

FLORIDA GRANTOR

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Summer 2010

- 2 *President's Letter*
The Veterans Initiative
- 3 *Florida Youth Leadership Forum 2010:*
Breaking Down Barriers
- 4 *Florida High School/High Tech Helps*
Max Discover His Future
- 5 *Grantee Spotlight: ENABLE*
- 6 *Grants for 4th Quarter 2010*
- 7 *Florida Disability Mentoring Day*
2010: Celebrating a Decade of
Mentoring Success
- 8 *Impacting Youth in Okaloosa, Walton*
& Dade Counties: Serving Students
with Multiple Barriers
- 9 *Grantee Spotlight: Stand Among*
Friends
- 10 *The 2010 Ability Celebration:*
A Grand Time Was Had By All
- 11 *Make a Donation to The Able Trust*
- 12 *Upcoming Events*
- 12 *Memorial Gifts*



The Able Trust's mission is to be the leader in providing Floridians with disabilities fair employment opportunities through grant programs, public awareness and education, and policy recommendations.

The 2010 Able Trust Ability Awards



2010 Ability Award winners (from left to right): Steve Sandman - TJ Maxx, Louie Vessio - TJ Maxx, Mark Grant - Publix Corp., Phil Harrison - Publix Corp., Mervin Hernandez, Torri Bandel, Margarita Warren - ILRC of St. Johns & Clay counties, April Baker - ILRC of St. Johns & Clay counties, Bryan Vaughan, Lee Nasehi - Lighthouse of Central Florida, Kelly Greene - CIL of South Florida, Dan O'Brien, Jim Payne - WESH2 News, Carrie Crockett - Palm Beach BLN, Lisa Wilson - CIL of Central Florida, Genevieve Cousminer - Palm Beach BLN.

On Friday, June 11, The Able Trust hosted its annual recognition of exceptional Floridians and their contributions toward employing citizens with disabilities. Thirteen honorees were featured at The Ability Awards luncheon and awards ceremony, held at Golden Eagle Golf and Country Club. The following individuals, organizations and businesses have demonstrated a commitment to advancing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the state of Florida, and are honored as leaders in their field.

2010 Ability Award Winners:

- **Lighthouse Central Florida** - Beverly Chapman Award for Employment
- **Kelly Greene of Center for Independent Living of South Florida** - Dr. George Spelios Leadership Award
- **Deborah Circelli of The Daytona Beach News Journal** - Print Media of the Year
- **Jim Payne of WESH2 News, Orlando** - Television Media of the Year
- **Torri Bandel, Delray Beach** - Adult Leadership Award
- **Mervin Hernandez, Orlando** - Young Adult Leadership Award
- **Bryan Vaughan, Tallahassee** - Public Employee of the Year
- **Rogue Gallart, Orlando** - Volunteer of the Year
- **Independent Living Resource Center St. Johns & Clay counties** - High School High Tech Program of the Year
- **Publix Corporation, Lakeland** - Business Mentor of the Year
- **Rosen Hotels & Resorts, Orlando** - Large Employer of the Year
- **TJ Maxx, St. Petersburg The New Gateway Mall** - Small/Medium Employer of the Year
- **Palm Beach Business Leadership Network** - Business Leadership Site of the Year ■

THE ABLE TRUST™

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We'd love to hear from you! If you would like to share your disability-related story ideas, events, questions, comments, or are more interested in learning about The Able Trust, please call us at (850) 224-4493 or visit our website at www.abletrust.org.

A Message from the President *The Veterans Initiative*



During the first part of this year, I had the fortune of visiting with some of our grantee organizations that have programs which assist veterans in seeking employment. Coupled with previous visits to similar programs, it has become very clear that the veterans programs supported by The Able Trust provide great value to our returning soldiers, and that for many of those soldiers, other systems of help have failed. In conversations with veterans, I have learned that many have difficulty navigating the federal VA system, and many often give up getting the help that is rightfully and legally theirs. It is not unusual to hear that returning soldiers have become homeless because they cannot get the help they need (and deserve). If they have no support system in place, running out of resources can become the destiny that throws them into a life without much hope.

The other issue I hear about often is how little their service experience prepares them for employment after discharge. Imagine for a moment a young man or woman of 18, who joins the service and is trained to be a soldier, learning combat skills and how to live in less-desirable surroundings. He or she spends time in training, then is sent overseas to help protect our freedoms. When service time is completed and the soldier wishes to return to civilian life, he or she has few skills that would secure a job in Orlando or Miami or Tampa or Tallahassee. If there is a family to support or additional education needed, the dilemma can be overwhelming. If the soldier has returned with a disability – whether physical, PTSD or other mental health issues, or a combination, the return to civilian life is so much more difficult. It is in those circumstances that organizations receiving Able Trust grant dollars for veteran employment assistance intervene and provide counseling, skills training, job seeking and help in job placement. Help can be as simple as providing proper clothing for job interviews, to as intense as updating computer skills. In some Able Trust funded veterans initiatives, veterans are also learning about self-employment options and entrepreneurial opportunities. The Able Trust is proudly funding five of these programs around the state, and hoping to continue this outreach, dependent of course on resources.

