

# The Arc Today

Winter 2015  
Volume 14, Issue 5

## Save the Date


**Golf Classic 2016**  
**June 20, 2016**

## Larry Lobue awarded 2015 STAR OF THE YEAR

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**OUR MISSION**

The Arc of Fort Bend County ensures opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to maximize their quality of life within our community.

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**CORE VALUES**

1. Awareness: greater awareness about individuals with disabilities increases understanding about the abilities of individuals with disabilities, and greater understanding increases opportunities for individuals with disabilities, so we work to achieve greater awareness to achieve greater understanding to expand opportunities.
2. Diversity: we must serve all individuals with intellectual and related developmental disabilities and their families in this county.
3. Respect: we must be understanding of and sensitive to the concerns of individuals with disabilities about their identity and how we describe them.
4. Ownership: it is important to have community members serve on our committees and board, and support our association, but our association should remain an "individuals with disabilities and their families" organization.
5. Advocacy: with limited resources, if we become primarily or solely a provider organization, our association will never do more than make only a limited impact on the quality of life of a few individuals with disabilities.
6. Cooperation: advocacy and programs that benefit individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families in many cases will also benefit individuals with other disabilities.
7. Good Stewardship: as an association, we must be fiduciaries of the talent and resources that our volunteers and community supporters entrust to us.

**OUR GOALS**

The Arc's goals were chosen to be directed toward Mission and Vision and build on our strength and success.

- I. The Arc shall advocate for appropriate individualized educational programs/opportunities for people with I/DD in all stages of life.
- II. The Arc shall advocate for a variety of vocational/employment options for people with I/DD.
- III. The Arc shall advocate for public and private community institutions to become more responsive to the individual needs of people with I/DD, thereby promoting quality of life for all.
- IV. The Arc shall advocate for and promote a variety of appropriate and inclusive social, cultural and fitness/wellness opportunities in the community.
- V. The Arc shall continue to invest in properties that are self-sustaining and provide facilities for our constituents.
- VI. The Arc shall provide effective leadership and fundraising efforts to accomplish our mission.

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Pay tribute to a friend or family member while also supporting services and programs that benefit The Arc of Fort Bend County with your donation.

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# 2015 STAR OF THE YEAR:

## Missouri City resident helps special needs athletes in Fort Bend

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By Michael Sudhalter - [msudhalter@fortbendstar.com](mailto:msudhalter@fortbendstar.com)

When Larry Lobue was just out of college, he enjoyed an opportunity to work with USA Track & Field as a master photo finish reader. Lobue, now a 58-year-old Missouri City resident, was one of the guys who determined who crossed the finish line first and certified world records. The gig took him all over the nation and to Olympic Games in Los Angeles and Atlanta, respectively.

He loved the chance to meet and visit with the likes of Carl Lewis and Leroy Burrell, but all of that excitement paled in comparison to the exhilaration he felt after volunteering at a Special Olympics Meet in the mid 1980s. "The kids are second to none," Lobue said. "If that doesn't put a smile on your face, I don't know what will. I think I get more out of it than the kids do. Competing in the Special Olympics gives the athletes an opportunity to participate, travel and form friendships."

Today, Lobue is one of the most involved volunteers in Special Olympics in the entire Houston area. His efforts on behalf of special needs athletes in Fort Bend have earned him the Star of the Year honor in 2015.

Lobue is one of the lead volunteers for Special Olympics Area 22, which spans from West Columbia to La Porte and includes Fort Bend. He coaches basketball, softball, volleyball and track & field and has led The Arc of Fort Bend County's Special Olympics delegation, as well. He earned The Arc's "Special Recognition Award" earlier this year for his volunteerism with The Arc (both as a board member and head of the Special Olympics delegation), Dream League and Special Olympics Texas.

"Larry is just a solid volunteer," said Allan Harris, a board member for The Arc of Fort Bend County. "He understands what volunteering is all about, and he's easy to work with. He's very patient and he communicates with the kids. I think all of them love him. His greatest asset is patience. I struggle with that myself, and I watch him and say 'boy, that's a patient person there.'"

About a decade ago, Lobue and some other volunteers worked with the First Colony Little League to start a Challenger Division "Dream League" for mentally and physically challenged athletes. The league continues to grow, but it enjoyed one of its greatest highlights last season when it was invited to bring a team to the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa. Each year, there are two teams selected out of 900 to play in the Challenger Division Exhibition Game. Lobue, as a board member for "the Dream League", helped raise \$86,000 so that 15 athletes, their parents and one friend each, could make the trip and play before 12,000 fans.

Sugar Land Mayor Jimmy Thompson has noticed Lobue's dedication with the Dream League and has commended his efforts on its behalf. "Larry is a very unassuming person that tirelessly volunteers his personal time to the mental and physically challenged youth of our community," Thompson said. "He was a leader in taking the Dream League group to Williamsport this year as only one of two teams in the USA — an experience both the parents and kids will never forget."

While in Williamsport, the Dream League athletes formed a special friendship with athletes from the Pearland Little League World Series team, which cheered on the First Colony Dream League athletes.

