

## Fresh Look Signals Renewed Focus

### Brand Makeover Includes Clear Purpose Statement

Something has changed ... and this renamed and redesigned newsletter is just the beginning. At long last, we're beginning to implement our new brand based on changes at the national level of Easterseals.

For the past two years, Easterseals has been on an exciting "brand renaissance" journey nationwide. The national office began using elements of the new brand publicly in May 2016, and Easterseals affiliates across the country will continue to transition to the updated look and refreshed philosophy until the end of 2018.

Changes will occur gradually at Easterseals Arc. You'll start to see the updated logo and color scheme on more and more materials (such as this newsletter), our website will be revised, and our signage will change.

The rebranding initiative is more than a new logo, however. The new brand is a way to clarify our purpose and reintroduce ourselves to our community. Easterseals Arc has evolved from its founding by a

group of parents nearly 65 years ago; our programs have changed and grown to meet the needs and desires of people with disabilities and their families.

To capture all we do, we have adopted a clear statement of our purpose: To change the way the world defines and views disability by making profound, positive differences in people's lives every day.

**Our Purpose**  
To change the way  
the world defines and  
views disability by making  
profound, positive  
differences in people's  
lives every day.

This purpose statement explains what drives us, what inspires us and where we focus our energies. We dispel stereotypes, overcome obstacles and challenge perceptions about people with disabilities and their potential.

The new brand also gives us a new tagline: taking on disability together.

The tagline clearly identifies us as an organization that is actively working to address disability issues and calls on the community to take action in some way: volunteer, hire people with disabilities, donate, be an advocate, or work with us. It calls on all of us to work collaboratively as we take on disability together.

### Out with the old ...

*Easter Seals Arc of Northeast Indiana*



### ... in with the new



# Exciting Year of Changes Coming

I hope 2017 is off to a great start for all of you! I am excited for 2107 for many reasons. We have a new logo and purpose statement that I hope will help tell our Easterseals Arc stories better! The world is changing for all of us, including people with disabilities. I think our new look and updated messaging better paints a future that we are striving to achieve.



**DONNA  
ELBRECHT**  
President & CEO

Our new purpose statement is: "To change the way the world defines and views disability by making profound, positive differences in people's lives every day." I like this because it speaks to our role in dispelling stereotypes, challenging attitudes and perceptions, and shaping the terms of the debate

around disability issues. Our purpose statement invites you and other people to join us as we take on disability together.

I think the timing of our new brand is perfect with the

many changes occurring in the disability community. In March of 2014 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) established the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule. The State of Indiana is working to ensure it is in compliance with these changes by 2019. You will see more information about this change as well as changes happening with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) in this edition of the newsletter.

All of these changes are seeking more choices, person-centered planning, community employment, and accessing the community to the fullest. You will see in this edition some of the new things we are doing based on input from the people we serve and their families, while also moving toward coming into compliance with the new rules and regulations. The state has hosted input sessions and has great information on its website. I encourage all of you to sign-up for their HCBS Transition Plan newsletter and stay updated.

I look forward to 2017, and I have confidence knowing we can count on you as we take on disability together!

## Encouragement Helps Consumer Move Beyond Comfort Zone

Behavior consultants do more than try to decrease problematic behaviors; they also encourage positive behaviors and attitudes. Denise is a great example of how that encouragement can make a difference for an individual.

Denise had been afraid to work because she thought she could not do it. Pat, her behavior consultant, spent a year telling her that she can do anything she puts her mind to. Denise has a roommate who works at Projects Drive Group, so Pat persuaded Denise to take a tour and see whether she would like to try working.



**With encouragement from her behavior consultant, Denise is now working two days a week.**

Denise was a little hesitant at first, but she went ahead with the tour. As she walked around on the tour,

she saw other consumers that she knew. Instantly her attitude changed, and she started say she could do it.

Denise now works two days per week and is really glad she made the decision to step out of her comfort zone.

Her newfound confidence may lead her to pursue community employment. On a recent trip to Burger King, she noted that she knows how to sweep floors and wipe tables. Knowing she can handle those tasks, she expressed an interest in working there.

# Federal Rules Focus on Integration, Employment

The rules and regulations that govern what, where and how providers can offer support services for people with disabilities can be overwhelming. Understanding federal and state regulations is more important now than ever as two significant rules, both rooted in 2014 changes, get closer to implementation.

## Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Final Rule

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), a federal agency, published regulations in 2014 to better define settings in which states can provide Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services. The goal is to ensure that individuals receive services in integrated settings and have access to the community. Individuals are entitled to opportunities to seek employment and work in integrated settings, engage in community life, and control their personal resources. The regulations also require a person-centered planning process, giving individuals input and choices in where they live and the services they receive.

