

## CREATING A PICTURE OF LIFE PROJECT

By: Larry Clausen, Executive Director



As a young child I learned the challenges of growing up in a single parent home without an extended family to provide support. When I was 10 years old, my mother developed [Lupus](#) at that time a severe and life-threatening, chronic illness which landed her in and out of hospitals for extended stays. In spite of her illness, my mom was a master in cobbling together acquaintances who would supervise me for the many months when she was hospitalized. In experiencing a range of different adults who unexpectedly entered my life as parental figures, I learned firsthand the uncertainty of an unknown future. When the Council first began discussing [issues](#) surrounding youth with developmental disabilities growing too old to continue in foster care I thought I had helpful insights since I had similar life experiences. I

couldn't have been more wrong. I learned that at age 18, youth in foster care must leave or transition into new living arrangements. While a daunting experience for anyone in this situation, persons with developmental disabilities will [face additional obstacles](#). I also found that a risk for persons with developmental disabilities leaving foster care is not planning adequately on how to access important community resources such as medical care, employment, public benefits, and other supports that will help them succeed.

In response to these problems and in partnership with the [Sonoran UCEDD](#), the [Division of Developmental Disabilities \(DDD\)](#) and the Council initiated the "Picture of Life" project, an approach designed to prepare for transitioning from foster care. Using [person-centered planning](#) as the foundation for its work, the project seeks to enable youth to fully participate in:

- Establishing a safe and stable home
- Engaging in self-determination and self-advocacy
- Framing a vision for the future
- Assembling a support system to help with decision making
- Maintaining a circle of natural and informal supports
- Participation in exploration of employment opportunities and moving into competitive employment whenever possible

The first year of this project will aim activities towards 16-17 year old youth currently receiving services from DDD and Child Protective Services and will prepare 20 young adults as they transition from foster care. Additional details on the success of this project will be available on the [Council Facebook page](#) and our [website](#).

## COUNCIL MEMBER RECEIVES HERBERT R. DRINKWATER AWARD

Council Member Ray Morris wears several hats in the Scottsdale Community. As a parent and advocate he provides family support to his son who is a person with a developmental disability. He's also created a non-profit organization, [Dads 4 Special Kids](#), an organization which provides information and supports to fathers of children with special needs. In the last year Ray has been active valley wide providing training to persons with developmental disabilities, their families and other community members in the area of emergency preparedness.



In addition to his multiple family and volunteer activities, Ray is also a full-time Scottsdale Fire Engineer. Every year the City of Scottsdale recognizes employees who provide outstanding community service and recently awarded Ray the [2012 Herbert R. Drinkwater Award](#) for setting an outstanding example through volunteerism and dedication to serving others. In presenting the award to Ray, Scottsdale Mayor Jim Lane noted that "he truly cares about making a positive impact within our community and is a wonderful role model for the fathers and families he helps and supports."

## VOLUNTEERISM AS A PATHWAY TO INCLUSION

By: Larry Clausen,  
Executive Director

As much as I try, I find it increasingly difficult to stay in touch with the people who make up the community where I live. I get tied to a schedule that sets a routine that's hard to break. Fortunately, I've found several volunteer opportunities that not only allow some of my time to be spent working in projects I believe in, but also pays-off in providing chances to meet new people and learn important things that aren't a regular part of my life. Volunteering is like that – creating options that can alter your views, introduce new thinking, provide personal fulfillment and in many cases, increase skills – which brings me to the [Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism](#), (GCSV) which applies the vision of "Building a better Arizona through service and volunteerism". Recently, Bob Shogren, Director of the GCSV, began working with our Council to see how we could involve more persons with disabilities in volunteering. This was an important step, since we believe



*April 11th Focus Group: Increasing the inclusion of persons with disabilities in state volunteer programs.*

that volunteering involving youth and adults, especially when related to service that can build job skills, is an important option leading to employment. Bob's office has several tools that can be used to support volunteerism, with one standing out as a great resource. The [AmeriCorps](#) program managed by the GCSV in Arizona, is a federally funded project which offers a variety of opportunities throughout the state and can lead to people finding jobs. AmeriCorps is unique in that it also offers a paid stipend to offset expenses of participants,

an unusual occurrence in the field of volunteering. As we explore increased utilization of volunteering as a pathway to employment, AmeriCorps offers an option with appeal to persons with disabilities and one that we would like to see become more accessible.