As this is written, we are approaching the Fourth of July, a holiday when our entire country celebrates independence and freedom. Yet many of our veterans returning from combat zones do not feel free or independent, because service to their country has forever changed their lives and limited their options. We would urge every community to not only celebrate on the Fourth of July, but to also pledge to support all veterans programs, and make sure you thank a veteran on that day. And of course, your donation to The Able Trust specifying support for our veteran's initiative would be welcome as we work together to help these young men and women pursue a good future.

Have a wonderful summer!



Susanne F. Homant, MBA, DPA
President & CEO

(To donate to The Able Trust's Veterans Initiative, go to page 11 or www.abletrust.org)

YLF 2010: Breaking Down Barriers

by Ray Ford, Jr.



Participants of YLF 2010 will be inspired to no longer be labeled by their disability, but by their ability instead.

Often you will hear adults waxing fondly on the days when they were teenagers; that mystical time in life when all their dreams – no matter how large – were attainable. Years later, a distant smile spreads across their lips, reminiscing about youthful exploits and discoveries; when for one moment in time, they were invincible, untouched by the trials of life.

In a month, nearly 50 teenagers will participate in an event that will create a lifetime of memories... and a lifetime of friends as well. On July 21, the 2010 Florida Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) will welcome high school juniors and seniors with disabilities from across the state. When they arrive, many will be self-conscious of their particular disability. When they leave, all will be inspired to overcome and reap the harvest of a field of dreams.

For some, the dream is unclear. Like many teenagers, graduation is accomplishment enough for now. Subsequent bridges will be crossed when they reach them. Others, however, have a sharper focus.

“After high school, I plan to attend a university and earn my master’s degree,” YLF delegate Kellsey Bruner said. “After I graduate, I plan to be an elementary school ESE (Exceptional Student Education) teacher. Since I have a learning disability, I want to reach out to children that have learning disabilities so they can understand that they can overcome and be successful, even if they learn or do things a little differently.”

They have visions of college and advanced degrees, with a spectrum of gifts and talents. Musicians, artists, teachers, and video game designers will be coming to the forum; each one with an end in sight, wisely taking the time to seek guidance from those who can help them reach their destination.

“When I started high school, I felt very alone because there were no other students in my school with physical disabilities,” YLF delegate Lequina Knox said. “I became known as the girl in the wheelchair. After a pep talk from my mother and sister, I set out to be known by my name and abilities; not my disability.”

YLF 2010 will give delegates the necessary tools to begin their life’s work of breaking down the walls erected by a society insensitive to their plight. Despite their varied career aspirations and goals beyond high school, all will play a part in taking down that dreaded wall... piece by piece, in the hopes of making it a little better for those coming behind them.

“I’m a 17-year-old who, like many that face the challenges of disabilities, [is] constantly searching for a way to feel normal,” YLF delegate Ashlen McWhorter said. “In middle school, people were afraid to talk to me for fear that they wouldn’t be able to relate to me. People could not see past the crutches to the person behind the disability. That social barrier built on the foundation of ignorance really wounded me, and made me really desire to help destroy that barrier.” ■

Abilities Foundation
 Abilities of Florida, Inc.
 Ability 1st
 Accessible Alternatives, Inc.
 ACT Corporation
 Action Disability Advocates, Inc.
 Advance Ability Solutions
 Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities
 AFIRE of Pasco County, Inc.
 Against All Odds-Macular Degeneration Network
 Agency for Community Treatment Services, Inc.
 Agency for Persons with Disabilities
 Agency for Workforce Innovation
 Aids Community Project of Tampa Bay
 American Foundation for Visual Rehabilitation
 American Habilitation Services, Inc.
 American with Disabilities Working Group
 Ann Storck Center, Inc.
 Apalachee Center, Inc.
 ARC, Inc.
 ARC Alachua County
 ARC Florida
 ARC Gadsden
 ARC Gateway, Inc.
 ARC Glades Area
 ARC Jacksonville
 ARC Madison-Jefferson
 ARC Marion, Inc.
 ARC Nassau
 ARC Nature Coast
 ARC of Alachua County
 ARC of Bradford County
 ARC of Broward
 ARC of Indian River County
 ARC of Martin County
 ARC of Okeechobee
 ARC of Palm Beach County
 ARC of Putnam County
 Arc Ridge Area
 ARC South Florida, Inc.
 ARC St. John’s County, Inc.
 ARC St. Lucie County
 ARC Sumter County
 ARC Upper Pinellas
 ARC Volusia
 Archways Behavioral Healthcare
 Association for the Development of the Exceptional
 Axon Technologies, Inc.
 Bay Point Schools, Inc.
 Bayview Center for Mental Health, Inc.
 Behavioral Health Services
 Bethune-Cookman College
 Big Bend Workforce Center
 Blind Americans, Inc.
 Boley Centers for Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.
 Brain & Spinal Cord Injury Program
 Brain Injury Association of Florida
 Brevard Achievement Center
 Brevard Community College
 Brevard Public Schools
 Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
 Bureau Chief for Medicaid Services
 CARC-Advocates for Citizens with Disabilities, Inc.
 Caring & Sharing CIL
 CCAR Services, Inc.
 CCDH, Inc.
 Celestial Therapeutic & Ornamental Gardens
 Center for Drug Free Living
 Center for Independence, Technology and Education
 Center for Independent Living of Broward
 Center for Independent Living of Central FL- Polk office
 Center for Independent Living of Central Florida
 Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida
 Center for Independent Living of Northwest Florida
 Center for Independent Living of South Florida
 Center for Independent Living of Southwest Florida
 Center for Independent Living of the Keys
 Center for Positive Connections
 Center for Space Education
 Center for the Visually Impaired
 CHAC-Sarasota/Manatee Co. HSHT
 Charter School at National Deaf Academy
 Chipola Junior College
 Citrus Hearing Impaired Program Services, Inc.
 Coalition for Independent Living Options, Inc.
 Communication Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 Community Center for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities
Crech Engineers, Inc.