Before the Dream League team left for Williamsport, the Sugar Land Skeeters gave the team a big sendoff celebration. "I thought there'd be a few players, but the whole team and all of the coaches showed up," Lobue said. Lobue said the Skeeters have been excellent community partners, and they host a Dream League game each season at Constellation Field.

"Larry is easy to work with, we can bounce ideas off each other and he's open to anything," said Chris Parsons, Director of Special Events for the Skeeters.

Lobue, a former business owner who now works as a regional sales manager in the security industry, is a Houston native who competed in the 400 meters for the University of Texas. He graduated from UT and moved to Fort Bend in 1986. "I just liked the area and the whole community atmosphere," Lobue said.

Lobue and his late wife, Kathleen, raised two children, Larryn, 30, and Steven, 28. Kathleen passed away from cancer in 2013, and that has been a challenge for Lobue, but he relies on the strong faith they built as a couple while attending Riverbend

# 2015 STAR OF THE YEAR: Missouri City resident helps special needs athletes in Fort Bend Cont'd

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Church together. "Faith is very calming," Lobue said. "I think it helps a lot with how you treat others and what you get back. I get ten-fold back from the kids from what I give."

As a volunteer, Lobue doesn't have much free time, but he enjoys golfing, hunting and rooting for UT Athletics. He's already working on building another successful season for the Dream League in 2016.

Fort Bend County Commissioner James Patterson, a longtime volunteer with The Arc of Fort Bend County, summed up Lobue's efforts eloquently. "Larry exemplifies the statement — 'still water runs deep'," Patterson said. "He is there and working but never makes a noise — just quiet leadership."

*Published with permission from Michael Sudhalter, Editor, Fort Bend Star*

## A History of Name Changes

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- 1953 - 1973: Fort Bend Association for Retarded Children (ARC)
- 1973 - 1992: Fort Bend Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC)
- 1992 - Present: The Arc of Fort Bend County (The Arc)

### *Changing with the times*

We, as an organization have been sensitive to the impact of terminology on our constituency and have adapted accordingly. As the words 'retardation' and 'retarded' became pejorative, derogatory and demeaning in usage, the organization changed its name to 'The Arc.'

Today, the term 'mental retardation' remains the terminology used in the medical field and referenced in many state and federal laws. However, 'intellectual disability' and 'developmental disability' are making their presence known, and we are doing everything in our power to make sure they're adopted more broadly.

We strongly believe the only 'r-word' that should be used when referring to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is "Respect."

## The Arc Family Matters

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### *Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers:*

Valerie Lynne Collier, passed away on November 13, 2015.

Emma Washington, also known as "Velvet T", sister of Allan Harris Sr., and aunt of Special Olympics athlete Allan Harris Jr., passed away on November 17, 2015.

Wanda White, mother of Jody White, passed away on December 6, 2015.

Doris Fuchs, sister-in-law of Marian Wright and aunt of Special Olympics athlete Monica Wright, passed away on December 8, 2015.

Mollie Lieber, aunt of Jeff Hoffman and Margo Pasko, passed away on January 7, 2016. She was 101 years old.

# Bridge Preparatory Academy

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Cheryl Sewell



Several parents accompanied me to The Bridge Preparatory Academy which opened on August 19, 2015, in space provided by the Friendship Community Bible Church, 420 Wood St., Sugar Land, Texas. Bridge Prep is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, Christian, private school that is learner-centered, focused on college preparatory academics, and committed to teaching students the way they learn best. They specialize in teaching students with different learning challenges to succeed academically. Their students generally present with Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, and "high functioning" Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Jackie Lockett, M.ED., J.D is the co-founder and the head of school. Jackie envisioned Bridge Prep when she was the Dean of High School Academics at the Logos Preparatory Academy in Sugar Land as well as years before when a teacher in LCISD. Jackie and her husband, a teacher in Katy ISD, have 4 children. Their son with Autism needed extra support in public school. But while working at public schools and even at Logos, Jackie noticed students that were not able to learn as well as their peers. She believed she could create a better environment to reach these students, to make more students "college worthy" and also increase their academic self-esteem. "We teach the kids how the kids learn best. We use visual, auditory, hands-on demonstration and other techniques, but we also use THEIR interests to teach them concepts. We try to integrate our lessons into their interests." Her son attends Bridge Prep as a 9th grader.

Jackie believes in partnering with parents – a lot. She said that teachers conference with parents every four weeks minimumly, and email in between. This provides open communication of the students' strengths and needs. Although homework is minimized in favor of practical applications practiced at school, some homework is necessary. When homework issues create family problems, however, students may consider writing their own contracts specifying the incentives and motivational techniques that will be used to guarantee work completion without family discord. Student-created contracts are subject to occasional revisions.

The school is seeking accreditation through AdvancED ([www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org)) and anticipates it will take about a year. Most of the seven teachers at Bridge Prep are certified, but a few are not. All are Christians and have a heart for teaching kids using multiple modalities. Different curriculums are used including "DEAR" (Drop Everything and Read), Math U See, Saxxon, "Bob Jones," Wordly Wise, Sequential Spelling and Spelling Power, novel based social studies books, scholastic magazines, and AIMS for science. Jackie insists that the teacher:student ratio should not exceed more than 1:10, especially in high school.

