

Fall
2015

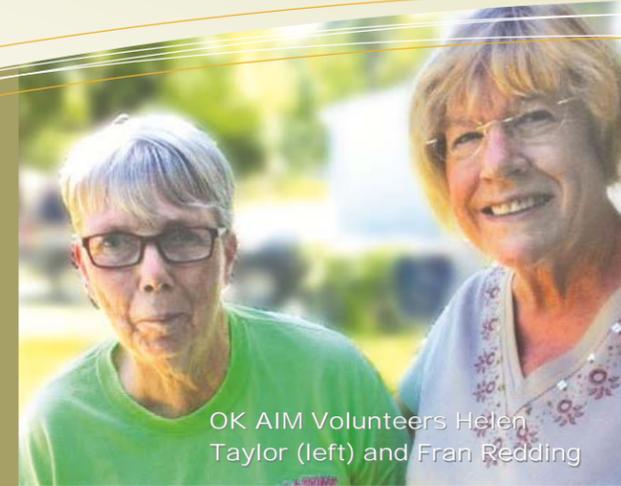
**TARC's Sherilyn
Walton receives
Women of
Distinction
Award**



TARC Family Support
Coordinator Sherilyn
Walton, MSW, LCSW
has been selected as a
recipient of the 2015
"Women of Distinction"
award.

Each year, the Tulsa
Business and Legal News
honors 20 Women of
Distinction for their
contributions professionally
and philanthropically.

These women are
selected based on
nominations by their peers.
They have made extraordi-
nary contributions to their
families and communities
while at the same time,
excelling in their careers.



OK AIM Volunteers Helen
Taylor (left) and Fran Redding

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OK AIM monitors with disabilities provide unique insights

OK AIM volunteer monitors come from all walks of life. Their diversity of backgrounds and experiences often give them unique insights into quality of life issues facing the individuals they monitor.

Perhaps the ultimate perspective is seen by several OK AIM monitors who also share some of the same disability challenges as the

people they serve.

One such example is veteran volunteer Helen Taylor who partners with another long-time ARCCorps and OK AIM volunteer Fran Redding.

"Helen has been an OK AIM monitor for more than 16 years and has attended visits with me for the last four years," said Fran.

"Helen knows firsthand what many of those we see deal with every day of their lives. She serves as a wonderful role model for people who are trying to gain their own independence," she continued.

Helen's passion for helping others extends beyond her participation as an OK AIM volunteer.

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25th Annual Advocacy Awards features Pulitzer Prize journalist

The 25th Annual Advocacy Awards and Volunteer Recognition ceremony will take place on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015.

Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author Ron Suskind will be the keynote speaker at this year's event. Suskind's latest book, *Life, Animated, A Story of Side-kicks, Heroes and Autism*, chronicles his family's 20-year struggle with their son's autism.



Ron Suskind, 2015 Advocacy Awards keynote speaker will describe his family's experiences with their son's autism.

Suskind's youngest son Owen was diagnosed at age three with regressive autism and eventually lost his ability to speak. He then developed an obsessive interest in Disney movies.

Once the family discovered this, they began to play the roles of animated characters and to converse in Disney dialogue – a method that over years helped their son regain speech.

The annual TARC

(Continued on page 5)

TARC winner of AFP Outstanding Diversity and Inclusion Award

TARC has been chosen as the winner of the Eastern Oklahoma Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals 2015 Outstanding Diversity and Inclusion in Philanthropy Award.

The award is given to an individual or organization that seeks to achieve a broad representation of experiences, perspectives, and cultures to ensure that the best possible thinking, ideas, opportunities and solutions are considered; intentionally creates a respectful and welcoming environment that is open to all; and appreciates the unique contributions of every member of the community.

The award will be presented to TARC at a special luncheon on Nov. 6. 



2015 AFP award winners from left to right: Outstanding Fundraising Professional: Lucky Lamons; Outstanding Diversity & Inclusion in Philanthropy: John Gajda (TARC); Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy: Keith Boyd; Outstanding Philanthropist: Kayla & Scott (not pictured) Vaughn; Outstanding Diversity & Inclusion in Philanthropy: Hannibal Johnson; and Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser: Isaac Rocha.



An affiliated
chapter of



OK AIM Activity Gauges
January 1 - June 30, 2015



TARC takes lead on ADA 25th anniversary events in Tulsa

July 26, 2015 marked the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by Pres. George H.W. Bush in 1990.

Earlier this year, TARC approached The Center for Individuals with Physical Challenges Executive Director Lori Long to explore possible ideas on how to commemorate this landmark civil rights

and others.