DAAWG

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services of Pasco/Hernando Co, Inc.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services of Volusia/Flagler

Deaf & Hearing Connection for Tampa Bay, Inc.

Deaf & Hearing Services of Lake & Sumter Counties

Deaf Service Bureau of West Central Florida

Deaf Service Center of Palm Beach County

Deaf Service Center of Pasco/Hernando County

Deaf Service Center of SW Florida, Inc.

Deaf Service Center of the Treasure Coast, Inc.

Dept. of Children & Families

Dept. of Corrections

Dept. of Education

Dept. of Education-BISCS

Dept. of Elder Affairs

Dept. Elder Affairs Employment Programs Unit

Dept. of Children and Families

Dept. of Veterans Affairs

Deputy of Juvenile Justice

Developmental Services, Inc.

Developmentally Disabled Residential Corp.

Division of Blind Services

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Division of Workers Compensation

Division of Workers' Office

DOE/BICS

DOT'S WRITE

Easter Seal Society of Broward County, Inc.

Easter Seals Miami-Dade

Easter Seals of Broward County

Easter Seals Society of Volusia & Flagler Counties, Inc.

Echo Outreach Ministries

Eckerd Academy/Eckerd Youth Alternatives

Elder Care of Alachua County

Emmanuel A.M.E. Zion Church, and Childcare Center

Epilepsy Association of Central Florida, Inc.

Epilepsy Foundation of NE Florida

Epilepsy Foundation of South Florida

Epilepsy Foundation of Southwest FL

Escambia HS/HT

FAAST

Fellowship House

FL Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

FL Crown Workforce Development Board

FL DDC

FL Dept. of Business and Professional Regulation

Florida Aids Action Council

Florida Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Inc.

Florida Association for the Deaf and Blind, Inc.

Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living

Florida Capital County

Florida Center for the Blind, Inc.

Florida Coalition for the Homeless

Florida Council for Community Health, Inc.

Florida Council for Community Mental Health, Inc.

Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc.

Florida Crown Workforce Career Center

Florida Department of Education

Florida High School/High Tech

Florida Impact

Florida Independent Living Council, Inc.

Florida Institute of Rehabilitation Education (FIRE)

Florida Keys Employment & Training Council

Florida Lions Conklin Center for the Blind

Florida Medicaid

Florida Psychiatric Society

Florida Rehabilitation Association

Florida Society of Ophthalmology

Florida Space Grant Consortium

Florida's Voice on Mental Retardation

Florida Department of Corrections

Foundation for Orange Co. Public Schools, Inc.

Friends of the Deaf Service Center, Inc.

Glaxo Smith Kline

Global Care Provider Services

Good Hope Equestrian Training Center

Goodwill CDC

Goodwill Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast

Goodwill Foundation, Inc.

Goodwill Heart of Florida

Goodwill Industries of Broward

Goodwill Industries of Central Florida

Goodwill Industries of North Florida

Goodwill Industries of South Florida, Inc.

Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida

Goodwill Industries Suncoast, Inc.

HS/HT Helps Max Discover His Future



Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida (CIL/NCF) on a group outing.

Submitted by Stephanie Weeks, CIL/NCF HS/HT Project Coordinator for Levy and Bradford counties

Max is a high school junior who has been enrolled in the Levy County High School/High Tech (HS/HT) Program for three years. When he first joined HS/HT, his attitude and personality mirrored his curly hair – a little unruly, constantly shifting direction, but always fun. Max had no firm idea for his future beyond high school graduation. Postsecondary education and career interests were just words; not goals. Max was just an observer, rather than a participant in such ideas.