The admissions process includes academic testing and reviewing other school or professional evaluations in order to determine the best placement and "fit" of teacher and class. The morning starts with a whole-group student/teacher gathering, discussing news and telling a "joke of the day." Most of the students who attend are independent in personal care and independent living skills, but some have deficits in social skills - without behavior issues. Students are clustered by academic ability during classes rather than by age or grade – except for social skills. They group same-age students for practicing pragmatic social skills. Teachers and parents develop a "Strategic Learning Plan" to individualize learning to address each student's strengths and weaknesses. Accommodations are discussed and implemented. Current enrollment includes 12 students from 3rd to 9th grade. Jackie does plan to expand to include K through 12. She was also excited to announce that they just received several donated IPADs and tablets for student use!

The school day is from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Thursday, with select electives offered after school. There is a full kitchen available and all students participate in lunch clean up. Fridays are "half days" in another area of the church where lessons center on science labs and "maker stations." Maker stations may involve puppet shows, community service activities, storytelling, creative indoor camping and buying items using "Bridge Bucks." Students completed a film project including script writing, acting, directing, producing and filming over several of the "maker station" Fridays.

One of the parents attending was interested in vocational and community skills training. Jackie said that many interesting projects are planned for 2016. In January, the math class is planning to go shopping, with the lessons including budgeting, price comparison, check writing and other consumer math skills. A cooking class will begin in 2016 and Jackie plans to

# Bridge Preparatory Academy cont'd

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partner with Techno Chaos to have students learn how to develop games and apps. Eventually a full athletic program will be introduced, but currently, students enjoy recess.

The question on most parents' minds, of course, is how much does it cost? Tuition is \$1200/month plus the cost of the elective (\$600/semester). Estimated cost per semester is \$5500. Jackie does offer a slight discount for parents paying for the entire year up front.

For additional information about the Bridge Preparatory Academy, contact Jackie Lockett, J.D., M.Ed. at 832.289.2901 or 832-886-4940 or visit [www.bridgeprepacademy.org](http://www.bridgeprepacademy.org)

## Get Ready! Get SETT, GO! - The Stafford Educational Training and Treatment Center

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*Cheryl Sewell*

*The Arc does not endorse nor promote any particular therapy, institution or service. Our desire is to introduce families to those interested in meeting the needs of people with disabilities. Please call to discuss your concerns and perform "due diligence" when seeking a service provider.*

Several parents toured the Stafford Educational Training & Treatment Center with me in November. Tonya Smith, owner, has worked with children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders, for over 16 years. She has worked for several school districts including HISD and FBISD and has also contracted as an in-home trainer and evaluator. She was a co-founder of "Sydney's Place" in Houston but closed this facility to set up the SETT Center in Stafford, serving a slightly different clientele.

The Stafford Education Training & Treatment Center serves individuals 16 years old to adult presenting with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders without serious medical or behavioral involvement. There may be some age-range flexibility for families needing an after-school care program for their school-aged child. The student must be fairly independent in their personal care (toileting) needs. SETT can provide transportation if needed. SETT focuses on teaching life skills, vocational training and appropriate community skills. This is a small facility currently serving only 10 so that each student they teach can enjoy personal attention and training. Tonya said they use "lots of visual aides and hands-on activities" in teaching.

SETT can provide a Robotics program for students' hands-on, science projects as well as wood-making and construction activities. For students who want to enhance their career opportunities, SETT can assist in writing their resume, interviewing and initiating applications. They also provide some in-house vocational training. They practice basic academics in order to maintain the student's reading, writing and math skills, but try to focus on teaching those skills while teaching other vocational tasks. Movement activities are included in the program. SETT classes offered include daily living skills, cooking, exercise, community outings, and reading.

Tonya uses the FACES and the MURDOCK programs for evaluating, teaching and training. SETT offers a weekly day activity program throughout the year, as well as summer and after school programs.

And here is also very good news! Tonya said they offer "an amazing 24/7 respite facility!"

The Stafford Educational Training & Treatment Center is located at 12827 Capricorn Street in Stafford. For additional information, contact either Lynn Smith, Center Director at 281-961-1935 or Tonya Smith, owner at 281-638-0221.

# Brookwood's "Aspire Program" at Gallery Furniture

Cheryl Sewell



Everybody has probably heard of Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale. He owns Gallery Furniture and has recently opened a store in Fort Bend County with a large presence at 7227 W. Grand Parkway in Richmond. He has generously provided space for The Brookwood Community to operate a store and vocational training site there. Our Informal Parent Group toured this Gallery Furniture/Brookwood training center in November, 2015. We enjoyed exploring the furniture, large aquarium, oversized table/chairs, atrium area with exotic birds, koi pond and monkey enclosure. We also visited the "Brick & Mortar" Restaurant. However, we were primarily interested in Brookwood's store and satellite vocational program called "Aspire."