Speakers included John Gajda, TARC; Jeannie Cue, Tulsa City Council; Dr. Andrea Walker and Bud Jessee, Tulsa Human Rights Commission; Sabrina Ware, Goodwill; Debbie Ruggles, Tulsa Transit; Lori Long, Tulsa Center for Individuals with Physical Challenges; and Emeka Nnaka and Sean Lewis, disability advocates.

The ADA 25th Anniversary

first pitch, and Gabby Pratt who participated in a special between-innings field activity.

In addition, John Gajda and Lori Long presented a plaque to Drillers' General Manager Mike Melega honoring the Drillers and ONEOK for providing Tulsa with an outstanding facility designed for accessibility and accommodation for people with disabilities.



John Gajda, TARC Executive Director, addresses guests and media at the ADA 25th anniversary press conference at ONEOK Field.

legislation for people with disabilities and bring further attention to disability issues.

As a result, a press conference was held at ONEOK Field, home of the Tulsa Drillers, on July 24th. Media attending included KJRH (NBC) and KTUL (ABC) plus the Tulsa World, La Semana

celebration continued the following night at ONEOK Field before and during the Drillers' game with the Arkansas Travelers and featured three individuals with disabilities: Sharon Rotramel who sang the national anthem, Emeka Nnaka who threw out the

Several area disability related organizations including Ability Resources, Bios, New View, and ERI participated by staffing booths inside the stadium to distribute information about their disability-related services and programs.

ARCCorps match made more joyful through mutual love of music

After spending just a few minutes with prospective match Kandy Smith, new ARCCorps volunteer Jill Scott said, "You certainly seem very happy."

Kandy's response immediately cemented what would become a lasting relationship. "I'm always happy when I'm with a friend," she said.

"Even though Kandy and I immediately bonded, I struggled to find things we could do together," said Jill. "Then one day I found out that Kandy loved to sing—especially old gospel tunes."

Jill asked Kandy if she would be interested in going with her to her church's choir rehearsal which Kandy enthusiastically agreed to do.

More than three years later, they both continue to sing with the Joyful Sound Choir from Henderson Hills Baptist Church in Edmond which includes several people with disabilities as choir members.

Coincidentally, the choir director is another long-time ARCCorps volunteer, Shouna Olson, also from Edmond.

"This turned out to be the perfect connection for us," said Jill. "This gave us a purpose and a deeper bond. It has truly become a joyful time for us to spend together."



ARCCorps volunteer Jill Scott (left) and Kandy Smith enjoy a mutual love of music as members of the Joyful Sound Choir in Edmond that has several members who have disabilities.

ARCCorps Volunteer Recruiter/Coordinator Brenda Garrett said, "Not only does Kandy get to spend time with Jill on a regular basis, but she has met new friends and had new experiences that she never would have had without Jill."

"Jill is a consistent and assertive advocate for Kandy and also helped me do a presentation at a Partners in Policymaking class where she shared her personal story and experience. I wish

I had twenty more just like her!" Brenda added.

Jill is a special education teacher and also volunteers as a Special Olympics coach. "My experience as a TARC volunteer has made me a better teacher by giving me a better understanding of what TARC is all about."

"Not having a child of my own with special needs, I've gained a whole new perspective of what many of my students' parents experience as a result of having Kandy become part of my family."

OK AIM Volunteer Reminders

- « Please back up your ratings with comments
- « Return your packet in a timely fashion
- « Sign your reimbursement form
- « Do reminder calls for your visits
- « Take your OK AIM ID badge with you

ARCCorps Volunteer Guardian Reminder

Please forward a copy of your completed annual report to your Coordinator as quickly as possible.

OK AIM monitors

(Continued from page 1)

She also serves as a volunteer greeter at Hillcrest Medical Center where she once worked.

In an online article posted in 2014 on their website, Gatesway Foundation said,

"Now 66 years of age, Taylor continues to live completely on her own. She has paid off the mortgage on her home and retired four years ago.

"By nature an active, energetic person, Taylor simply couldn't picture herself as a couch potato, so she began

doing what many active seniors do: volunteering — at Hillcrest of course. She is also an OK AIM volunteer, encouraging others like herself to hang in there and live up to her motto of 'never give up'."

Has Your Address or Phone Number Changed?

Please contact your OK AIM or ARCCorps Coordinator with your correct information or call 918-582-8272 or 800-688-8272.



TARC Board member Bob Cole to receive Leadership Tulsa Paragon Star Award



TARC Board member Bob Cole will be presented a Leadership Tulsa Paragon Star Award at the "Legends and Legacies" event on Oct. 27.

After serving as a Board intern in 2011 as part of the Leadership Tulsa program requirements, Bob has continued as a full-fledged Board member since 2012.

This year, Bob agreed to serve as the chair of the TARC Board's Public Relations and Development Committee. The Committee has become very active and Bob has helped to reenergize the Board's involvement and engagement in fundraising.