As Max engaged in HS/HT over the next few years, however, he started to identify his personal goals for life after high school, and began to “own” his future. As a sophomore, Max began developing and exploring his postsecondary interests and options. Through the HS/HT program, Max visited college campuses in Jacksonville, Orlando, Tallahassee, Tampa, and Gainesville. Other industry site visits included industrial and business facilities around the state, encompassing a wide range of experiences - an animatronics corporation and perfumery in Jacksonville, a chocolate factory in Daytona, a dolphin care and research center in St. Augustine, aeronautics at NASA, just to name a few.

Max was also introduced to mentors through participation

More About the Program

The Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida (CIL/NCF) administers Florida High School/High Tech (HS/HT) Programs in Alachua, Marion, Bradford, Levy and Putnam counties. Approximately 251 high school students with disabilities are engaged in HS/HT programs in eight high schools. As a result of program services in the 2008-2009 school year, nearly 100% of high school graduates continued their education, entered postsecondary education or employment.

The Florida HS/HT Program serves students with disabilities throughout 37 counties and 100 high schools. Due to the commitment of exceptional organizations like the CIL/NCF, local school districts, and community and business partners, students with disabilities have the opportunity to discover their future. Each year, approximately 1,500 students like Max gain mentors, knowledge of careers and colleges, paid work experience, and confidence to strive towards their dreams.

in the Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) Program, and summer internships. During DMD, Max spent a day with the Gainesville district attorney's office, attending court and exploring the legal system. During the summer months, Max participated in a paid summer internship with a physical therapist at a local rehabilitation center. Max also began attending his Individualized Educational Program (IEP) meetings, where he learned to advocate for himself, discussing his accommodations with teachers and other school professionals, and setting his own goals for his academic career.

Max's experiences in HS/HT have transformed him into a successful, motivated, and mature young man. In spite of a specific learning disability, he maintains a 2.8 GPA and is taking Advanced Placement US History and English Literature. In addition to HS/HT, Max seamlessly balances football, weightlifting, boy scouts and a church youth group. He serves as a leader in his local HS/HT, attending meetings, reminding his peers of upcoming events and activities, and aiding program staff during workshops and fieldtrips.

Today, Max radiates a quiet confidence, and has earned the respect of staff and students alike. Classmate Jordan describes Max as a "good all around person, a good team player" who "never disrespects anyone." Max states that HS/HT provided a "great outlook on different careers," helping to keep him "focused on narrowing [his] decisions."



Thanks to the Florida High School/High Tech Program, students like Max have a positive outlook on their future.

As he finishes his AP exams and stands ready to become an Eagle Scout this summer, the future looks bright for Max. Thanks to the opportunities and experiences provided through the HS/HT program, he has decided to pursue a career in the medical field, attending Santa Fe Community College after graduation, where he will earn his associate's degree before transferring to the University of Florida. ■

Grantee Spotlight

ENABLE

Disabled Veterans represent a worker pool which possesses an excellent work ethic, and are a competent and loyal workforce for employers. The Florida Crown Workforce Board recognizes the importance of helping these brave Floridians who risked their lives in defense of our basic freedoms, and with funding from The Able Trust created the Enhanced Network Assistance Bringing Learning and Employment (ENABLE) Program.

The ENABLE Program provides supportive services, training, education, and job search assistance for these veterans. The goal of the program is to assist disabled veterans obtain employment at a self-sufficiency wage, while providing the employers of the region with a qualified and committed workforce.

A.S. is an ENABLE success story. A veteran of the U.S. Army, A.S. was neither working nor receiving unemployment compensation when he came to the Florida

(Grantee Spotlight - ENABLE... continued on page 9)

