

CORE VALUES

- People First
- Democracy
- Visionary Leadership
- Diversity
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Community Participation



President's Letter

The Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD) is a coalition of organizations committed to advancing the rights of people with disabilities and statewide policies that affect them. The organizations involved include The Arc of Nebraska, People First of Nebraska, Nebraska Advocacy Services, as well as several others. We decided we had to try something different to positively impact how the legislators saw us. The idea we selected was to have "coffee and rolls" in one of the meeting rooms at the Capitol. So, the morning of January 28, 2010 we hired a "barista" to make coffee, got assorted rolls and invited all the senators and their staff to come in and join us. We did not have a specific item to discuss; we just talked about disability generally and what people with disabilities needed to live full inclusive lives in the community. It was extremely successful! We had about 20 Senators and/or staff join us. It was scheduled to last for two hours but there were some that were hesitant to leave! We changed the perception of people with disabilities a little that day. We are planning on holding the event again next year and maybe we will have a specific topic or maybe we won't! We will just have to wait and see.

On January 27, 2010 we reached another important milestone. The Legislature passed and signed a Legislative Resolution "that the Legislature recognizes July 26, 2010, as the twentieth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Legislature reaffirms its support of and commitment to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and celebrates the act's inclusion of all citizens of Nebraska in society." We are in the process of planning a celebration for the 20th Anniversary. This will include not only a large celebration at the Capitol, but publicity kits so that celebrations may be had in several communities throughout the state. As details are confirmed we will keep you informed. Stay tuned!

Upcoming Events

- March 18-20 Parents Encouraging Parents Conference
- March 25, 26, 27 Nebraska Developmental Disabilities Summit
- March 25-26 Nebraska Brain Injury Conference
- April 9-10 56th Annual Arc Conference
- May 8 The Arc of Nebraska Annual Meeting
- June 1-3 Social Role Valorization Workshop

Updates from the Executive Director

Below are the most recent updates of activities at The Arc of Nebraska:

- Early Bird Registration Now Available for The Arc Conference!
This spring The Arc of Nebraska will host its 56th annual conference. We have had the opportunity to host the event in various locations with Nebraskans from across the state in attendance. This year, our conference will take place on Friday, April 9th and Saturday, April 10, 2010 in Lincoln at St. Mark's church located at 8550 Pioneers Boulevard.

The conference begins Friday, April 9th at 12:30 p.m. and offers workshops targeted to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The sessions will be followed by an annual awards banquet and screening of "A Friend Indeed – The Bill Sackter Story."

On Saturday, April 10th, the conference continues with a one-day workshop for all attendees featuring international speaker, Darcy Elks who will provide a presentation on "The Power of Roles." We are grateful to the Value-Based Education Coalition and Nebraska Advocacy Services, Inc., *The Center for Disability Rights, Law, and Advocacy* for providing support to make Darcy's presence possible.

We strongly urge everyone to take advantage of the early-bird registration option for conference events. To learn more about conference sessions and registration, please contact us at 402-475-4407 or arcneb@inebraska.com. You can also visit The Arc of Nebraska website at www.arc-nebraska.org.

- Website
It has finally arrived!!! The new Arc of Nebraska website is up and running. On the new site you'll find information about upcoming events, news, and legislative updates, and other resources as well as how you and others can become more active in your state chapter. We are also developing a special page "for members only" that will showcase select information only available to Arc members. As always, the website is meant to be an effective means of communication. Any suggestions you may have are always welcome. Check out the new site at www.arc-nebraska.org!
- Legislative Advocacy
This has been an interesting legislative session to say the least. With eyes on the budget, not many bills that will have a fiscal impact are being considered. Therefore, much of the proposed legislation has been somewhat different than in years past. The Arc of Nebraska is attending to several bills this session both alone and in conjunction with other statewide advocacy organizations and the Nebraska Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities (NCCD). A couple of bills we have identified that we ask you to consider taking action upon include:
 - **LB 776**
LB 776 provides an annual increase of \$240,000 for the Respite Network and a \$60,000 annual increase for the Respite Subsidy. This funding will provide expansion and improvement for caregivers across the state by increasing the number of family caregivers served and decreasing the number of nursing home placements. Many families are in need of respite services. This bill would allow for a greater number of individuals to be trained to provide those services and would allow for families to continue caring for loved ones at home. While this bill does have money attached to it, it will eventually result in a cost-savings to the state when compared to what it costs to provide care in a nursing home or other institutional setting.

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- **LB 1089**

LB 1089 provides for the adoption of the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA). While each state has its own guardianship statutes and procedures for creating guardianships, this bill will give states a uniform way to recognize guardianships already in effect from other states. By adopting this Act, the likelihood of abuse will be lessened as states can monitor potentially abusive situations from one state to another. Potentially abusive individuals will not be allowed to take someone from one state to another to establish guardianship for the opportunity of abusing the person or exploiting their resources. Adopting the Act will also save individuals, families and the state money as resources will not have to be expended to establish guardianships that already exist in one location.

Further information about talking points on these bills as well as testimony and letters of support can be found on the Take Action page of The Arc of Nebraska website at <http://www.arc-nebraska.org/getinvolved/takeaction.html>. The bill chart is updated daily at the site, but can be e-mailed or mailed to anyone who is interested as well. Just ask!

Senatorial Dinner

The Senatorial Dinner this year was quite a success! Over 200 people attended from across the state including 27 state Senators and 2 representatives from Sen. Johanns and Sen. Nelson's office. The evening included a social hour followed by a dinner with a panel of self-advocates who spoke about their employment experiences and aspirations. The dinner concluded with the presentation of the Harold Sieck award to all of the members of the Appropriations Committee. The Arc of Nebraska is grateful to the Appropriations Committee for taking steps to fund the waiting list. While the waiting list still exists, without this funding families would be waiting even longer for needed services. We are appreciative of all of the work of Nebraska's legislators!

- Other Activities

Sibling Handbook

Our grant with the Nebraska Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities has ended, but the dissemination of our Sibling Handbook has not! If you are interested in receiving a presentation or copy of the handbook, please let us know. It is also available on our website.

Voting

We are continuing to provide presentations about voting rights across the state to individuals with disabilities, families, poll workers, and any other interested groups. We also are able to conduct mock candidate workshops that can help voters learn how to gather information about candidates and issues. If you would like a voting presentation and/or mock candidate workshop in your community or if you would like to conduct a voter registration drive, please contact us! We'll also keep you posted of our upcoming voting events across the state.

Chapter Development

In the coming months we will be traveling to several areas across the state to do various presentations. We look forward to using this as an opportunity to get to know local chapters and be supportive of their needs. If you would like us to visit your chapter, please contact us. We'd be glad to offer a presentation and to listen to how we can best support your local community. Just let us know!



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