



The Arc™

Monthly Memo
New Mexico
February, 2014

www.arcnm.org

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The mission of The Arc of New Mexico is to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages by advocating for equal opportunities and choices in where and how they learn, live, work, play and socialize. The Arc of New Mexico will promote self-determination, healthy families, effective community support systems and partnerships.

The 2014 Disability Rights Awareness Days were held February 17 and 18 in Santa Fe and was attended by over 150 individuals from all regions of the state. This year's theme was "Access to Healthcare for ALL." The opening plenary on Monday featured Katie Gordon from Disability Rights New Mexico talking about Health insurance reform and the health exchanges and Ellen Pinnes from the Disability Coalition talking about Medicaid Expansion.

Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, whose flight had been delayed by bad weather, arrived just prior to lunch. As usual the Congresswoman was very dynamic, knowledgeable and inspiring. She talked about the challenges and issues in Congress and impressed everyone with her knowledge and concern with the many issues happening here in New Mexico.

The afternoon included breakout sessions on a variety of topics including the DD Waiver Waiting List, Centennial Care, Focusing on the Future, Special Education, Knowing Your Rights and opportunities for students with disabilities to study abroad. In the early evening there was an informal Meet and Greet that included an open bar, soft drinks and finger foods. It was a great opportunity for everyone to mingle and network.

On Tuesday everyone had an opportunity to visit with their legislators. The mid-day rally included awesome music by guitarist and singer Larry Lorenzo. State Auditor Hector Balderas, father of a young daughter with Down syndrome, gave a very rousing talk to the attendees reminding everyone that, "This is your house!" The Disability Coalition gave Star Awards to Senators Bill O'Neill, Nancy Rodriguez, William Soules and Representatives Jim Smith and Liz Thomson for their advocacy and work on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families.





I am Waiting!
Gonzalo “Cheby”
La Mesa, New Mexico

Gonzalo or “Cheby” as he is affectionately called by all those that know him is a 26 year old young man who was diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability. He attended local public schools within the area of his hometown of La Mesa, New Mexico, located in the southern part of Dona Ana County. His name was placed on the Central Registry for the DD Waiver in the spring of 2005. A date his father proudly recalls.

Cheby is an amazing young man; he has a personality that can light up a room. He spends his days working



outside alongside his father who was disabled a few years ago. Together they work on repairing the family vehicle and any handyman work around the house that is needed.

Cheby proudly states that he enjoys watching T.V. shows with the cartoon network and superheroes being a favorite along with watching WWE where he has a favorite entertainer/wrestler, Ryback. Cheby cannot be left alone he does not fully comprehend danger in his surroundings and does not know how to react in certain situations. He used to work in a neighborhood restaurant where he would scrape off plates to prepare for wash and throw the trash and he would help the ladies sort the silverware. Unfortunately, the trash receptacle outdoors was moved which required Cheby to walk alongside a town bar in the dark and he needed to now open a fence that had been placed around trash receptacle. Cheby cannot read or recognize numbers he could not open the combination lock to get into the fence and he became afraid and could no longer perform his duties. He hopes one day to be able to work again he enjoyed his independence.

Cheby's primary caregiver is his mother and his sister is always around to help also. His family currently receives some home services but sadly the amount of hours given to him have been cut back so far he is only receiving the bare minimum. His parents fear for the future. Right now there is no family vehicle they do not have the money to buy the parts needed to fix it. They don't know what they will do.

Cheby needs to see a doctor every two weeks and with no vehicle they wonder how simple errands like groceries or bill paying will be completed. They hope that when Cheby is allocated things will be better. They wish that he could just go to a movie theatre accompanied by someone. He may never be able to live completely alone but they dream of him being able to do simple things for himself. They hope that the DD waiver will be able to help him achieve that goal.

Executive Director Randy Monday, February 10 and with thirty community individuals with disabilities, providers. He was able to information:



Costales was in Roswell had the opportunity to visit members including family members and service share with them the following

- ⌚ Talking Points regarding litigation filed against Department of Health and Human Services Department by 8 individuals, The Arc and Disability Rights New Mexico
- ⌚ Senate Memorial 20 Summary (plan to reduce DD Waiver Waiting List from 12 years to 3 years) asking them to contact their Senators in Santa Fe as soon as possible encouraging them to support House Bill 55 sponsored by Senator William Soules to put the recommendations into action.
- ⌚ Update on Jackson Lawsuit
- ⌚ Arc Services and Programs

Randy informed the group that The Arc is very interested in opening a home office in the Roswell area. The Arc currently has family members working part-time out of their homes in Silver City (Vicki Galindo) and in Santa Fe (Bernadette LeRouge). He also invited and encouraged all attendees to become members of The Arc by visiting www.arcnm.org. Membership is free for a lifetime.

The meeting was organized by Arc Board Member Trish Gull – thank you Trish!

The 2014 Summit on Social Equality/Arc of New Mexico Conference will be held Friday and Saturday, June 20-21 at the Hotel Cascada on Carlisle and I-40. This year's theme is, "Work Hard! Play Hard!"

The four major topic areas include Employment, Issues affecting Individuals with Down syndrome, Technology and Community Leisure. The event will include a pool party, exhibitors, silent auction, and awards.

More information regarding registration and hotel reservations will be posted on The Arc website next month.

Achieve with us.

The Arc of New Mexico depends on public donations to sustain our work. You can make a one-time gift or a recurring gift. Make a donation now to support our mission to benefit all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in New Mexico.

A memorial gift is a beautiful and lasting tribute for a loved one or to a family as an expression of sympathy. Family and friends can be recognized with a gift in their honor. This might be for a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, holiday, wedding, retirement, etc.

Visit www.arcnm.org to make an on-line donation. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Thank you to our 2014 Arc Allies

Gold – Bank of the West

Silver – Gregory Chase

United Healthcare

Susan Mullins

Loretta and Dennis Silva

Fred and Jane Weiss

Steven and Rebecca Grass

Community Health Charities

David Barringer

Molina Healthcare

Presbyterian Healthcare

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico

Desert Hills of New Mexico

New Mexico Aging and Long Term Services Department

University of New Mexico Center for Developmental Disabilities

Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Community Outreach Program for the Deaf

Cornicopia

New Mexico Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Supports Division

Disability Rights New Mexico

New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Center for Self-Advocacy

New Mexico Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

Governor's Commission on Disability

Independent Living Resource Center

New Vistas

New Mexico School for the Deaf

New Mexico Autism Society

Parents Reaching Out

Consumer Direct New Mexico