Goodwill Industries-Manasota, Inc.
Grove House Supportive Services, Inc.
Guardian Angels for Special Populations, Inc.
Gulf Coast Community Care
Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Habilitation Center for the Handicapped
Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County
Hardee Association for Retarded Citizens
Hearing Impaired Persons
Heron-Peacock Supported Living
HOPE Center
Hope Haven Children's Clinic and Family Center
Horses and the Handicapped of South Florida, Inc.
Human Services Council
I Can Grow, Inc.
Independence for the Blind
Independent Living and Resource Center NE Florida
Independent Living Resource Center of Northeast Florida
Janssen
Jeff Industries
Jewish Association for Residential Care
Jewish Community Services of South Florida, Inc.
La Amistad Foundation, Inc.
Lakeside Alternatives
Lakeview Center Foundation
LARC, Inc.
L'Arche Harbor House
Latino Leadership, Inc.
Law, Redd, Crona & Munroe, P.A.
League for the Hard of Hearing
Life Management Center of Northwest Florida, Inc.
Life Stream Behavioral Center
Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches, Inc.
Lighthouse of Broward
Lighthouse of Central Florida
Lincoln-Marti Community Agency
Lock Towns Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
Louise H. Graham Training Center
Loveland Center Inc.
MacDonald Training Center, Inc.
MACTown, Inc.
Madison County HSHT
Madison County School Board Dept, ESE
Magellan Health Services
Manatee Glens
Marianne Center Services
Martin Memorial Health System
MAXIMUS
McDaniel Consulting, L.L.C.
Mental Health Association of Palm Beach County
Mental Health Care, Inc.
Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Miami-Dade Disability Services and Independent Living (DSAIL)
Michael D. Cusick & Associates, Inc.
Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc.
Moore Consulting Group, Inc.
Muscular Dystrophy Association
NAMI Florida, Inc.
NASA
National Multiple Sclerosis (FL Gulf Coast)
National Multiple Sclerosis Society- Mid FL Chapter
National Multiple Sclerosis Society, North Florida Chapter
National Wheelchair Sports Fund
New Hope Drop In Center, Inc.
New Horizons Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
New Horizons of the Treasure Coast, Inc.
Northside Mental Health Center
OFCCP Miami Area Office
OFCCP Orlando District Office
Office of Health Services
Office of the Governor
Okeechobee Rehabilitation Facility
One Stop Career Center
Orange County Public Schools
Osceola ARC, Inc.
Palm Bay High School
Palm Beach County HS/HT
Palm Beach Habilitation Center, Inc.
Pathways to Independence, Inc.
Pensacola Care, Inc.
Pensacola Penwheels
Perdido Bay Tribe, Inc.
Pine Castle, Inc.
Primrose Center, Inc.
Project Special Care
Project STAND, Inc.

PSI Family Services of Florida, Inc.
 Pyramid, Inc.
 Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
 Remmert Employment Project
 Renaissance Behavioral Health System, Inc.
 Roe & Associates Integrated Behavior Supports, Inc.
 Rotary Youth Camp
 Ruth Rales Jewish Family Service of S. Palm Beach Co.
 Seacamp Association, Inc.
 Seagull Industries for the Disabled, Inc.
 Self Reliance, Inc.
 Seminole Work Opportunity Program
 SGS
 Sickle Cell Disease Association of Broward County, Inc.
 Sickle Cell Disease Association of Florida
 Small Business Development Center / FGCU
 Social Security Administration
 SOS Children's Village of Florida
 Southeast Parkinson Disease Association
 Space Coast Center for Independent Living
 Special Advisor on Criminal Justice and Mental Health - FL
 Supreme Court
 St. Andrew's Bay Center
 Stand Among Friends
 Statewide Office of Suicide Prevention FL Office of Drug Control
 Suncoast Center for Independent Living
 Suncoast Epilepsy Association, Inc.
 Suncoast Health Council, Inc.
 Sunrise Cape Coral Cluster
 Sunrise Community of Polk County
 Sunrise Community of Southwest Florida
 Sunrise Community, Inc.
 Sunrise of Pasco County
 Sunrise Opportunities, Inc.
 Tallahassee Community College
 Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind
 Taylor County High School
 Technical & Career Education
 Technical and Career Education
 The ARC Nature Coast, Inc.
 The ARC of Jacksonville
 The Center for Independence, Inc.
 The Governor's Commission on Disabilities
 The Harbor
 The Learning Experience School
 The Spina Bifida Association of Jacksonville, Inc.
 The Watson Center
 TLC Landscape Contractors, Inc.
 Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
 Tri-County TEC
 Tyler Institute
 United Cerebral Palsy of Central Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of East Central Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of North Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of Panama City, Inc.
 United Cerebral Palsy of Sarasota-Manatee & SW Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of South Florida
 United Cerebral Palsy of Southwest Florida, Inc.
 United Cerebral Palsy of Tallahassee
 University of South Florida
 Urban League of Broward County
 Van Gogh's Palette, Inc.
 Veterans Administration
 Victory Living Programs
 Vincent House
 Visual Dialogue
 Visually Impaired Persons of Southwest Florida
 Vocational Rehabilitation
 Volunteer Florida Foundation
 Volunteer Jacksonville, Inc.
 VSA Arts of Florida
 Walton County ARC
 Washington/Holmes ARC
 WAVE The Workshop for Adult Vocational Enrichment
 Wellcare
 Woodland Hall Academy/Dyslexia Research Institute
 Workforce Alliance, Inc.
 Workforce Development Board
 Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa & Walton Counties
 Workforce Florida
 Working Solutions

Grants for 4th Quarter 2010

Center for Independent Living of Central Florida

The Center for Independent Living of Central Florida, Inc. will receive \$40,000 to continue its Veterans with Disabilities Program, and hire a Veterans Employment Specialist who will work one-on-one to place veterans with disabilities in jobs developed through business partnerships, provide on-the-job training as needed, and create a Career Expo.

Center for Independent Living of South Florida

The Center for Independent Living of South Florida will receive \$40,000 to continue its Innovate & Navigate Veterans Employment via Support & Training Program (INVEST), an employment program for veterans with disabilities needing comprehensive assistance and support to gain and retain employment in the Miami-Dade community.

The Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc.

