



Winter 2010



Merry Christmas
And
Happy New Year!

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends & Supporters,

Melody Reynolds

The staff and board of Advocates for Access want to wish you a very happy holiday season! We end 2010 thankful for the opportunities we have had to serve the community and our consumers.

Next year it is our vision to become the “go to” agency for information, referral, advocacy and services for people with disabilities with a sustainable and diverse funding model, supported by the strongest, most innovative, passionate team imaginable. We intend to offer opportunities for higher quality of life for people with disabilities in a more cost effective manner.

We invite you to participate as we build a passionate community network in 2011. Thank you for enabling us to provide services and advocacy for people in our community who count on us! We hope you enjoy a blessed and safe holiday season and Happy New Year.

Melody

Celebrating 25 Years

Since 1985 Advocates for Access has supported the independent living philosophy that people with disabilities are the best judges of the direction of their own lives.

Thank you for supporting us in our mission to empower people with disabilities to live independently in our community.

Rollin' on the River

SECOND ANNUAL WHEEL-A-THON



Thanks to Community Support...

2nd Annual Wheel-a-Thon Raises Over \$55,000

October 9, 2010 brought unseasonably warm temperatures in the 70's and over 200 participants including volunteers, local legislators and media to the Peoria RiverPlex to raise money and disability awareness for Advocates for Access programs and services. The AFA Staff, Board of Directors, and community volunteers participated in the planning and execution of this second annual event. Representative Jehan Gordon shared her personal story of how AFA has provided services for people with disabilities in the community. Representative David Leitch offered his support of AFA and his longstanding relationship with AFA and it's constituents. Several of our corporate sponsors were present on event day including Par-A-Dice, United Access, Central IL Radiologic Technologists, CityLink, and others.

Plan to join us next year on October 8, 2011!

Over 26 teams of 2-7 people participated in raising money for AFA. Over half of them decorated a wheel-chair for the Wheel Chair Float contest. The Flintstones team with Jackie Hale as Team Captain won first place with Fred, Barney and the whole family. Our top Fundraiser Team "High Rollers" was led by Andrew Knobloch and raised over \$15,000. With over \$6,600 in raffle tickets sold, 4 lucky winners took home over \$5,000 in goods and services donated by over 50 local businesses. Melody Reynolds, Executive Director presented Jackie Hale with Roger Knoblauch's Distinguished Service Award for her dedication and service she has provided to AFA. Advocates for Access has been branded into the public eye through an extensive media campaign with WEEK-TV25 and WMBD Radio 1470.

The AFA Board of Directors and staff, thank our sponsors, volunteers, team captains, participants, guest speakers, media, and dedicated steering committee for making this second annual event a huge success.



2010 Corporate Sponsors

Platinum Wheel
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Seeds of Change

Advocates for Access plants seeds of change regarding the way people view individuals with disabilities by providing education and training to the community.



About Visitability

Visitability refers to single-family or owner occupied housing designed in such a way that it can be lived in or visited by people who have trouble with steps or who use wheelchairs or walkers. Three basic requirements are:

1. One zero-step entrance
2. Doors with 32 inches of clear passage space
3. One bathroom on the main floor you can get into in a wheelchair

On November 16, 2010, AFA in collaboration with the Central Illinois Agency on Aging (CIAA), held a Seeds of Change workshop at the Par-a-Dice Hotel. The disability awareness workshop was targeted for CIAA staff and service providers, local legislators, construction companies and other local disability service providers.

The topics included independent living philosophy and history, disability etiquette, a visitability/aging in place presentation, and 4 “my story” presentations from people with a variety of disabilities. Mini breakout sessions provided attendees the opportunity to answer questions designed to stimulate conversation.

Attendees left with a better understanding of the importance of people with disabilities being treated with respect and dignity, live in an accessible community and exercise their right to make their own decisions and practice self-determination.

Four students from Bradley University assisted with the planning of the event and gave a presentation to attendees on Visitability. They had an assignment to bring together a for profit company with a not-for-profit organization to achieve the goal of developing a community relations campaign that would cause a change of perceptions in the community. Becker construction was the for profit business that partnered for the event and gave a presentation on the need and low costs involved with making new constructions visitable.

AFA thanks Bethany Doty, Megan King, Dassie Rice and Caitlyn Stoeckley for the stellar job they did! AFA will continue to advocate for visitability for all new construction as it is inclusive and accessible for all people.

Melody Reynolds, Executive Director of AFA, gave a presentation on the Independent Living philosophy, disability etiquette and expressed the importance of community based services in our community.

“Illinois is dead last in the nation in providing community based services,” Melody said. “This means a larger percentage of the taxpayer dollar goes toward putting seniors and people with disabilities into nursing homes than any other U.S. state. In spite of the fact that it is approximately \$30,000 cheaper per person per year to remain living in the community.”



It makes sense and saves cents for people to have the choice and services available to have a higher quality of life by living at home.

AFA provides educational training on a variety of disability related subjects. Contact us to request training for your group or organization. Visit our website at www.advocatesforaccess.com to find out more information regarding our programs and services.



ADVOCATES FOR ACCESS

Staff Members

Melody Reynolds.....Executive Director
 Tiffany Denniston.....Office Manager
 Jodi Alwan.....Program Manager
 Jack Baize.....PA Coordinator
 Rachel Gama.....Reintegration Coordinator
 Tammy Helm.....Deaf/Hard of Hearing Advocate
 Melissa Logsdon.....Office Assistant
 Terri Ralph.....Youth Services Coordinator
 Shirley Wells.....Direct Services Coordinator

Board Members

Brad Guidi..... President
 Dawn Weber.....Vice President
 Patricia Bitner.....Secretary
 Elizabeth Godinez.....Treasurer

Board Members

Sarah Talley	Janet Hall
Michael Van Cleve	Christine Lybeck
Perry Johnson	Jim Eller
Andrew Knobloch	Merle Rocke

Plan to join the fun next year!



3rd Annual Wheel-a-Thon
Saturday, October 8th, 2011

Be a Participant, Sponsor, Team Captain, or Committee Member!



Alternate Formats Available Upon Request



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Peoria Heights, IL 61616

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