The Brookwood Community is a Christian-based program and their satellite center is no exception. Their motto is "Godrich" which stands for **G**race, **O**pportunity for All, **D**ignity for all, **R**espect for all, **I**nterdependence, **C**ontinuous improvement and **H**onesty. The Aspire program started September 1, 2015, and now boasts 16 citizens with ID/DD working there –with a capacity of 30 to 40. The citizens must apply to work at Brookwood and go through an interview and screening process. There is also a fee for working at this vocational training shop.

Rochelle Fowkes, the head instructor at the Brookwood Aspire program, said that they will be partnering in January with both LCISD and FBISD to provide a Work Place Learning opportunity for students in life skills and adult transition programs. The citizens in the Aspire program receive pay which is below minimum wage for their labor. Their pay is based on a time-study analysis of how quickly it takes them each to complete a task. Citizens can elect to work full or part time.

For additional information about Brookwood's Aspire program, contact Rochelle Fowkes at 908-432-3173 and for additional information about The Brookwood Community visit: [www.brookwoodcommunity.org](http://www.brookwoodcommunity.org)



# Fort Bend Junior Service League Awards \$10,000 Grant to The Arc



Fort Bend Junior Service League awarded a \$10,000 grant to The Arc to support our Special Olympics Delegation. The Arc was one of the beneficiaries of the proceeds of their 2015 Sugar Plum Market.

The Arc's Special Olympics' delegation has over 110 Fort Bend County adult athletes competing year-round in Basketball, Bocce, Bowling, Golf, Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Volleyball, and Track & Field. This important program develops camaraderie and a spirit of healthy competition and celebrates the victories of individuals who face daily struggles.

Participating in Special Olympics gives the athletes opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Thank you, Fort Bend Junior Service League for continuing to support this vital program!

## No Amount of Alcohol is Safe During Pregnancy, However Too Many Women are Misinformed

How often have you heard someone say...

- “It’s just one glass of wine.”
- “My doctor told me it would help relieve my stress.”
- “My mother drank while she was pregnant with me and I’m fine.”

An alarming 41% of respondents to a 2014 NBC Today poll<sup>1</sup> (n = 34,000) answered YES to the question, “Did you, or do you, drink alcohol while pregnant?”

*The fact is, drinking alcohol while pregnant is the only cause of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs). FASDs are 100% preventable.*<sup>2</sup>

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are a medical diagnosis that describes a group of conditions that can occur in a person whose biological mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These conditions include Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder, and alcohol related birth defects and ranging from mild to severe disabilities. People with FASDs can have intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) which may result in difficulties with learning, judgement, problem solving, physical aptitude, speech, hearing, social skills, and behavioral problems. In 2006, an estimated 1% of all newborns are impacted.<sup>3</sup>

While it’s true that some women who consume alcohol during pregnancy give birth to children who do not have FASDs, experts cannot predict how much alcohol is safe to consume during pregnancy since it depends on:

- The amount of alcohol consumed;
- How quickly the alcohol is consumed;
- The height and weight of the pregnant woman; and
- The amount of food in the woman’s stomach at the time of alcohol consumption.<sup>4</sup>

For these reasons, experts such as The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other global leaders including the World Health Organization, Canada FASD Research Network, and European FASD Alliance advise that no amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy.

## The Arc’s Needs Assessment

To better understand health care professionals’ attitudes and knowledge about FASDs, an online survey was developed and disseminated. The full report, [The Arc’s FASD Needs Assessment Technical Report](#), has additional information about the survey and results. Table 1 lists the categories, numbers and percentages of survey respondents.

**Table 1: Survey Participants’ Profession Category (n = 364)**

Profession	#	%
Registered nurse	213	59%
Nurse practitioner	42	12%
Therapist/counselor/case manager	39	11%
Midwife	39	11%
Physician	31	9%

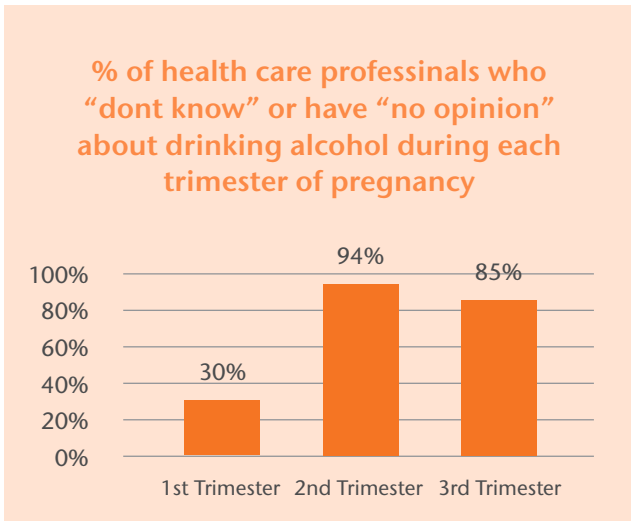
**Suggested citation:**

FASD Prevention Project (2015). Health Care Professionals’ Attitudes and Knowledge about FASDs: Findings from The Arc’s FASD Needs Assessment. Washington, DC. The Arc of the United States.



