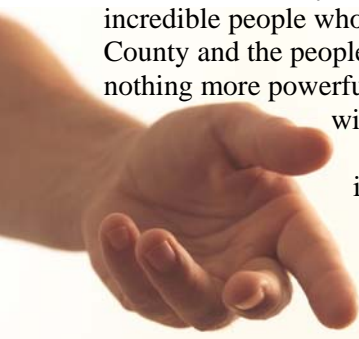


The Value of One Ideal is Alive and Well and Changing Lives in Positive Ways



As we review the year we can't help but think of the incredible people who have helped The Arc of Riverside County and the people we serve and support. There is nothing more powerful than people helping other people within our own community and that is the essence of *The Value of One* ideal.

This newsletter profiles a few of the individuals that exemplify The Value of One. It is dedicated to the radical idea that if we change the way people with developmental disabilities are valued in our culture, we will treat them with greater dignity and respect, find ways to provide them appropriate services and supports, and include them in all aspects of community life.

So our key question is this: What would happen if everyone treated people with developmental disabilities with the same respect and dignity that people without disabilities generally receive?

What would our communities be like? What would happen when people with developmental disabilities encountered the criminal justice system? How would they spend their days, where would they live and who might employ them? Would we support them better in all aspects of their life?

We believe the answers are self-evident and we hope you will join us on our journey to demonstrate "that all people, including people with intellectual disabilities, are endowed by their Creator with the same inherent value."

Aaron Eide: A Life of His Own, In His Own Words

Aaron Eide, who attends The Arc of Riverside County's Advance Enterprises program in Riverside, may appreciate *The Value of One* message more than anyone. Like many people with a developmental disability, Aaron has encountered a variety of challenges in his 27 years, including disrespect by those who don't recognize that people with developmental disabilities have value.

As we talked to Aaron about his life, he had many experiences to share that demonstrate it hasn't been easy. Among other things, he was bullied as a school kid, something he encounters even today. Despite this blatant lack of respect, he is a positive, hard working and independent person.

How independent? He has his own apartment, he travels back and forth each day on his moped, and takes care of Max and Leonardo, his pet cat and turtle. What he likes best about living on his own is the freedom, "I can come and go as I please. Having my own place is a dream," he said.

Aaron has become familiar with The Value of One campaign, and says he likes it. "I think it's great, and people need to stop calling people 'retarded!,' It's wrong. And to have it in movies is ridiculous. We should have the same respect as everybody else."

Aaron knows that many wonderful people have contributed to The Arc of Riverside County with both their time and their pocketbooks, and that by doing so they have also strengthened the idea that people with developmental disabilities have value and deserve respect.

"They must be just excellent people to do all that for The Arc. I'm really blessed to have people like that," said Aaron about The Arc's contributors. "I would love to meet them and personally thank them on behalf of all the folks who come to The Arc for training and jobs."

Aaron's story is one of thousands in our area that are characterized by the challenges and triumphs that a life with developmental disabilities presents. We hope to share more of these stories with you in the future. For now, we're thankful Aaron has found the support he needs, in his community. We're especially glad that he knows that he's valued.





Who Wouldn't Want to be a Best Buddy of Megan Lopez?



When it comes to friendship, 16-year-old Megan Lopez might be your best buddy. Megan, a junior at Norte Vista High School in Riverside, is chapter president of the school's Best Buddies program, and despite recent budget cuts, she's running a great program.

Established in 1989 by Anthony Kennedy Shriver, Best Buddies International is a nonprofit movement that brings together people with and without developmental disabilities and provides them with opportunities to build meaningful and active friendships. For thousands of middle and high school students across the globe without developmental disabilities ("peer buddies"), this means participating in purposeful, planned activities alongside students with disabilities.

For Megan's 70-member Best Buddies club, meaningful activities include a weekly lunch, a Friendship Festival, and even a prom night. The latter event brings together members from all local chapters for a night of socializing, dancing and even a crowning ceremony for the night's king and queen. Sadly, opportunities like this aren't often available for people with developmental disabilities, and that's what makes the Best Buddies program so special.

Megan recognizes the impact Best Buddies has on students with developmental disabilities, saying that the club is great "because they know they have friends and support and they won't feel isolated or neglected," she said. "Best Buddies gives them a chance to open up to others and gain new friends. Both groups enjoy it."

Although Megan is naturally ambitious and has a lot of experience with worthy causes, she has another personal reason for her involvement in this club. Her sister, Mary, 18, has cerebral palsy (CP). This condition is commonly marked by motor skill deficits and often requires individuals to use wheelchairs or other assistive devices.

Although CP limits some of Mary's movements, it doesn't limit the amount of fun she and Megan have when working on Best Buddies projects, "My sister makes everything more fun and more lively," says Megan. "With her actions, she motivates me to get more involved in events."

Last year, the Norte Vista Best Buddies club raised almost \$4,000 selling Otter Pops and sodas to help with funeral expenses for a member of Megan's club. A "buddy" passed away from complications from a common illness. At the funeral, Megan and members of her club donned T-shirts featuring their fallen buddy to honor her memory and sold the shirts to help pay for funeral expenses. The family was grateful for Megan and her club.