In short, the HCBS rule focuses on respecting the individual's rights and choices, supporting full access to the community, and maximizing the individual's independence. However, there are provisions for times when following the rule would jeopardize the individual's health and safety.

Each state must create a plan to ensure compliance with the HCBS rule. Indiana's plan is currently being reviewed by CMS. In the meantime, the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) has been assessing service sites to determine what changes may be needed to ensure compliance with the plan. Based on these assessments DDRS will work with providers to become compliant by June 2018.

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Reforms passed by Congress in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014 require individuals receiving a sub-minimum wage to have the opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated

## Stay Informed

Visit Indiana's Family and Social Services Administration website at [www.in.gov/fssa](http://www.in.gov/fssa) for up-to-date information.

employment, including supported or customized employment. The reforms also require that individuals be informed of these opportunities.

In response, local Vocational Rehabilitation Services offices and staff from The Arc of Indiana have begun to contact providers like Easterseals Arc who offer employment at a sub-minimum wage to schedule Career Counseling & Information and Referral Services (CCIR) sessions for individuals employed at subminimum wage, starting with those employed on or after July 22, 2016. Guardians are also encouraged to attend the sessions.

Another important aspect of WIOA is that a person younger than 24 with a disability cannot start a sub-minimum wage job. They must receive pre-employment transition services and career counseling first.



## Impact on Easterseals Arc

Easterseals Arc has already implemented many programs and services that encourage and facilitate community integration. For example, we have greatly expanded our employment services in recent years to help consumers prepare for and gain employment in the community. The Employment Readiness Academy, which offers 18-week paid internships with local employers, is just one highlight of our efforts in employment. Also, we have created a community integration team dedicated to planning outings and activities driven by consumer interests. All of our day programs are also finding new ways to incorporate community integration into their offerings.

As the state continues to clarify rules, you can rest assured that Easterseals Arc will continue to put our consumer needs and interests first.

# Lutheran Network Opens On-site Clinic

Easter Seals Arc and Lutheran Health Network celebrated the opening of an on-site Lutheran Medical Group clinic at Easter Seals Arc in December. The clinic is part of a partnership designed to provide individuals with disabilities the right health care, at the right time, and at the right place.

"Having a Lutheran Medical Group clinic at our facility gives our consumers increased access to care they need, when they need it, in a place where they are comfortable," explained Donna Elbrecht, Easter Seals Arc president and CEO. "We believe this clinic partnership can significantly improve our consumers' overall health and well-being, while reducing health care costs."

Easter Seals Arc is providing the space for the clinic in its Adult Day Center, while Lutheran Health Network is providing the nurse practitioner; a certified medical assistant/receptionist; an electronic medical record/billing system; and ongoing supplies.

"Through the Employment Readiness Academy at Lutheran, we have formed a strong bond with Easter Seals Arc and its clients," said Scott Weiskittel, chief operating officer, Lutheran



**Easterseals Arc staff and consumers gathered with Lutheran Health Network officials in December to celebrate the opening of a Lutheran Medical Group clinic at Easterseals Arc.**

Hospital. "Providing these individuals with an enhanced patient experience at a location and in an environment where they feel most comfortable is something we've been excited to be part of. We believe this provides all involved with a real opportunity to receive lasting health benefits."

The clinic offers clients easy access to health care in a familiar environment with equipment such as special lifts. The clinic staff can:

- Provide on-site exams and physicals
- Diagnose and treat acute conditions
- Order and interpret diagnostic tests such as EKGs, lab work,

and x-rays

- Prescribe medications
  - Educate clients and caregivers on disease prevention and healthy life choices
- Easter Seals Arc will collect data to measure the clinic's impact on consumer health in areas such as reduction in visits to emergency rooms and urgent care centers; reduction in hospital admissions and readmissions; and increases in achievement of health care goals related to weight, blood pressure and management of diabetes.

As an added benefit, Easter Seals Arc employees and their dependents are also eligible to use the clinic.

## Easterseals Arc Board Approves 5 New Members

The Easterseals Arc of Northeast Indiana Board of Directors has approved the addition of five new board members:

- Shane Araujo, of 3BG Supply
- Phil Bundy, of Three Rivers Federal Credit Union
- Greg Haney, of Horizon Bank
- Linda Johnston, of Old National Bank
- Peter Van Baalen, of Fort Wayne Newspapers

Each board member will serve a three-year term. The Board of Directors now has 19 members.

# Pre-Employment Services Begin at Wayne HS

## Easterseals Arc, FWCS, Ivy Tech Collaborate on Program

Easterseals Arc, Fort Wayne Community Schools and Ivy Tech Community College Northeast are partnering to provide pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to qualifying Wayne High School students with disabilities through a state grant.