## What are health care professionals' opinions on drinking alcohol during pregnancy?

The majority of health care professionals surveyed (91%; n = 385) do not think that drinking alcohol “during any period of pregnancy” is safe.



However, there is substantial difference of professional opinion depending on the trimester of pregnancy. The vast majority of respondents, 91% (n = 380), agree that occasional alcohol consumption (1-2 drinks/week) during the first trimester is NOT safe. However, none of the respondents expressed such certainty regarding occasional consumption in the 2nd or 3rd trimester.

- Ninety-four percent (94%, n = 375) of respondents reported that they either “don’t know” or have “no opinion” about whether occasionally drinking alcohol during the 2nd trimester is safe.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) expressed the same uncertainty about drinking during the 3rd trimester.

Similar differences of opinion were expressed about the volume and frequency of alcohol consumption during pregnancy:

- Nearly all respondents (99.7%, n = 375) indicated that they either “don’t know” or have “no opinion” about the safety of regular or frequent alcohol consumption during any part of pregnancy.
- 23% indicated that one drink (1.5oz of liquor, 12oz of beer, or 5oz glass of wine) per week can be safely consumed during pregnancy without risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes, while 77% said only zero drinks would be safe.

## Do health care professionals feel prepared to address alcohol use and pregnancy?

While the vast majority of respondents (96.2%, n = 423) indicated that they provide care to females of child-bearing age, less than half (42.5%, n = 339) indicated that their practice has a written policy about discussing alcohol use with female patients. Additionally, the majority of respondents (82%, n = 252) indicated that they were responsible for educating, asking, or screening women regarding their alcohol use, however, not all feel prepared to do this (see Table 2).

One in four health professionals surveyed do not feel prepared to conduct alcohol screenings; nearly one in five feel unprepared to both educate pregnant and non-pregnant women about alcohol consumption and pregnancy and to provide resources or referrals for formal treatment.

Table 2: Health professionals' feelings of preparedness

Task	Very or somewhat unprepared	Don't know	Somewhat or very prepared
Conduct alcohol risk screenings (n = 293)	26%	4%	70%
Educate pregnant women about the effects of alcohol on a fetus (n = 292)	19%	3%	78%
Educate non-pregnant women about the effects of alcohol on a fetus (n = 293)	21%	7%	72%
Interview patients about alcohol use (n = 294)	12%	1%	87%
Conduct an intervention (n = 294)	24%	8%	69%
Offer resources/referrals for formal treatment (n = 289)	28%	4%	68%

## What is preventing health care professionals from discussing alcohol use and pregnancy?

The health care professionals surveyed also reported that there are multiple obstacles to discussing alcohol use with their patients.

- Time limitations (85%, n = 285) and patient/client sensitivity or denial (89%, n = 285) were obstacles for a vast majority of respondents;
- Over half indicated they experienced discomfort or were unsure how to discuss alcohol use with patients/clients (51%, n = 283) or expressed a need for additional training (65%, n = 284); and
- Over a quarter (76%, n = 283) identified lack of referral sources.

## What advice do health care professionals give about pregnancy and alcohol use?

Opinion and practice differed between different types of health care professionals:

- Midwife respondents were nearly three times as likely to agree that consuming alcohol during the third trimester of pregnancy is safe as compared to other respondents.
- Physician respondents were nearly four times as likely to agree that consuming alcohol during the second and third trimester of pregnancy is safe as compared to their colleagues.
- Nurses, on the other hand, are less likely to agree that occasional alcohol use is safe during the second trimester of pregnancy.

*This study suggests that while physicians and midwives have the opportunity to interact with women who are pregnant or who are planning on becoming pregnant, they are more likely to provide inaccurate information regarding alcohol use and pregnancy to their patients/clients compared to other professionals.*

## What resources and training materials are needed?

Health care professionals agreed that it would be beneficial to them to have access to more resources and training materials when discussing alcohol use with female patients/clients yet, they also report that the materials they need are currently unavailable.

**Table 3: How helpful would the following kinds of materials be to you?**

Materials	Somewhat helpful/ Helpful/ Very helpful	Already available
Updates on current/new research relating to alcohol use (n = 263)	95%	3%
Culturally or linguistically appropriate patient/client education materials (n = 263)	90%	4%
Patient/client education materials on the impact of alcohol on a fetus during pregnancy (n = 263)	90%	8%
Recommendations on how to incorporate alcohol use into general wellness discussions (n = 263)	89%	4%
Information on motivational interviewing techniques to improve alcohol-related discussions (n = 263)	86%	7%
Training on assessment and consulting techniques (n = 263)	86%	4.2%
Incorporation of patient/client education materials and alcohol-related screening tools into Electronic Health Records (n = 263)	83%	6.1%

Table 4 illustrates in which format respondents prefer receiving training materials. Hardcopies of training materials, on-line courses, onsite and virtual training (e.g. videos/webinars), and smartphone apps were all indicated as being helpful by over half of respondents.