The Florida Crown Workforce Board, Inc. will receive \$40,000 to continue its Enhanced Network Assistance Bringing Learning & Employment (ENABLE) Program, which provides personalized career planning and employment services to veterans with disabilities in a four county region of North Central Florida.

BEING GOOD STEWARDS OF OUR FUNDS

The Able Trust is committed to funding programs state-wide that help Floridians with disabilities who want to work.

In Fiscal Year 2010, The Able Trust made 65 grant awards totaling more than \$1.7 million.

The Life Management Center of Northwest Florida

The Life Management Center of Northwest Florida, Inc. will receive \$40,000 to continue its Supported Employment: Removing Barriers to Employment for Disabled Veterans in Rural Florida Program, hiring a Job Coach and support for veterans with disabilities returning to work in four counties of rural Northwest Florida.

WestCare Gulf Coast - Florida, Inc.

WestCare Gulf Coast- Florida, Inc. will receive \$40,000 to continue its EmployAble Program, providing Veterans with disabilities an Employment Program to assist in the gaining and retaining of employment in urban St. Petersburg.

Creative Clay, Inc.

Creative Clay, Inc. will receive \$56,000 for expansion of its Artlink Employment Program, a supported-employment program in Pinellas, Hillsborough and Manatee counties that provides individuals with disabilities mentorship and training with professional artists and employment placement assistance utilizing retail marketing skills.

The Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida

The Center for Independent Living of North Central Florida will receive \$44,542 for its Promoting Inclusion and Partnerships between Rural Employers and Qualified Job-Seekers with Disabilities Initiative. Funds will provide for an Employer Network Liaison who will connect with Citrus County businesses, looking for employees and individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

The Sunrise Community of Collier County

The Sunrise Community of Collier County will receive \$32,698 for expansion of its Collier + Sunrise = A Chance Program. Funds will enhance a supported-employment program that would provide transitional support to persons moving from an enclave to community based, competitive employment.

The STARR Center, Inc.

The STARR Center, Inc. will receive \$35,000 for its Implementing Transitional Employment Placements Program. Funds will provide for Program Director and Employment Specialist positions to create and implement the transitional and supported employment program model in the Bay County area.

The Easter Seals Society of Southwest Florida

The Easter Seal Society of Southwest Florida, Inc. will receive \$59,950 for its Manasota Employment Networking Training Opportunity (MENTOR) Program. Funds will create an internship and employment program for individuals with disabilities in Manatee County.

The Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

The Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind will receive \$2,840 for services benefitting individuals with Macular Degeneration, helping them become independent and successful citizens.

The University of Alabama-Birmingham

The University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB) will receive \$2,840 for research to solve or make progressions in treating Macular Degeneration. ■



**CELEBRATING A DECADE
OF MENTORING SUCCESS
2001 - 2010**

Florida will celebrate Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) on October 20, 2010, joining thousands of mentees and mentors across the country.

DMD is more than an opportunity for companies to demonstrate positive leadership in their communities. It offers a great solution to access qualified job candidates beyond the traditional labor pool.

For corporate sponsorship opportunities, or to learn more about how to participate as a mentor or mentee, contact Sally Ash at sally@abletrust.org.

More About the Programs

Okaloosa, Walton, & Miami-Dade

Through the Workforce Florida grant, Florida HS/HT has initiated a new Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) HS/HT program in Walton County, and has expanded services available to the existing DJJ HS/HT program in Okaloosa County. This new program, with its expanded services are being administered by the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton counties. In addition, Our Kids, Inc. – the lead community-based care agency for foster care services in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties – is a new HS/HT partner administering The Florida HS/HT Foster Care Pilot Program. **This site represents the nation's first HS/HT program that will target youth with disabilities in the foster care system.** The goals of all programs include providing services associated with the Guideposts for Success, resulting in increased graduation rates and entrance into post secondary education & employment.

Florida Crown & Independent Living Resource Center (ILRC) of Northeast Florida

The Institute for Educational Leadership's (IEL) Center for Workforce Development (CWD) is working with state and local disability organizations across the nation to promote the Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program (RAMP). In Florida, The Able Trust was selected to implement this innovative program and is providing technical assistance to the following organizations who are implementing this expansion of HS/HT services: The Florida Crown Workforce Development Board (Columbia, Gilchrist, Union and Dixie counties HS/HT) and the ILRC of Northeast Florida (Clay and Duval counties HS/HT). These programs will assist youth with disabilities in preparing for their future by ensuring they have a caring adult in their support network. The RAMP project provides HS/HT youth with expanded opportunities to gain one-to-one, group, and peer mentoring. The goal of the project is to increase the number of youth with disabilities who are matched with a caring mentor, remain in school, avoid arrest, and develop transition plans for employment, college, or vocational training.

