



# The Arc Appeal

*“Empowering People with Developmental Disabilities to Achieve their Full Potential”*

A Publication of The Arc of the Mid-South

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## 12th Annual Benefit & Awards Gala

This year, The Arc of the Mid-South celebrated its 12th Annual Benefit and Awards Gala on Friday, September 28, 2007. What a remarkable night it was! The event took place at the Memphis Area Home Builders Association Building in Cordova. Under the theme of “Empowering through Inclusion: Delivering on the Promise”, the evening was filled with enthusiasm, excitement, and empowerment for the award nominees and attendees. The purpose of our Annual Gala is to honor individuals and organizations that helped to improve the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities along with generating funding for the various services provided by The Arc of the Mid-South. Throughout the night, attendees were able to bid on several items during our live and silent auction like St. Louis Cardinals Baseball tickets, Southwest Airline tickets, the Westin Memphis Hotel Stay and David Yurman Earrings from Mednikow Jewelers.

Terrance Bates and Bonny Kinney from ABC 24/CW 30 Eyewitness News This Morning were the Gala’s moderators. The Keynote Speaker for the evening was Dr. Nancy K. Ray, President of NKR Associates who gave a dynamic presentation about the concerns of individuals with developmental disabilities in the state of Tennessee.

A special thanks to this year’s sponsors: Sam’s Club, Harrah’s Entertainment, FedEx, Sprint/Nextel, and Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. The agency would also like to thank its Board of Directors, Gala Committee, volunteers, staff and many supporters for making this year’s Gala a great success.



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## Director's Corner



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## In Pursuit of Justice

"In pursuit of justice" is what I heard at a recent Town Hall meeting. Many parents, individuals with disabilities and advocates joined together at a Town Hall Meeting hosted by the DMRS and The Arc of Tennessee. Commissioner Steve Norris gave updates on the current waiting list and regional updates of system changes.

We heard the voice of many concerned about the "still existing waiting list" and new proposed changes to existing services.

What you should do!

- 1) If you are already on the waiting list, you should contact the Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) Regional Office to see if you are eligible for the Medicaid Waiver. If you are on the list, contact DMRS Regional Office to re-assess your category of need. This is very important, because people in "deferred" category will not receive consumer directed support.
- 2) If you are NOT on the waiting list, you should contact DMRS office to be placed on the waiting list. You must complete an application to start the process to see if you are eligible for Waiver services.
- 3) If you are not sure or need help with any of the steps above, The Arc of the Mid-South is committed to ensuring that every family is receiving adequate services, on the waiting list and advocating for funding to fund the waiting list.

Waiting means no services! We need your help! Please join The Arc of the Mid-South in identifying families who need assistance in processing their Medicaid Waiver application or understanding what services are available and how to apply for other funded services.

Each of the 6,000+ people on the waiting list represents a family in need. As we heard at the Town Hall meeting, some families have been waiting for more than 10-20 years to receive services. While the parents were speaking, I thought, "Is this justice?" No it's not. Everyone should be outraged not just the families, the individuals with disabilities or advocates, but the entire community.

As of August, 2007, 6032 individuals have applied for services through the Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) and are on the waiting list. 48% of those on the waiting list are adults living at home who have no services at all. Another 48% are children whose families need some support when their child is not in school. In Fiscal Year 2006-2007 DMRS is enrolling 50 individuals each month while approximately 95 are being added to the waiting list each month. You do the math!

To help you understand all the jargon, here are a few definitions:

- Arlington Waiver – Medicaid Waiver for class members in West Tennessee, including only people who have lived at Arlington Developmental Center and others eligible through the definition of the Class
- Medicaid Waiver – Allows services to be provided in the community rather than in institutions and provides Federal funds to match State dollars.
- HCBS (Home and Community Based Services) Waiver – The statewide Medicaid waiver that includes a complete range of services, including residential, day, employment, therapies and other supports.
- SD Waiver – The Self-Determination waiver capped at \$30,000 per year; provides personal assistance, day services, employment and other services that can be included under the \$30,000 cap and does not include residential services.
- Slots – number of positions available in a waiver during a calendar year. Each slot can only be filled one time during a calendar year.

"In Pursuit of Justice" The Arc of the Mid-South is committed to ensuring that justice is done by bringing awareness to this critical need and assisting all families with obtaining required services and Justice for All!

Sincerely,  
*Carlene I. Leaper*  
Executive Director

### Employees on the Move



**Kelli Ellis**

**Director of Career Development**

Kelli Ellis was recently promoted from Career Development Administrator to Director of Career Development. Kelli joins our team with 14 years of experience and is currently working towards her Bachelor degree at Southwest Community College.



