

Looking Forward: Building Pathways to Empowerment

By Cyndi Johnson, Family Advocate for The Arc of Indiana



Cyndi Johnson and her daughter, Rebecca
Photo used with permission by Firefly Foto

When I first learned of my daughter's diagnosis of Down syndrome, I suspect my experience was not unlike that of many parents of a child with a disability—intense emotions running the gamut from pure joy to fear and uncertainty. I spent months poring over books, articles, and just about anything else I could get my hands on, focusing all my time and energy on my daughter's needs.

Yet, it was not long before my vision broadened to include others facing many of the same challenges. I wanted to get connected, so I began volunteering with a local parent group, attending seminars, contacting lawmakers about disability issues, and joining email lists. It was by way of an email list that I learned of The Arc Network, a project of The Arc of Indiana. In September 2009, I became a Family Advocate for The Arc of Indiana.

Through the lens of a Family Advocate, I see opportunities nearly every day to come alongside families and individuals as they navigate the ever-changing labyrinth of services. I assist people with completing Medicaid waiver applications and answer basic questions about things like Social Security, Medicaid and other health insurance alternatives, and guardianship. I make referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation for persons needing employment support, or to trained educational advocates for families faced with special education challenges, or to independent living centers for persons who require modifications to make their residence more accessible. I help families and self-advocates identify support networks at the local, state, and national levels. I let parents know that they have options as they plan for the financial future of their child with a disability by providing information about The Arc of Indiana Master Trust.

But my work involves far more than being a knowledgeable resource. When all the paperwork is finished, the phone calls made, and the referrals complete, it is my hope that families and individuals come away with a new point of view and sense of empowerment. I want them to be energized by a vision of the possibilities that are within our reach, if together we can shift the focus to ability rather than disability.

For over fifty years, The Arc of Indiana has been the driving force behind the vision of a brighter future for persons of all abilities. While we are closer than ever to seeing the dream of an inclusive community become reality, there is still a great deal of work to be done. Toward that end, The Arc of Indiana has launched the "Building Pathways to Empowerment"

campaign—an initiative to take a fresh look at Indiana's system of programs and services for persons with developmental disabilities and their families. The goal is to redesign and redefine that system into one that provides people with what they want and need in the most sensible way possible. It is not just the state that needs to change, or providers that need to change, but communities, families and advocates need to change as we all respond to the challenges facing us.

So, while Family Advocates like me stand ready to help you, The Arc of Indiana is seeking your help as well. If you are ready to re-envision your future, I urge you to join the "Building Pathways to Empowerment" campaign today!

The Arc Network consists of Family Advocates and Self-Advocates statewide, providing information, resources, and advocacy to families and people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. To request an Advocate, to learn more about The Arc of Indiana, or to join the Building Pathways to Empowerment campaign, visit www.arcind.org, or call 800-382-9100.

Seeking Talented Tri-Staters!



Tri-State's Got Talent, sponsored by Vectren, launched in October to find an act to fill the last spot in The Really Big Show on February 12, 2011.

To Enter: Visit www.14newstube.com and upload your video under Tri-State's Got Talent.

Deadline: Entries accepted until December 10, 2010.

To Win: The top 10 most viewed videos will move on to a live audition on January 13, 2011 at 6 p.m. at Washington Square Mall where the winner will be announced!

Tell us who you think should take center stage at The Really Big Show by voting for your favorite act at www.14newstube.com!



"Devil Stick" performer and 2010 People's Choice Award Winner Zach Watson performing in the 2010 Really Big Show.

Our Mission

The mission of Evansville ARC is to advance the value of and respect for all individuals with disabilities by providing opportunities for development, employment, and independence.



Evansville ARC

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Deidra R. Conner, President

Please direct any questions or comments regarding this newsletter to Denise Seibert, Director of Development.



Presented by:



Tickets on sale soon for

The Really Big Radio Show!



When: Saturday, February 12 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: The Centre, Evansville

How: On January 7 \$20 reserved seats available at Ticketmaster outlets including Robert's Stadium & The Centre, www.ticketmaster.com, or by calling 1-800-745-3000.

\$100 VIP tickets, including admission to the Curtain Call Reception are **on sale now** by calling ARC at 812-428-4500!

Proceeds from The Really Big Show benefit all programs at Evansville ARC!



Alcoa volunteers finish one of two lofts they built for the Child Life Center in October. Funding for the project was provided by Alcoa and a donation from SABIC.



UE students detail client transportation vans at ARC Industries during the United Way Day of Caring in September. 71 volunteers participated in Day of Caring at Evansville ARC.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Really Big Show Volunteer

Be a part of the biggest event fundraiser of the year on February 12. Volunteers are needed for various positions including set up, green room attendant, coat check clerk, People's Choice vote seller, and more!