The funding from the state's Vocational Rehabilitative Services program is preparing students to learn and enhance their skills in five areas: job-exploration counseling, post-secondary education, self-advocacy, work-based learning experiences, and workplace-readiness training.

"We really worked to establish a program that would benefit individuals with disabilities who may be looking to seek employment options in the near future," said Thomas Summerville, director of the Adult Day Center, Transitions and employment services at Easterseals Arc.

Easterseals Arc approached Fort Wayne Community Schools about a potential partnership, and FWCS officials identified Wayne High School as the school with the greatest need for pre-employment transitional services.

"In the past two years, our school—for its part in working with special needs students—has made a big push toward project-based learning. Our special needs students currently maintain a greenhouse, a lunch café and a supplies store within the school," said John Houser, principal of



**Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) at Wayne High School include classroom learning, work experience, guest speakers, college visits and employment-related field trips.**

Wayne High School. "I'm excited to see this partnership with Easterseals Arc and Ivy Tech because it will make the available training opportunities more rigorous, more real life."

The program began with eight students Jan. 17 and will conclude May 11. During the 18-week work-rotation schedule, the students will gain work experience in four areas at Ivy Tech Northeast: administrative services, catering/ culinary, groundskeeping and janitorial/housekeeping. Students also will earn Indiana's safe food handler certification during their training experience.

"Ivy Tech is proud to provide work experiences to individuals with disabilities," says Kassandra Flanagan, program manager for Ivy Tech Northeast's Workforce Alignment. "These experiences will not only provide skills training in various areas of our campus'

facilities, these experiences will also provide a stepping stone for one's independence and self-worth."

The students are divided into two groups of four students. Each group trains at Ivy Tech Northeast two days a week and participates in classroom learning two days. On Fridays, the students focus collectively on self-advocacy and post-secondary education by visiting local colleges, hosting guest speakers, and taking employment-related field trips.

"This collaboration has been a great opportunity for all parties," Summerville said. "Wayne High School's entire administration has been phenomenal, and Ivy Tech continues to provide Easterseals Arc with great resources to help enhance the education and employability of individuals with disabilities."

Easterseals Arc hopes to expand to additional high schools in the future.

# 'Dancing' Offers Night Out for Great Cause

If you are looking for a fun night out with dinner and entertainment that also supports a local charity, look no further! We are



**SHERI WARD**  
Director of  
Development

approaching our first fundraising event of the year—Dancing with the Arc Stars.

As I scan through photos from previous events, my heart is overwhelmed! Unless you

have witnessed this event in person, there is no way to describe the emotions that fill the venue.

Dancing with the Arc Stars supports our recreation programs, which serve about 1,000 people



## Dancing with the Arc Stars

**Date and time:** 5:30 p.m.  
Thursday, March 9

**Location:** Grand Wayne Center,  
1201 W. Jefferson Blvd.

**Tickets:** \$100 per person,  
purchase online at  
[www.bidpal.net/dancing](http://www.bidpal.net/dancing)

each year. The event features Easterseals Arc consumers paired with individuals from the

community to compete for awards from our judges and votes from the audience. Come show your support and make your vote count! Tickets are \$100 each and include a buffet dinner.

One longtime donor who attends Dancing with the Arc Stars each year is unable to make it this year due to a previous commitment; however, he feels so strongly about the Easterseals Arc programs that he purchased tickets to give away. What a GREAT idea! This not only spreads the word on our event, but enables his donation to grow by providing the opportunity to another individual. If you'd like to talk about how you can support Dancing with the Arc Stars beyond just attending, please feel free to contact me at [sward@esarc.org](mailto:sward@esarc.org) or 360.456.4534 ext. 267.

We look forward to seeing you Thursday, March 9!

## Gratitude for Grants

Easterseals Arc is thankful to the following organizations for their generous grant awards:

- Parrish Foundation, \$25,000 for operating expenses
- Waterfield Foundation, \$5,000 for nursing services
- Eric & Mary Baade Trust, \$4,000 for health education services
- Easterseals, \$10,000 for nursing services
- Foellinger Foundation Invited Initiatives Programs, \$130,000 for operating expenses, \$10,000 for capacity building and fundraising, and \$75,000 for technology and capital improvements
- English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, \$48,500 for technology
- Mary Cross Tippmann Foundation, \$6,500 for operating expenses
- Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne, \$15,000 for employment services
- Magee-O'Connor Foundation, \$7,500 for employment services
- ME Raker Foundation, \$10,000 for employment services and community integration
- Easterseals, \$5,000 for Parents Taking Action
- Wilson Foundation, \$5,000 for assistive technology
- Fort Wayne Health and Education Fund, \$1,000 for assistive technology