Impacting Youth in Okaloosa, Walton and Dade Counties: Serving Students with Multiple Barriers

The Able Trust has been selected to implement state and national programs that will allow expansion of existing High School/High Tech (HS/HT) programs and services to benefit Florida's youth and communities across the state. As a result of funds received from Workforce Florida, two new HS/HT programs are serving 85 youth with disabilities that are incarcerated or receiving foster care services.

"We are excited to represent the state and to serve the organizations that are helping to implement these projects," said Dr. Susanne Homant, president and CEO of The Able Trust.

Students participating in the Okaloosa County program expansion had the opportunity to engage in two service projects. The first was the Project Impact Initiative, a High School/High Tech (HS/HT) partnership with Volunteer Florida. Participating students chose the Emerald Coast Fisher House™ as the recipient of their volunteer hours. The Fisher House™ provides a "home away from home" setting for military families during treatment for serious illness or physical & occupational therapy. Working together with teachers, volunteers, and mentors from AmeriCorps and HS/HT staff, four picnic tables were presented to The Fisher House™ of the Emerald Coast during the month of April.

For their second project, Okaloosa Youth Academy students participated in "Ramp It Up" in May, and built two accessibility ramps for community members in Milton, Florida. Each participant received Certificates of Participation from the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton counties, Inc., and Certificates of Contribution and letters of recommendation from AmeriCorps Program Directors. ■

Since the program began in March, the Florida Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program (RAMP) sites have served nearly 60 mentees and mentors through weekly mentoring activities and workshops (with a goal of serving 100 youth participants by the end of the program year.) One RAMP coordinator recently reported that a highly at-risk youth who has a history of illegal drug abuse has already shown improvement in her self esteem and a decrease in negative behaviors after just a few weekly meetings, due in part to the RAMP peer mentoring component.



RAMP mentees visiting NASA.

A group of Florida Crown RAMP mentees recently experienced a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity



to attend the launch of Space Shuttle Atlantis during an industry site visit to NASA/Kennedy Space Center. The trip served as an incentive for the work mentees have completed to achieve their goals, as well as an opportunity for them to explore high-tech careers. Through participation in RAMP, high school students with disabilities are learning to be proactive in personal goal setting, and are achieving more in the areas of learning, living and thriving. ■



Thanks to the ENABLE Program, veterans with disabilities can get back to work.

Crown. He came seeking job search assistance in the aviation maintenance field. ENABLE worked with A.S., utilizing its employer services team to find suitable employment for his skill set. It wasn't long before A.S. received an "intent to hire" letter from Aeroframe Services LLC in Lake Charles, Louisiana as a full-time Aircraft Structures Technician, earning \$22.95/hr. But it didn't stop there. ENABLE also provided transportation assistance and temporary lodging for A.S. to aide in his relocation. Had it not been for these supportive services, A.S. would not have been financially able to make the move to Louisiana and begin his new job.

Thanks to The Able Trust, ENABLE has expanded outreach and marketing for its Veterans' Program, and now provides additional services to disabled veterans participating in the program. For more information about ENABLE and other programs, visit www.floridacrown.org ■

Grantee Spotlight

Stand Among Friends

by Guenevere Crum



Stand Among Friends Staff (from left to right): Corina Larsen, Employment Director; Liza Dietschy, Program Assistant; Krista Masterson, Job Developer; Rosendo Velez, Job Coach/Intake Specialist; Monica Felices, Employment Coordinator; Heather Struble, Employment Coordinator; Gail Carner, Employment Support Specialist; Shawn Friedkin, Founder and President SAF.

Stand Among Friends (a grantee of The Able Trust since Fall 2007) is a nonprofit organization located on the campus of Florida Atlantic University. Its mission is to promote opportunities for college students and adults with disabilities, thereby helping them to achieve their highest degree of independence and success. Working in collaboration with the university's Office for Students with Disabilities, along with funding from The Able Trust, Stand Among Friends works diligently to assist students with disabilities to find employment in line with their education, career goals and experience.

More than 200 students with disabilities have utilized these services, taking advantage of the well-trained employment specialists that assist with individualized employment services. Assisting the employment specialists are FAU graduate students; one of which is Johnny, who is majoring in Rehabilitation Counseling and will receive his Master's degree next year. His internship required a great deal of data processing on the computer, and it was noticed that the limited dexterity of his cerebral palsy only allowed the use of one finger for typing. Staff inquired and learned that a previous experience with assistive software *Dragon Naturally Speaking* had not been successful. Staff re-introduced

the technology to Johnny and offered extensive training, which increased his typing speed from just 10 words per minute to 70. Not only did he become more effective at his job, but due to his own increased productivity six other clients were able to obtain interviews and employment.

Stand Among Friends has also worked in collaboration with nearby Lynn University, offering employment assistance to the students with disabilities there as well. Sean is one such graduate that received assistance with interview preparation and workplace communication, resulting in successful employment in his field.

The Able Trust is proud to support Stand Among Friends efforts toward creating a dynamic employment placement program focused on personalized services to meet the needs and employment goals of each student. More information can be found on line at www.standamongfriends.org. ■



Sean at work in Stand Among Friends computer lab.