**Julia Ellis**

**Payroll Clerk**

Julia Ellis was recently promoted from a Senior Services employee with Meritan to a full time Payroll Clerk here at The Arc of the Mid-South. Julia comes to us with 32 years experience as an Account Manager with the Memphis Jewish Home.

### New Employees



**Jan Harris**

**Marketing Specialist**

Jan Harris, born and raised in Memphis, TN, joins our team with over 10 years of Marketing experience in various fields. Jan has received her Associate degree and is currently working towards her Bachelor degree in Public Relations and Marketing from the University of Memphis.



**Heather Carmon**

**Human Resources Assistant**

Heather Carmon joins our team with 10 years of Human Resources experience. Heather has recently received her payroll certification (FPC) and is currently working toward her Human Resources certification (SPHR).



**Felecia Carothers-Logan**

**Career Development Administrator**

Felecia Carothers-Logan has recently relocated to Memphis from Huntsville, Alabama where she worked as an Executive Assistant for Alabama A & M University. Felecia received her Bachelor degree in Business and is currently working to obtain her Master's degree.

## Family Support Services



Sign-up for our Weekend Retreats:

December 14-16

January 18-20

at Nelson Woods Retreat Center in Millington, TN

\* We are always in need of Retreat Staff and Volunteers. If you are interested please contact Family Services @ 901.327.2473

### Weekend Retreat Report:

The October Weekend Retreat was held on October 19-21 at Nelson Woods Retreat Center in Millington, TN. The theme for the weekend was "Boogie Nights".

The campers enjoyed a fun filled Halloween party on Saturday, October 20.



Craft time



Halloween Party..Let's dress up!

## Upcoming Events

### DECEMBER

14-16 Weekend Retreat

24-25 Christmas - Office Closed

### JANUARY

1 New Year's Day - Office Closed

18-20 Weekend Retreat



December 7th @ 7:05 pm

Arc of the Mid-South night with the RiverKings

## Career Development Student Spotlight

Robert Greer is in our student spotlight for this quarter. One student in particular stands out, Robert Greer. Robert attends class regularly and he is always willing to work hard. Robert has successfully completed each P.A.E.S. lab activity presented to him with flying colors. He just recently began the electrical project which is considered to be one of the most difficult activities in the lab. In this project he had to wire a light bulb fixture to an electrical outlet. Robert was able to complete all six electrical projects. His success just amazed all of the other students and has motivated them to try harder.

### **Everyday is a Beautiful Day: a glimpse into Williams Syndrome**

This is Hailey Victoria Daughtrey, age 9, from Cordova, TN. Hailey enjoys fishing and hunting for bugs, lizards, frogs and worms in her grandma's yard. One of her favorite things to do is to ride on grandpa's 4-wheeler. She loves animals and being outside. She also enjoys the wind in her face and the warmth of the sunshine. She spends time everyday watching the hummingbirds at the feeder.

Hailey is a Brownie Girl Scout; her troop recently went to a Camporee at Kamp Kiwani. Hailey is a cheerleader with a special needs squad called the "Special Tigers." Frankie Conklin of Memphis Elite Competition Cheerleading Training Center, The Cheer Station, sponsors the squad.

Hailey is in the third grade this school year at Riverdale Elementary in Germantown, Tennessee. She participates in Science and Social Studies with her third grade homeroom, as well as music, art, PE, lunch, and recess. She goes to expanded resources for reading, spelling, English, writing, and math. She enjoys school and especially loves science and social studies.

A geneticist diagnosed Hailey with William's Syndrome at 3.7 years old. This past summer we attended a Southeast Regional Williams Syndrome Association Picnic at a state park in West Georgia. Hailey met many new friends there who were very similar to her. The children there came from Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia—they all had Williams Syndrome. Since finding out that Hailey has William's Syndrome, we have discovered just how special she is. The only other children we have met have been at the WSA picnic and one other child, while on vacation in 2005. In September of 2003, the doctors told us that 1 in 20,000 children were born with Williams Syndrome. Due to continued research, geneticists now say that it is 1 in 7,500 births.

Williams Syndrome is a developmental disorder caused by a deletion of approximately 28 genes, including Elastin gene and LIM-kinase 1. Many individuals with Williams Syndrome have congenital heart defects such as supravalvar aortic stenosis (SVAS), hernias, and/or other connective tissue disorders. The deletion of the Elastin gene causes these problems. Young children usually show a developmental delay. About 75% of older children and adults have intellectual disabilities.

While many children with Williams Syndrome share a distinctive pattern of cognitive strengths and weaknesses, their verbal short-term memory ability is typically above the level expected for their level of general cognitive ability. The children love to talk and are very inquisitive. Language abilities are at or slightly above the level expected for general cognitive ability. They do however, experience extreme difficulty with visuospatial construction.