# Upcoming Events: February Through May

## FEBRUARY

- 2/1 & 15 Aktion Club meeting, 6:30-7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 300 W. Wayne St.
- 2/7 Asperger's Youth Group, 6:15-7:15 p.m., Ivy Tech Community College, 3800 N. Anthony Blvd.
- 2/13 Social Group for Adults who have Asperger's, 6-7:30 p.m., Lutheran Hospital, Room #4 in cafeteria
- 2/17 Self Advocates meeting, 1-2 p.m., Projects Drive
- 2/25 Wings for Autism, 10:45 a.m., Fort Wayne International Airport, advance registration is required at [www.thearc.org/wings](http://www.thearc.org/wings)

## MARCH

- 3/1 & 15 Aktion Club meeting, 6:30-7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 300 W. Wayne St.
- 3/7 Asperger's Youth Group, 6:15-7:15 p.m., Ivy Tech Community College, 3800 N. Anthony Blvd.
- 3/9 Dancing with the Arc Stars, 5:30 p.m., Grand Wayne Center, 120 W. Jefferson Blvd., purchase tickets at [www.bidpal.net/dancing](http://www.bidpal.net/dancing)
- 3/13 Social Group for Adults who have Asperger's, 6-7:30 p.m., Lutheran Hospital, Room #4 in cafeteria

### New Group for Adult Siblings

Our Sibshops have been very successful in providing an opportunity for siblings of children with special need to meet and share their experiences. We are now inviting adult siblings of people with special needs to get together to talk and support each other. The first gathering is 6:30 p.m. March 15 at Easterseals Arc. For more information, contact Sue Christman at 456-4534 ext 271 or [schristm@esarc.org](mailto:schristm@esarc.org).

- 3/15 Adult Sibling Get Together, 6:30 p.m., Easterseals Arc, 4919 Coldwater Road

- 3/17 Self Advocates meeting, 1-2 p.m., Projects Drive
- 3/18 Sibshops, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. for elementary school (ages 7 to 12); noon-3 p.m. junior high/middle school; 2-4 p.m. high school, Mad Anthony's Children's Hope House on Lutheran Hospital campus

## APRIL

- 4/3-7 Spring Break – Dream Teens
- 4/4 Asperger's Youth Group, 6:15-7:15 p.m., Ivy Tech Community College, 3800 N. Anthony Blvd.
- 4/5 & 19 Aktion Club meeting, 6:30-7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 300 W. Wayne St.
- 4/10 Social Group for Adults who have Asperger's, 6-7:30 p.m., Lutheran Hospital, Room #4 in cafeteria
- 4/27 5th Annual Recognition Celebration, 6:30-8 p.m., Ceruti's, 6601 Innovation Blvd.,
- 4/21 Self Advocates meeting, 1-2 p.m., Projects Drive

## MAY

- 5/2 Asperger's Youth Group, 6:15-7:15 p.m., Ivy Tech Community College, 3800 N. Anthony Blvd.
- 5/3 & 17 Aktion Club meeting, 6:30-7:30 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 300 W. Wayne St.
- 5/8 Social Group for Adults who have Asperger's, 6-7:30 p.m., Lutheran Hospital, Room #4 in cafeteria
- 5/19 Self Advocates meeting, 1-2 p.m., Projects Drive
- 5/20 Sibshops, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. for elementary school (ages 7 to 12); noon-3 p.m. junior high/middle school; 2-4 p.m. high school, Mad Anthony's Children's Hope House on Lutheran Hospital campus

# Respite Program Moves, Expands Offerings

If you've never used Easterseals Arc respite services or haven't in a quite a while, it's time to give the program another look. Recent changes make it easier than ever for caregivers to take a break.

- **Respite House:** The Respite House has moved from its old location on Broadway to 4420 Woodstock Drive.
- **After-school program:** *embArc on Adventures* is a new after-school program at the Respite House. The hours are 2 to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and transportation is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Special Activity Nights:** Planned activities will include craft nights, movie nights, and community outings.



**Caleb enjoyed a recent outing to Painting Fun Spot as part of the respite program.**

- **Parents Night Out:** On Friday evenings, Respite House staff

## Contact Information

To get more information or reserve space in the after-school program, Parents Night Out, or summer camps, contact:

**Katie Moreno**  
Respite House Supervisor  
456-4534 ext. 209  
[kmoreno@esarc.org](mailto:kmoreno@esarc.org)

will care for your loved one and give you a movie gift card and restaurant gift card to help you enjoy a relaxing evening.

- **Summer camps:** Our respite program will feature five different week-long overnight camps this year.