**Table 4: How helpful would the following types of FASD-related training and educational materials be if they became available?**

Materials	Somewhat helpful/ Helpful/ Very helpful	Already available
Paper manuals or reference guides (n = 270)	89%	3%
Online CME-credit courses (n = 266)	86%	2%
Online manuals or reference guides (n = 267)	76%	3%
On-site training for myself and colleagues (n = 266)	74%	1%
Speakers at regional conferences (n = 265)	70%	2%
Smartphone manuals or reference guides (n = 265)	62%	1%
Online learning opportunities not offering CME credit (n = 266)	54%	2%

*Unfortunately, as this study has shown, while the majority (91%) of health care professionals surveyed think drinking alcohol during pregnancy is unsafe, there are still too many who think it is not risky. Health care professionals recognize their responsibility to screen and educate women about their alcohol consumption, however many don't feel prepared to do so due to their own discomfort with the topic as well as a lack of time and resources. The Arc's FASDs Prevention Project can help.*

## What can you do as a Health Care Professional to Prevent FASD?

The Arc's [FASDs Prevention Project](#) is the go-to place for health care professionals, self-advocates and families to learn more about FASDs. Healthcare professionals who provide care to females of child-bearing age are invited to take advantage of our many [resources](#), including:

- Take our free online course Preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders offered by one of our [partners](#), the [Association of Reproductive Health Professionals](#);
- View our series of FASDs prevention training [videos](#);
- Participate in live [webinars](#) or listen to [archived webinars](#) on a variety of FASDs prevention topics;
- Review the [free FASD Toolkit](#) for materials on alcohol screening and interview tips;
- Order [materials](#) that promote an FASDs prevention-friendly office;
- Learn more about FASDs prevention [news headlines and research notes](#);
- Read the Project [blog](#);
- View the [calendar](#) for upcoming events; and
- Stay up-to-date on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention by [subscribing](#) to the Project for updates and following @TheArcUS on Twitter.

Advocates can help too! When family, friends, or colleagues say it's OK to drink during pregnancy or when trying to become pregnant, join in The Arc and become an FASDs Prevention Champion by taking the opportunity to share with them the fact that **no amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy.**

## The Arc's Commitment to FASDs Services, Supports and Prevention

The Arc is the largest national community-based organization advocating for and serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. From supporting the early research by Dr. Ken Jones on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum in 1977, to advocating for the FAS Prevention and Education Act in 1998, to creating the 2004 "Sharing Stories, Finding Hope" curriculum that focused on providing supports and services to individuals with FASDs and their families, The Arc has been an important contributor in the FASDs community. The Arc's efforts were further enhanced in 2013 when we received a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Research and Services Administration (Grant number: U1HMC26371) to create resources for physicians, nurses and other health care professionals to support their discussions with women about the dangers of drinking alcohol when pregnant or planning to become pregnant. Learn more at The Arc's FASD Prevention Project website: [thearc.org/FASD-Prevention-Project](http://thearc.org/FASD-Prevention-Project).

# Western Dance 2015.... Biggest and best yet!

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*Margo Pasko*

It was a repeat! For the second year in a row, The 37th Annual Best in the West broke records for success! Let's have a big round of applause for our sponsors, supporters, volunteers, committee members, board members and the entire Fort Bend County community who came to the George Ranch Arena on November 21, 2015 for bidding, barbecue and dancing, in support of "Quality of Life for All"! Whether it was the divine weather, the ever-outstanding music of The Triumphs, the mouthwatering barbecue from The Swinging Door or the excitement of the live auctioneering by County Commissioner James Patterson, the crowd rocked the Arena.

A "dream team" has the perfect combination of skills to make this the premier nonprofit event in Fort Bend County. "Best in the West Wranglers" James Patterson, Ann Smith and Jo Ann Stevens produced an amazing evening. They were assisted by committee chairs Ron and Trudy Ortwerth (Ace in the Hole Auction); Jenny Gortney (cashier and live auction); Mike and Linda Casey (Raffle); Julie Fix, Vicki Ikeler and Barbara Magana Robertson (Publicity); Theresa Bathe, Melisa Bell, and Danielle Garrison (Reservations); Russell Cosbey, Rick Cushenberry and Ron Stevens (Set-up); Beverly Cushenberry and Sarah Parkinson (Silent Auction) and a host of hard-working volunteers.

Chris Breaux, of the accounting firm Whitley Penn, reprised his performance as master of ceremonies as he presented the 23 sensational live auction items. The fabulous packages ranged from a South Padre Island get-away to a week in Tarmarindo, Costa Rica to a trip to Washington, DC, the lab puppy (sold four times!), and the King Ranch hunting trip for the elusive Nilgai antelope and a variety of other wildlife. There was something for everyone!

Ron and Trudy Ortwerth's Ace in the Hole Auction was bursting with 21 exclusive and exciting items. Here is a sampling: Gallery Furniture gift certificate with design services, an executive one-day goose/duck hunt at the Bucksnap Hunting club, and dinner for eight at Perry's. The "Buy Now" option was popular with some of the bidders.