Through Bob's leadership TARC is making great strides in developing its fundraising capabilities. With Bob as a driving force, this year's golf tournament doubled its net profit from last year.

TARC volunteer Sean Lewis receives Live United Spirit Award

The Tulsa Area United Way honored Sean Lewis as the recipient of the 2015 Live United Spirit award.

The award was presented to Sean at the TAUW Day of Caring Kickoff Breakfast on Sept. 11 at Johnson Park.

The purpose of the Live United Spirit award is to honor an individual from one of TAUW's 60 partner agencies who has made an indelible mark on the lives of others.



"You have no limits except the ones you place on yourself."

This individual goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve the agency through advocacy or volunteer efforts.

He or she promotes healthy change, ideas and works well with others. This person encourages others to overcome obstacles, possibly having overcome similar challenges, and exudes a positive spirit. He or she is a supporter and promoter of the organization and always has its best interests at heart.

Sean has exemplified these requirements through years of service through TAUW

partner agencies TARC, The Center for Individuals with Physical Challenges, and other organizations through motivational speaking engagements, organizational leadership, and, most of all, through his example.

Sean has been an active member of Tulsa People First, a self-advocacy organization for adults with disabilities, for nine years



Sean receives the 2015 Live United Spirit Award from TAUW President Mark Graham at the Day of Caring Kickoff event at Johnson Park on Sept. 11.

serving in various leadership positions.

He currently serves as president of Tulsa People First which operates through and is facilitated by TARC. In 2012, Sean was honored as the Self Advocate of the Year at TARC's annual Advocacy Awards and Volunteer Recognition ceremony.

He has volunteered to be a presenter at TAUW panel visits as well as at a recent group visit by Blue Cross Blue Shield president, Ted Haynes and other BCBS and TAUW employees. Sean currently is serving as the co-chair for the 25th Annual TARC Advocacy Awards and Volunteer Recognition event in December. One of Sean's favorite expressions to share with people is, "You have no limits except the ones you place on yourself."

Talk Up TARC Volunteers Like us on Facebook

As a TARC volunteer, you know firsthand how much of a difference your service to individuals with developmental disabilities makes. Please share these stories with friend and family and let them know how rewarding these experiences have been for you personally. As a result, they too may want to donate their time and talents as you have done to improve the lives of those who most need help. Let them know how they can become an OK AIM or ARCCorps volunteer. By doing so, you will have expanded your service through the service of others. Liking and sharing the TARC Volunteers Facebook page is one way to do that.

25th Annual Advocacy Awards

(Continued from page 1)

Advocacy Awards program was created to recognize those who have provided outstanding service and advocacy for Oklahomans with developmental disabilities.

Awards will be presented in 12 categories including a new Catalyst of Change category. This award will be given to individuals, groups or organizations that have been catalysts for significant positive change in improving the lives of Oklahomans with developmental disabilities.

Enclosed in this issue of CaringVoices is a nomination form for this year's Advocacy Awards.

This is your opportunity to nominate a person, agency, civic group or business that has made an outstanding contribution to the field of developmental disabilities.

Nominations also can be submitted online by going online to the TARC website at www.ddadvocacy.net.



Also new for 2015 will be the addition of a special award category — the Lifetime Achievement Award.

These awards will honor individuals, groups and

organizations that have created a lasting impact on the lives of Oklahomans with developmental disabilities through sustained and outstanding service.

Previous Advocacy Award winners will be eligible for these two new awards.

Advocacy Awards also will be presented in the following

categories: Board Member, Case Manager, Direct Care Provider, Educator, Professional Provider, Volunteer, Elected Official, Self-Advocate, Media Advocate, Parent Advocate, and Special Achievement in Advocacy.

The deadline for receiving completed nominations is Monday, Nov. 2.

In addition to the awards ceremony there will be a dinner and live entertainment provided by the Pathways Choir from Kirk of the Hills Church located in Tulsa and the Green Country Shining All Stars cheer group from Owasso.

ARCCorps volunteers are encouraged to bring their match with them to the ceremony.

Please take time to let someone you know how much their service is appreciated by nominating them for this important recognition award.

Volunteers and sponsors key to golf tournament success

Thanks in large part to the generosity of volunteers and sponsors, TARC's 20th annual Shot In The Dark Golf Tournament was a tremendous success.

The Young Single Adult group from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints provided more than 50 volunteers for the fifth consecutive year. Also providing volunteers were ONEOK and Tulsa People First.