Client Assistant for Adult Day Services

Assist with classroom activities, help with lunch duties, provide one-on-one attention to clients and form friendships with individuals in Evansville ARC's Day Services program. Interest in helping individuals with disabilities develop practical and social skills a must. Applicants must meet drug screen, criminal history and Evansville ARC training requirements.

Child Life Center Check-off Clerk

Each month perform one or more of these required routine checks: battery check in CO2 monitors, first aid inventory and medication box inspection. Great opportunity for someone who is a stickler for detail and has the capability to schedule volunteer time on a regular monthly basis.

And that's not all!

We offer many more volunteer opportunities throughout the year and also welcome groups who would like to perform special projects. Visit www.evansvillearc.org, contact Jennifer Bayer at 812-428-4500, ext 309, or e-mail jennifer.bayer@evansvillearc.org for more information on how you can make a difference at Evansville ARC.

CAN YOU HELP?

We are in need of the following items for our programs. Can you help us? If so, please contact Angie Sumner at 812-428-4500, ext. 307 or angela.sumner@evansvillearc.org.

Child Life Center Needs

- Hand or bath towels and wash cloths
- Masking tape
- Nursery water
- Unscented hypo-allergenic baby wipes
- Dress up clothes/shoes/accessories
- Children's books (board books and story books for infants – preschool ages)
- Cars/trucks for toddler – preschool ages
- Any new or gently used toys for infant to preschool ages, as long as they are in good condition

Adult Program Needs

- Construction paper
- Colored pencils
- Modeling clay
- Tempra paint & brushes
- Craft items (beads, waxed string, pompoms, glue, glitter, etc)
- Paper towels
- Facial tissue



A few of the auction items already donated for the silent auction.

Really Big Show Silent Auction Needs

We are seeking items and gift certificates (for stores, restaurants or services) to put up for bid in our silent auction during the Curtain Call Reception, presented by German American. Banking. Insurance. Investments., after The Really Big Show. The proceeds from the auction benefit The Child Life Center and the Bayleigh Pauckner Endowment. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Jennifer Bayer at 812-428-4500, ext. 309 or jennifer.bayer@evansvillearc.org.

Donating at a Click of a Button!



Donating to Evansville ARC has never been easier – just visit www.evansvillearc.org, scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on the link about donating online. No stamps and no check writing, just an easy online payment that you can designate to the program of your choice.

Career Style Show

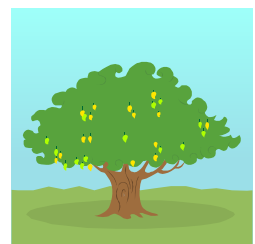


Evansville ARC Employees give examples to young job seekers of what not to wear to a job interview during the "Working Toward Your Future" Fall Conference and Career Style Show in October supported with The Arc of the United States and the Wal-Mart Foundation grant.

Go Green with ARC!

Evansville ARC just launched a new e-news letter. **Visit www.evansvillearc.org and click "Join Our Mailing List!"**

- Monthly News
- Upcoming Events
- Fundraisers
- How You Can Help
- Success Stories





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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

A Success Story *Jack Hazen*



Jack has been employed at ARC Industries for 36 years.

Jack Hazen began his employment at ARC Industries in 1974 and is working harder than ever thanks to a switch in job duties. When Jack began at ARC, he, like many ARC Industries' employees, worked on "the buckets." However, as time went on Jack became limited to the type of work he was able to do which prohibited him from attaching the handles to the buckets for prolonged periods of time. Jack only worked part-time because of his condition, which left him aggravated and upset. His situation continued and worsened to the point where about four years ago, Jack was close to throwing in the towel due to his frustration with his work situation because he wanted to work more hours.

Searching for a position that would accommodate Jack's abilities, ARC Industries' management and Jack's Vocational Specialist, Dennis Deusner, decided to let Jack try working right outside the "clean room"

at ARC Industries taping together boxes, labeling boxes and stacking the boxes in a particular pattern as they exit the clean room. The clean room is a specific manufacturing room with a low level of environmental pollutants such as dust, airborne microbes, aerosol particles and chemical vapors. This room allows ARC Industries to package environmentally sensitive items which expands the reach of items that can be packaged at ARC Industries.

For the past two years, Jack has worked full time outside the clean room in his new position and couldn't be happier. Jack always greets visitors with a smiling face and will enthusiastically tell them about his job duties. After moving to full time employment, Jack's added income allowed him to recently purchase a new dishwasher for his house. Always a team player, Jack will often work packaging other products on the line if the clean room is not operating.