The silent auction was also amazing! The silent auction corral sponsors were: The Arc of Fort Bend County, Big Boys' Woodshed, Cushenberrys/Parkinsons, Fort Bend ISD, OakBend Medical Center, RE/MAX Fine Properties, and Fort Bend Law Enforcement. The variety of items made for splendid shopping—there was something for everyone, from smaller ticket items to big-ticket items!

The evening was underwritten by many generous sponsors. Prosperity Bank was the presenting sponsor for the evening, designated as World Champion. Sprint Fort Bend County Landfill and The Johnson Development Corp. were the Gold Buckle sponsors. At the Bronze Boots sponsorship level were Aviles Engineering, Classic Chevrolet Sugar Land, Dannenbaum Engineering Corporation, Fred and Mabel R. Parks Foundation, and Sugar Land Rotary Club. Rhinestone Cowboy sponsors were Aliana Development Company, Atlantic Pacific Communications LLC, Bob & Marilyn Ewing, Geoscience Engineering, Helfman Ford and PGAL. Silver Spurs sponsors were AECOM, CobbFendley, Costello, Inc., County Judge Bob and Pat Hebert, EHRA Engineering, Fort Bend County Sheriff's Association, Foster Creek Vet Hospital, Geotest Engineering, Inc., Huitt-Zollars, Jones Carter, Levee Management Services, Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP, Muller Law Group, PCD Management LLC, Silver Eagle Distributors, and SWCA Environmental Consultants/Ninyo & Moore. In addition, 92 other individuals and companies purchased tables in support of The Arc.

The "Best in the West" Wranglers would like to express their sincere appreciation to every individual, corporation and organization in Fort Bend County that helped make this event a success. The dramatic and positive changes that have occurred in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are a tribute to a responsive community that has shared our vision of "Quality of Life for All."

Proceeds from The Best in the West will be used to fund the services, programs and advocacy The Arc provides every day. These funds will help maintain group homes and learning centers that The Arc leases to HCS providers; support the self-advocates group; provide social and recreational activities for over 140 members such as, the annual holiday formal, monthly dances, weekly bowling league; our Special Olympics program with nine different sports and more than 110 athletes; the employment services program; the TwentySomethings transitional group; The Arc's legislative and educational advocacy programs and the youth group programs.

THANK YOU to all who came out and made this such a successful night. We hope you had as much fun as we did! Please mark your calendars to save the date for **Saturday, November 19, 2016!**

# Best IN THE West



# Can you “Dig” it?

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Margo Pasko



Congratulations are in order for our four volleyball teams and our individual skills player!

On Saturday morning, November 7, The Arc of Fort Bend County’s four volleyball teams caravanned to Texas City where they competed in the Gulf Coast Area volleyball tournament.

Jackie and Gaylon Butler’s Sharks brought home gold medals. Hal and Will Marshall’s Wolverines brought home bronze medals. The Doves had new coaches this year: Robin Vaiana, Beth and Jimmy Jimenez. Their team won gold medals. Debbie Eddlemon’s Angels also brought home gold medals. Great teamwork! Don Duyka’s individual skills player, Trevor Dow, also brought home a gold medal! That’s lots of hardware for our delegation!

Member of the Angels were: Kyle Eddlemon, Derek Schottle, Michael Kidd, Bridget Stephney, Tim Caldwell and Chris De La Paz.

The Doves were: Blaine Hylton, Andrew Kase, Michael Pelz, Larryn Lobue, Tony Presson and JJ Jimenez.

The Wolverines players were: Mike Marshall, Carrie Wantuch, Jason Lungstrum, Stevie Meyer, Tyler Sims, Russell Smith, Paul Hennecke, and Aniecia Mouton.

The Sharks were: Kimberly Butler, Nicole LaSala, Keith Jensen, Marques Dancy, Wayne Heitman, Whitney McLaren, Aaron Lindsey, Jhonatan Ramirez and Kristi Oujesky.

Congratulations to the athletes and “thank you” to the coaches, chaperones, volunteers and financial supporters of The Arc of Fort Bend County who made it possible for the athletes to participate. Beth Jimenez set up a bakery buffet with items donated from Randalls, and Joanne Meyer provided a fruit tray for the athletes. Thank you!

Next up, Winter Games in Round Rock, February 4-7, 2016 where our volleyball teams will bump it, set it, and smack it down!

## Special Olympics Bowling News

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Margo Pasko

Our four Special Olympics bowlers competed in the Special Olympics Area 22 bowling tournament on Saturday, December 5, and they all came home winners! David Sturhan won a gold medal in assisted ramp bowling; Allan Harris, Jr., received a ribbon; and the unified team of Jason and Steve Lungstrum won gold medals as well. Congratulations to all of them! Next stop for them is Winter Games, February 3-6 in Round Rock.

If you or a family member are interested in competing in bowling as a Special Olympics athlete, contact Margo for more information on how to become a bowling coach. Each athlete needs a caregiver or family member who is a certified Special Olympics bowling coach.