The 2010 Ability Celebration: A Grand Time Was Had By All



Able Trust Legislative Champion Stephen Wise (far left) and keynote speaker Marc Buoniconti (center) with Able Trust Board members (from left to right) Jeannie Amendola, Co-Chair Richard Cole, Barbara MacArthur, Eladio Amores, and Board Chair Bridget Pallango.

(HS/HT) program, which is designed to allow students with all types of disabilities the opportunity to explore jobs or post-secondary education in technology-related fields.

“The Able Trust opens a world of opportunity for Floridians with disabilities--the work of The Able Trust is unsurpassed and inspires thousands to reach their potential, explore meaningful careers and live the life they were meant to,” Buoniconti said.

The annual Ability Celebration recognizes businesses and other organizational sponsors of The Able Trust, acknowledging that it could not achieve its mission of fair employment for people with disabilities, without its many sponsors from the business world. The annual celebration was moved to Orlando in 2010 and will be hosted there again in March, 2011, in recognition of the need to centralize this event. Photos of the 2010 event will be placed on The Able Trust’s website very soon! ■

The Able Trust hosted its annual Ability Celebration at Walt Disney World’s Grand Floridian Resort and Spa on May 6th, celebrating another year of success in employing Floridians with disabilities.

Keynote speaker Marc Buoniconti (the son of veteran Miami Dolphins player Nick Buoniconti) joined a host of honored guests, including The Able Trust’s legislative champion, Senator Stephen Wise Ed.D; corporate champion Walt Disney World Resort (represented by President Meg Crofton), and master of ceremonies Jim Payne of WESH-TV (Orlando).

The Annual Ability Celebration serves as the primary fundraiser for the Able Trust, supporting its many programs and helping to distribute grants to other organizations who provide vocational rehabilitation. One such beneficiary is the Florida High School/High Tech



Walt Disney World Resort President Meg Crofton accepts the Able Trust Corporate Champion award as staff members look on.



We Make Donating to The Able Trust Easy!

You can make your donation by visiting The Able Trust Web site at www.abletrust.org and clicking the "Make a Donation" button. Or you can fill out the form below and mail your donation to:

The Able Trust, 3320 Thomasville Road, Suite 200, Tallahassee, Florida, 32308-7906

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Cash, Check or Credit Card Donations are Accepted. Please make checks payable to The Able Trust.

Is this donation (*please check one*):

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The Able Trust is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be the leader in providing Floridians with disabilities fair employment opportunities through fund-raising, grant programs, public awareness, public education and policy review and recommendations. Since its establishment, The Able Trust has awarded more than \$25 million in grants to nonprofit agencies throughout Florida for employment-related purposes, enabling thousands of Florida citizens with disabilities to enter the workforce each year. The Able Trust youth programs provide career development and transition to almost 2,000 students with disabilities annually, helping to reduce the dropout rate and prepare young adults for life beyond high school.

For more information about The Able Trust visit www.abletrust.org.

The Able Trust is recognized as exempt from federal income taxation under section 501c3 of the IRS and eligible to receive tax deductible contributions. Federal ID: 59-3052307. The Able Trust is registered with the Florida Division of Consumer Services as required by the Solicitation of Contributions Act (#CH957). A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free in Florida: (800) 435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State.

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Memorial Gifts

There are many ways for you to make a gift in remembrance of someone special that will have meaningful significance for years to come. Here are a few options to consider:

Make a Deductible Gift and Receive Life Income

You may wish to make a memorial gift while providing current life income for yourself. If your memorial gift is made to fund a charitable remainder trust, you can receive income monthly, quarterly or annually. You receive a charitable deduction for your gift this year and avoid paying capital gains tax on the sale of your appreciated assets. The remainder passes to us as a gift in memory of your loved one. Please contact us for more information on charitable trust plans.

A Memorial Gift of Cash or Property

A gift of cash is one of the simplest ways to remember your loved one or

friend. You receive a tax deduction for the value of your gift to The Able Trust. Please designate the person you wish to remember and the best way that we can honor them. If you are making a memorial gift of appreciated stock or real estate, your deduction may depend on the type of property gifted. Please call us to discuss the treatment of your gift and the best way to transfer your property to us.

PLANNED GIVING

Please feel free to Contact Mike Campbell, Regional Endowment Director, at 850-224-4493. You may also visit our planned giving website at www.myabletrust.org.

Upcoming EVENTS

July 21 - 25, 2010

*Florida Youth Leadership
Forum*
Tallahassee, FL

August 27, 2010

*Business Leadership Network
Meeting*
Orlando, Florida

September 16 - 17, 2010

*Able Trust Board of Directors
Meeting*
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

October 12, 2010

*Disability Mentoring Day 10th
Anniversary Statewide Launch*
Orlando, FL

Contributions are deductible according to applicable IRS guidelines. The Able Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and in compliance with the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act.