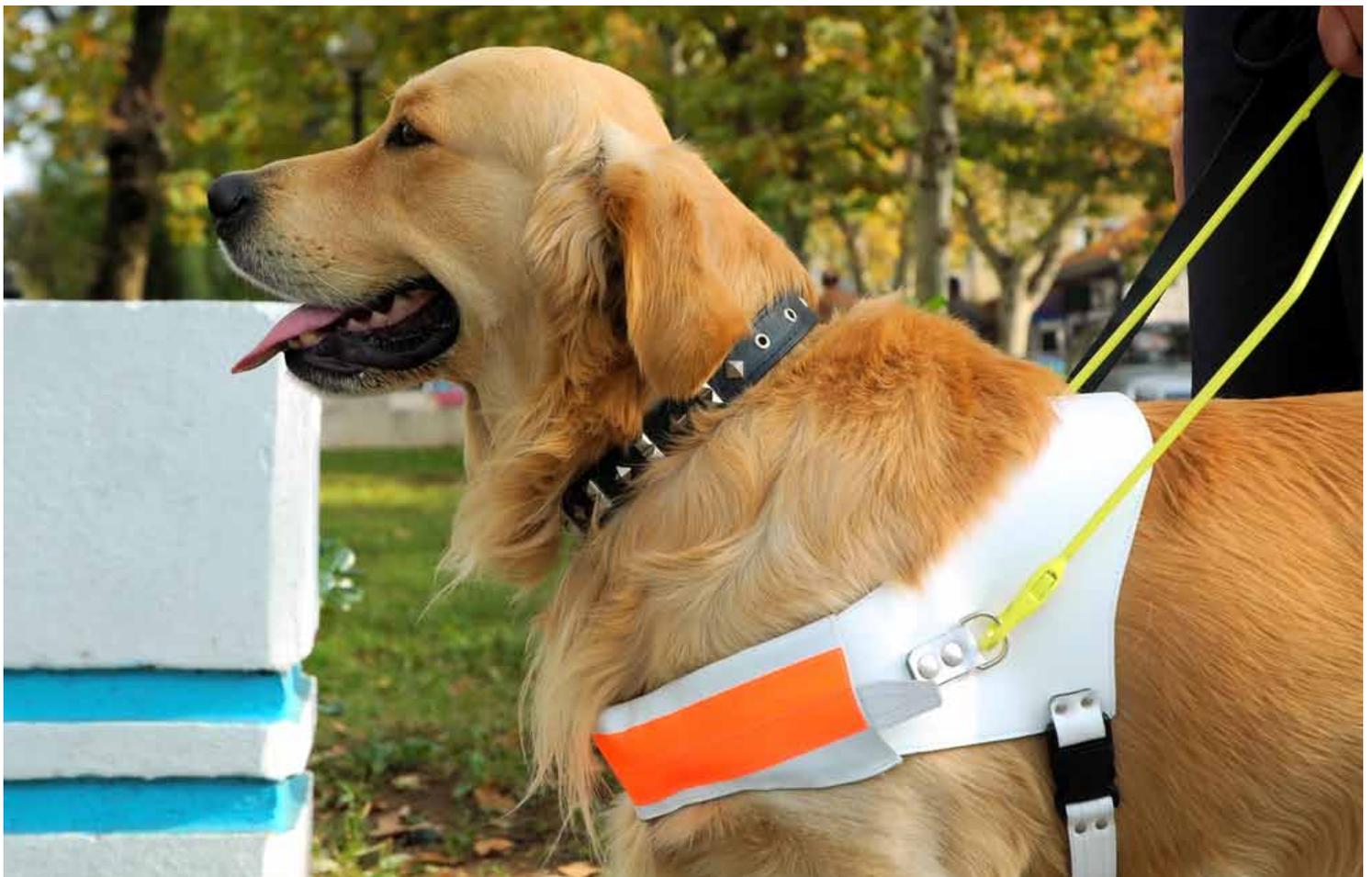
On April 11th, Bob hosted a focus group at our Council office, inviting persons with developmental disabilities, family members, and other stakeholders, to discuss how volunteerism in Arizona could be shaped to be more inclusive of persons with

disabilities. The focus group was one of many held in the state to invite public participation as GCSV designs its new strategic plan. As the topic of specific programs (including AmeriCorps) was included in the many discussions held across Arizona we are anticipating a broader involvement of persons with disabilities in the projects that will offer benefits to participants as they volunteer and build important links that increase community service, potential employment and a greater Arizona.

## SERVICE ANIMALS

During the Arizona 2013 Legislative Session, House Bill 2401 was introduced to amend state statute pertaining to service animals. Under the new revisions, service animals are now defined as a dog or miniature horse and language is included to clarify the circumstances for appropriate use of service animals. Some of the approved tasks that designate a service animal as they specifically relate to a person's disability are:

- Assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision, with navigation and other tasks;
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds;
- Providing non-violent protection or rescue work;
- Pulling a wheelchair;
- Assisting a person during a seizure;
- Alerting individuals to the presence of allergens;
- Retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone;
- Providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities;
- Helping individuals with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or disruptive behaviors.



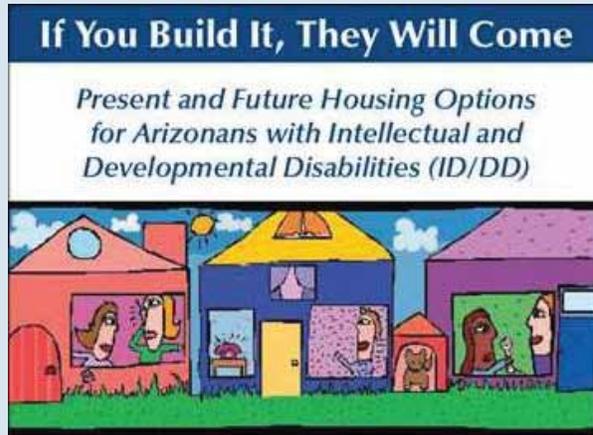
## “IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME” HOUSING REPORT RELEASED

The updated statute is clear in stating that deterring crime, provision of emotional support, comfort and companionship are not covered tasks defining the function and use of a service animal under the law.

