their lives to it. "At Potentials, we celebrate all successes, big and small. The best reward for us is seeing in a child's eyes the sense of real empowerment when acquiring a new skill." She is referring to skills most of us will take for granted, such as being able to lift a spoon to your mouth or being able to greet a friend. "For our students, the smallest change is a stepping stone to new levels of independence," notes Peterson.



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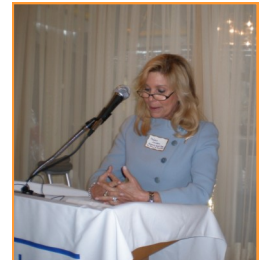
Boca Raton Businessman and Philanthropist Robert B. Campbell (at right with Joyce Laird (l.) and previous Laird award recipients Michele Poole and Mary Courim), founder and CEO of BBC International, received the Joyce W. Laird Community Leadership Award Friday, February 12 at the Annual Arc Angels Luncheon at the Sundy House. The annual luncheon honors volunteers, staff and organizations that have demonstrated devotion to children and adults who have developmental disabilities.



One such person is "Bobby" Campbell, a recognized philanthropist in Florida and New York, whose BBC International is one of the leading children's and athletic footwear companies in the world with brands that include Airwalk, Reebok, Disney, Polo by Ralph Lauren for Kids and Guess for Kids. Campbell, who has been active on The Arc Board of Directors for almost a decade, has raised nearly three-quarters of a million dollars for The Arc's Potentials School South over the past seven years.

"It's all about the kids," Campbell told the luncheon's 120 attendees after receiving the award from Joyce W. Laird, for whom the award is named and The Arc's former executive director for 26 years. "I've been in a lot of good organizations, but it's the kids at The Arc that got to me," an emotional Campbell told the crowd in explaining how he chose The Arc over other worthy non-profits to be a prime beneficiary of his generosity.

Master of Ceremonies for the event was Paige Kornblue, WPTV Channel 5 anchor. Also speaking at the luncheon were Michael Papa, executive director of The Arc, Florida State Representative Kelly Skidmore, and the event's Honorary Chair Melanie Jacobson (at right) who introduced Campbell and reflected with those assembled on his contributions to the Palm Beach County community since his arrival in 2000.



Volunteer of the Year Awards went to Frenchman's Creek Charities Foundation (representatives shown at left) and to Lost Tree Village Charitable Foundation.

Head Moraca, Inc. (Tom Head, Jr., Tom Moraca and Jason Stephenson shown at right) received the President's Award from Arc Board President Debra Ruedisili for their years of service, in particular this past year of renovation work completed on The Arc's Sippotta Group



Home in Delray Beach. The Corporate Leadership Award was presented to Leadership Palm Beach County, Inc.,



(LPBC incoming President Ron Harbison and Executive Director Krista Springer Basore with Arc President Debra Ruedisili at left) members of whose Class of 2009 volunteered with The Arc's employment services department to create a public awareness campaign, "It's Not Just A Good Deed, It's Good Business," emphasizing the benefits of hiring individuals with developmental disabilities.

Also honored were Arc staff members who received tenure awards: Norma Warren, Janet Gros, Primrose Johnson, Cindi Davis, Christie Gross, Andrea Main, Sean Stickley, Michele Cumston, Phyllis Franklin, Leah Green, Pamela Heyer, Bonnie Johnson-Thomas, James Michel, Erica Mosely, Cheryl Pixley, Antoinette Richardson, Andrea Stephenson, Ellen Valencia and Esperanza Zaccari.