Megan's hard work and commitment hasn't gone unnoticed. Earlier this year the Press Enterprise named her one of their "Most Remarkable Teens of Riverside," an honor only given to Riverside's best and brightest young people. Megan's parents are proud of her, too, "My mom and dad are always there for me," she says. After graduating next school year, Megan hopes to study medicine at the University of California, Riverside.

The Arc of Riverside County has offered to help the club organize a fundraiser and provide them with other activities during this school year. We are looking forward to a mutually beneficial relationship that builds a sense of dignity and respect for people with developmental disabilities. These students represent our future and Megan and her club members exemplify "The Value of One."

For more information on Best Buddies International, go to www.bestbuddies.org.

Thanks to Five Special Contributors for their Recognition of the Value of Everyone with a Disability



The Arc of Riverside County wants to acknowledge the many generous and often long-term donors that have contributed to our agency and have impacted the lives of the people we serve. With their contributions, they have made a statement about the value of these individuals and all deserve our sincere thanks. At a special event held on December 1, we highlighted five individuals and organizations that exemplify The Value of One ideal. It is that every person, with and without a disability has inherent value.

The **Albert B. Cutter Memorial Fund**, a local philanthropic foundation, has been donating on a monthly basis to The Arc of Riverside County since the 1960's. Most recently, the Cutter Fund helped cover most of the cost of new vinyl flooring in our Advance Enterprises upstairs work center in Riverside. This organization, and their spokesperson, Executive Secretary Debby Phillips, understand that everyone has value and deserves a good floor to stand on.

Mike Stearsman is the grandfather of Jeff Baldwin. Jeff is a person with a disability that we support at March Air Reserve Base in a job he has had for a number of years. Mr. Stearsman coordinates the now annual The Value of One Golf Tournament held at Indian Hills Golf Club in Riverside. Last year was the 24th consecutive year that Mike has conducted a golf tournament fundraiser for people with developmental disabilities. This last year we were fortunate enough to be the recipient of his hard work and generosity. Mr. Stearsman contributes money as well as expertise and time to make this event a winner. Mike proved that he is the Jack Nicklaus of The Value of One. Read more at TheValueofOne.org.

Over the past several years, financial support from **The Riverside Community Health Foundation** has sustained clinical nursing services to individuals we support with extensive medical needs at our Brockton Resource Center. Without Licensed Vocational Nurse Windee Wagner, who carries out a variety of vital health services for adults with serious medical conditions, these individuals would not be able to attend a day program. Some would have no community day service option were it not for the special care

provided at this facility. Under the able leadership of Dr. Dan Anderson, these are the types of critical needs that RCHF is meeting as part of their mission in the Riverside area.

Recognizing the inherent value of people with developmental disabilities is so important, but what happens when the leader of a Riverside service club decides to get involved in a special project of our agency to prevent this disability? More than any single service club member, **Mike Stong** took a personal interest in the NineZero Project and helped get it off the ground as a president of the Riverside Arlington Kiwanis Club and later as chair of the annual golf tournament. At a critical time when our agency needed resources to implement our high school peer taught curriculum, it was Mike who made things happen. The Riverside Arlington Kiwanis Club raised and then donated over \$75,000 in an eight-year period to support this project. This initiative is a prevention and education campaign developed by our agency that seeks to reduce the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. To learn more about the NineZero Project, go to NineZero.org. To learn more about selflessness emblematic of The Value of One spirit, look no further than Mike Stong.

If a dictionary existed for every catch phrase, "The Value of One" might have a picture of **Lynn Bogh Baldi** beside it. Lynn has done so much for so many years to support the people of The Arc of Riverside County and the Ray Strebe Resource Center that the best use of our limited space is simply to say "thank you" to a caring mom and a community woman of action. Her creativity and occasional arm twisting in pursuit of donations for our Pass Area facility and ultimately the people we serve, knew no limits. She even held a birthday party for herself and charged \$40 for admission, then donated the proceeds to us. Later she was instrumental in obtaining a donation to complete our grounds renovation at the center from the County of Riverside and with the help of her friend, Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley.

To find out how she helped in the spirit of The Value of One, go to ArcRiverside.org/frankramirezproject.html.

Contribute to The Arc of Riverside County and The Value of One ideal!

Making a charitable donation to The Arc is now easier than ever. Simply visit ArcRiverside.org and click on Donations/ Membership in the left column.

Or, send your contribution to:
8138 Mar Vista Court | Riverside, CA 92504

The World Has Changed the Way We Communicate and So Have We

The Internet has changed everything and we must adapt. Beginning with this newsletter, you will find less information in hard copy format and more online at our primary and related websites. To fulfill our mission, we have a number of websites, and depending on your needs and interests, you want to visit them. We have listed them below with a description of the information they provide.

www.arcriverside.org is our main agency website.

www.advanceenterprises.org is a marketing site for acquiring work and jobs for people with disabilities.

www.ninezero.org is a site with a blog that supports our NineZero initiative.

www.thevalueofone.org is a site to support our initiative on dignity & respect for people with disabilities.

8138 Mar Vista Court P | (888) 818-6298
Riverside, CA 92504 F | (951) 688-7207

The Arc of Riverside County

8138 Mar Vista Court
Riverside, CA 92504-4324

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RIVERSIDE, CA
PERMIT NO. 1066