The law continues to require responsibility in the area of management of service animals and claims that public settings are not discriminatory if they ban animals who:

- Pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others;
- The service animal fundamentally alters the nature of the public place or the goods, services or activities provided;
- The service animal poses an undue burden;

In addition, a service animal handler is liable for any damage done to a public place by the service animal. The statute offers remedies that can accommodate certain restrictions faced by handlers of service animals. To learn more visit [here](#).



As many Arizonians know, the last several years have been difficult when managing the selection and cost of housing. Persons with developmental disabilities have a historical experience in facing housing

limitations, and a new publication recently released by the Council details the present state of affairs and also proposes future options that may increase housing options for persons with developmental disabilities. In conjunction with Arizona State University, Morrison Institute on Public Policy. *“If You Build It, They Will Come”*, was developed by the Council for distribution to consumers, public policy makers and government planners.

The Council is hopeful that the publication can become part of an increasing “toolkit” to make appropriate and adequate housing increasingly available in Arizona. You can view this document on our [website](#) or by e-mail to receive a copy.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CEREBRAL PALSY

According to the [United Cerebral Palsy Foundation](#), nearly 800,000 children and adults in the U.S. are living with one or more symptoms of cerebral palsy. The website, [PubMedHealth](#) writes that cerebral palsy is caused by injuries or abnormalities of the brain. Most of these problems occur as the baby grows in the

womb, but they can happen at any time during the first 2 years of life, while the baby's brain is still developing. In some people with cerebral palsy, parts of the brain are injured due to low levels of oxygen in the area. It is not known why this occurs. Premature infants have a slightly higher risk of developing cerebral

palsy. Cerebral palsy may also occur during early infancy as a result of several conditions, including:

- Bleeding in the brain
- Brain infections
- Head Injury
- Infections in the mother during pregnancy
- Severe jaundice

Recently a new [study](#) conducted in Australia identified an approach that may reduce the impact of the condition in young children. Using umbilical cord blood cells transfused into study participants as an adjunct to other treatments, researchers found that within six months of treatment children scored significantly higher on cognitive and motor tests than other children receiving more traditional methods of treatment. Excitement is growing about the future of this intervention but continued study will be necessary to determine if adverse effects exist countering benefits.





## PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In an effort to continue Council involvement with community programs, Council staff recently met with Larry Villano and other professionals from the **TERROS** team to learn about the supports they provide to persons with developmental disabilities. Staff was struck by the Special Assistance Team that responds to mental health emergencies. Knowing how critical supports are in mental health crisis, we asked TERROS to provide information to share with consumers.

The **TERROS Special Assistance Team** serves adults and children with developmental disabilities who are experiencing a mental health crisis requiring assistance and support in their homes or community. Disabilities include autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy and epilepsy.

Calls to the TERROS Special Assistance Team can be made 24 hours a day to 602-222-9444 which dispatches the TERROS Special Assistance Team. A two-person TERROS Special Assistance Team provides services from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week. Members of the Special Assistance Team receive training to meet the needs and expectations of clients. The team is trained to:

- Identify the behavioral, social, emotional, functional, and health challenges persons with developmental disabilities face throughout their lives.
- Provide mobile crisis interventions and connect families to community resources.

- Recognize environmental and interpersonal stressors and other underlying factors that may cause persons with developmental disabilities to experience a mental health crisis.
- Conduct a functional behavioral analysis and provide positive behavioral support.

Team members are certified on Prevention and Support Training (CIT) in addition to being knowledgeable of client's rights in [Article 9 of the Arizona Administrative Code](#). Feedback by families and caregivers report that the TERROS Special Assistance Team demonstrates dignity and respect for clients, increases hope, meets the immediate need and connects clients to services and resources.

## MEET JOSHUA (JOSH) SNOW, STUDENT INTERN

Our Council continues to work closely with *Interns in Action*, a program operated by the Arizona Department of Administration which places university, college and community college students in professional settings aligned with internship requirements of their field of study.

Josh is the 7th intern to be placed with the Council and will focus on developing social media relationships with consumers and others interested in developmental disabilities.

A Wisconsin native, Josh completed 6 years of military service in 2012

and is a combat veteran of both Afghanistan and Iraq. Josh and his wife Carissa just welcomed the birth of identical twin girls, adding to their family of a 3 year old boy, a dog and cat. Majoring in Global Studies at Arizona State University, Josh is looking forward to graduation in December and has a number of aspirations, some of which we hope will be fulfilled in his work with the Council.

In looking to his upcoming career, Josh is hoping to work in a way which directly impacts others in a positive manner while ultimately making a difference.