2015 tournament sponsors included:

Eagle Sponsors:
Margaret Goatcher
Industrial Electric



Classic Sponsors:
Bank of Oklahoma

Invitational Sponsors:
Dr. Tim Cole
Randa Vernon/HoganTaylor
Bluestone Resources
Williams Companies
Marjo Operating Company

Hole Sponsors:
Chick fil A
TTCU
Lakewood Midstream
Brain Balance
Auto Insurance Center of Tulsa
Grace Business

Corporate Performance Group
Cyntergy
Sutton
Tulsa Child Psychology
Flexco
T.D. Williamson
Southeast Rotary

\$10,000 Putting Contest Sponsor:
Jackie Cooper Imports

BBQ Dinner Sponsors:
Albert G's
Bob Cole

T-Shirt Sponsor:
Al Johnson

OSU partnership continues to provide OK AIM Monitors

The partnership between TARC and Oklahoma State University that began in 2012 continues to provide OSU students with a hands-on opportunity to serve individuals with developmental disabilities.

In August of this year, 82 OSU students in the Human Development and Family Science Department started training as OK AIM Monitors and will begin solo visits in October.

In addition, 12 former HDFS students have continued to volunteer as Monitors and have been successfully utilized as trainers for the current class.

"We are very pleased with the ongoing success of the OSU/TARC partnership," said Michelle Brinkley-Jones, OK AIM Program Coordinator. "So much so that we have met with Oral Roberts University representatives from the Social Work Department to develop a similar program at ORU", she added.

Three ORU students have been trained as Monitors and have completed eight successful solo visits.



Go Green!

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter electronically instead of by mail as well as information about special events, program updates, etc., just email tarc@ddadvocacy.net and let us know you want to be added to the TARC e-mail list.

Easy as 1-2-3!

Join

Become a TARC Member and add your voice as an advocate for those with developmental disabilities.

Volunteer

Learn how you can personally affect an individual's life by becoming an OK-AIM or ARCCorps volunteer.

Donate

Your tax-deductible donation helps fund the many programs and services that TARC provides.

New volunteer recruitment position funded by AmeriCorps



In an effort to bolster volunteer recruitment, TARC applied for and received a grant from AmeriCorps to fund a new a new position specifically designed for that purpose for one year.

TARC welcomes Kate Fitzpatrick as TARC's AmeriCorps Member/Volunteer Recruitment Assistant.

Kate recently filled another AmeriCorps position with the Tulsa City/County Library Trust.

Nationally, AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country.

"TARC's ARCCorps program has a significant need for more volunteer guardians. There are currently 180

people throughout the state who remain unmatched with an advocate/guardian to help ensure their quality of life is what they need and deserve," said TARC Executive Director John Gajda.

"This new position will help give our existing volunteer recruiters/coordinators added support and outreach capabilities," he added.

Kate also will assist with volunteer recruitment planning and outreach efforts for the OK AIM program.

One component of TARC's outreach efforts has been the creation of a special "TARC Volunteers"

Facebook page.

The primary purpose of the page is to build a community of TARC volunteers through program and event announcements, shared stories, and volunteer recognition.

TARC volunteers are encouraged to visit the page often, 'like' posts, and share them with others.

"This is another way our volunteers can help in finding and recruiting others to become TARC volunteers as well as making more people aware of our programs and services," said Stacey Figueroa, ARCCorps Program Coordinator.

For more information about TARC's volunteer programs, call 918-582-TARC or 800-688-TARC.

Information also is available online at www.ddadvocacy.net.

Ricoh volunteers step up for TARC Day of Caring event

TARC's Fall Spectacular was held on Sept. 11 in conjunction with the Tulsa Area United Way Day of Caring.



People with developmental disabilities and their care staff were invited to enjoy games, arts & crafts, D.J.—Steve Pitts, and a picnic cook-out at Whiteside Park.



Ricoh of Tulsa chose the Fall Spectacular as their Day of Caring project and provided volunteers to assist with games and cooked hamburgers and hot dogs.

We are grateful for their participation at this well attended event where people from Gatesway, Bios, VOA, Central States, Independent Opportunities, and other residential programs gathered for a day of fun and food.

Our thanks to Ricoh, Ehrle's Party & Carnival Supply, the staff at Whiteside Park as well as the many others who made this event so enjoyable for everyone involved.



TARC Volunteers. The Power of One.

In her song, *Heaven's Here on Earth*, Tracy Chapman sings, "I've seen and met angels wearing the disguise of ordinary people living ordinary lives."

This phrase aptly describes the hundreds of ARCCorps and OK AIM volunteers who donate their time, money, and other resources to help individuals with developmental disabilities whose lives are truly enriched by their caring support.

These volunteers exemplify the power one person has to change life of another.

They truly are angels in disguise.



ARCCorps volunteer Katie Bynum (right) & Renee Angleman

25th Annual Advocacy Awards Nominations Needed

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ARCCorps Activity Gauges January 1 - June 30, 2015