Children with Williams Syndrome have a distinctive personality profile. They are overly friendly, empathetic to other's feelings, and have a very strong desire to please other people. They never meet a stranger and do not have a concept of "stranger danger". This behavior combined with a tendency to wander, creates a potentially dangerous situation, unless closely supervised. A large portion of children and adolescents with Williams Syndrome have ADHD.

Many individuals with Williams Syndrome have a unique musical ability. They have a love of music and many love to sing. Gloria Lenhoff is a wonderful woman with Williams Syndrome. She has a voice with perfect pitch. She can sing in over 30 different languages. She has sung with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, but she cannot leave her home alone. Many others are wonderfully talented in music, but they can't add two plus two or tie their shoes. Many can compose music and play anything they hear, but they cannot compete in competitions because they cannot read or write music. It all really sounds very strange, but it is very true. Hailey has started taking piano, but her talent has yet to spring forth.

To learn more about Williams Syndrome contact the Williams Syndrome Association at <http://www.williams-syndrome.org>. If you have a child with Williams Syndrome and would be interested in starting a support group, please contact Arc of the Mid-South at 507-8568. Hailey would love to have more friends.

Hailey thinks everyday is a "beautiful day"!

**-Written by Sheila Wright, grandmother of Hailey**

# Gala Award Winners



Christene Lloyd-Burkes



Stephanie Gatewood



Paul Holmes



Jewel Plunkett

## Annual Community Recognition Awards Winners!

Each year at our Gala event, awards and honors are bestowed upon individuals, groups, organizations and businesses who have given their utmost to the community in the following categories. Below are our 2007 Winners.

### Congratulations to all nominees and winners!

**Educator/Advocate of the Year Award**  
*Christene Lloyd-Burkes*

**Distinguished Community Service Award**  
*Stephanie Gatewood*

**Empowerment Award**  
*Paul Holmes*

**Humanitarian of the Year Award**  
*Jewel Plunkett*

**Employer of the Year Award**  
*Marshall's*

**Employee of the Year Award**  
*Kevin Franklin*

**Artist/Performer of the Year Award**  
*Rickey Frazier*

**Professional of the Year Award**  
*Lisa Blocker*



Marshall's



Kevin Franklin



Rickey Frazier



Lisa Blocker

## The Road to Freedom



### ***The Road to Freedom: Keeping the Promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act***

The Road to Freedom is a national awareness campaign inspired by the historic journey of Justin and Yoshiko Dart to mobilize support for passage of the ADA. The cross country bus journey began in Washington D.C. and stopped in Memphis on Monday, October 29th. It aims to engage audiences across the United States in the story of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the history of the disability rights movement. The hope is to mobilize Americans to keep the promise of the ADA - freedom, inclusion, and opportunity for children and adults with physical, mental, cognitive and development disabilities. The Arc of the Mid-South received an award of appreciation from the Tennessee Disability Coalition.

Throughout their year long journey, national and state disability leaders will be joined by young people with disabilities to restore and strengthen the ADA.

The word will be spread as follows:

The Road to Freedom bus will stop at more than 80 locations nationwide

Tom Olin's stunning photographs of the struggle for disability rights will be the centerpiece of the traveling exhibit.

Press conferences, radio shows and TV interviews are planned highlighting both the obstacles - and the victories - of Americans with disabilities.

The tour will visit schools and colleges to design youth curriculum, working with their partners, the National Youth Leadership Network.

They will demonstrate technology that is advancing educational and economic opportunities for people with disabilities.

A website has been created, [www.roadtofreedom.org](http://www.roadtofreedom.org), for more in depth information on the ADA, tour locations and dates, and ideas on how to make a difference.

There are 5 simple things you can do to help keep the promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1. Sign the ADA petition - go to [www.roadtofreedom.org](http://www.roadtofreedom.org)
2. Contact Congress - go to [www.roadtofreedom.org](http://www.roadtofreedom.org) for facts and contact information
3. Sign up for News and Alerts - An educated community is an empowered community
4. Join an Organization - Find out about our state and local partners at [www.ncdr.org](http://www.ncdr.org)
5. Donate to ADA Watch and the National Coalition for Disability Rights



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FEBRUARY 28, 2007

Disability Days on the Hill 2007 was a SMASHING success that helped establish the disability community with our legislators. If you didn't make it this year, there is plenty of time to plan for 2008.

This is your opportunity to meet with state legislators at the Capitol and talk about issues important to you and your family. Dozens of disability organizations from across the state will be participating and with your help we can ensure that every legislator gets to hear from a constituent with a disability, a family member or friend. Please contact our office for more information.

*The Arc of the Mid-South is a proud member of*



*"Empowering People with Developmental Disabilities to Achieve their Full Potential"*

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