# Dulles Adult Transition Program

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Margo Pasko



On November 11, 2015, an Accessories Extravaganza was on display in the Dulles High School library. The venue was crammed with beautiful home décor and personal accessories, all for sale and all made by Adult Transition Program (ATP) students under the leadership of the creative and hardworking teacher, Hyacinth Pickersgill.

The students opened the program by taking turns making statements about their participation in the creation of the products and what they learned as they prepared for the Accessories Extravaganza. Mrs. Pickersgill, with her paraeducators, Dulles staff and student volunteers create a work based learning environment that teaches valuable employment skills. The students learn to stay on task, independently follow multistep directions, and evaluate their own work. They develop a sense of fulfillment in a job well done.

Dulles principals were in attendance as were many members of the DHS staff. Principal Ronnie Edwards had the honor of the cutting the ribbons signaling it was time to “shop ‘til they dropped”.

Some of the proceeds, minus costs, were donated to The Arc’s TwentySomethings group. This group provides social and family networking activities for students with disabilities after graduation from high school. The purpose of TwentySomethings is to welcome young adults with intellectual disabilities and their families as they transition from lives as students to lives as adults in the community. The Arc is grateful for the support of the Dulles Adult Transition Program students and looks forward to seeing them participate in The Arc activities. Upon graduation, The Arc gives a complimentary family membership to Adult Transition Program students.

## TwentySomethings Group Partied at BooBash!

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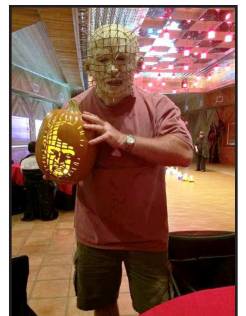
Margo Pasko



Boo! The Arc’s TwentySomethings group partied down at the Boo Bash on Sunday, October 26 at Safari Texas Ranch. The weekend flooding stopped long enough for families to get to and from the event. The Arc’s TwentySomethings facilitator, Wendy Chong, organized an afternoon of music and games in the beautiful San Antonio Room of Safari Texas. Boo bowling, cauldron toss, mummy wrap and Halloween musical chairs were just a few of the games the group enjoyed! Gary Schottle, winner of the TwentySomethings disco costume contest in August, showed, once again, that he really enjoys his party themes! He brought all kinds of animatronics to the event, creating a great atmosphere!

As always, while the TwentySomethings partied with Wendy and her friends, the families were sharing information about providers, learning centers, guardianship attorneys and other topics of importance to them.

Allison Wen, owner of Safari Texas Ranch, donated the use of the San Antonio room, a perfect venue for the event. The next time you are in the community at an event, be sure to mention Allison and Cassandra Wen’s generous support of The Arc’s programs!



# S o c i a l

## Halloween Party ~ 10-18-15



## Winter Dance ~ 12-5-15





# R e c r e a t i o n

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## *St. Theresa's Dance ~ 11-20-15*



## *Holiday Formal ~ 12-6-15*



*The Arc thanks Allison Wen and Safari Texas again for hosting our 2015 Holiday Formal*



February 7 - 9, 2016

Royal Sonesta Hotel | Houston, Texas

**Inclusion Works Conference Purpose:**

*Inclusion Works!* is an opportunity for educators, administrators and parents to improve their skills in educating and supporting students in Special Education. The Arc of Texas is committed to the goal of promoting, protecting and advocating for students' right to be included in regular education settings with the appropriate aids and services. Conference participants will be offered information and education about research-based practices, aligned with the purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), so that their students can meet their educational, employment and independent living goals!

Up to 10 hours of CPE credits (Monday - 6 hours / Tuesday - 4 hours) are available approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), CPE Provider # 501024.

**Inclusion Works values and indicators of implementation of inclusive practices on a campus or in a district:**

- Disability is considered by adults and students as only one of many attributes possessed by each child;
- All students with disability labels are members of the general education community;
- Students receive special education services and supports in general education settings;
- Students with disability labels are involved and making progress in enrolled grade level curriculum based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) or Pre-K Curriculum; and
- Special educators and general educators work together in general education settings to meet students' needs.

**At Inclusion Works, participants can expect to learn how to:**

1. Provide access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the Pre-K Curriculum.
2. Support students with disability labels in inclusive settings-including use of Assistive Technology and school-wide positive behavior interventions & supports.
3. Improve skills in planning, collaboration and co-teaching.
4. Use PLAAFP to write grade level standards based IEPs and how to implement them.

**Information and Register at:**

[http://www.thearcoftexas.org/site/PageServer?pagenam e=events\\_inclusion\\_conference](http://www.thearcoftexas.org/site/PageServer?pagenam e=events_inclusion_conference)



The Arc of Fort Bend County ensures opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to maximize their quality of life within our community.

# Membership Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate  New Member  Renewing Member

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ HCS Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am a:**

- Family Member  Person with Disability  Interested Citizen  Professional who works in the Disability Field

Indicate the age of person with a disability: 0-12 13-22 23-54 55+

**Membership Levels:**

**Individual with Disability** \$20.00  
reserved for those not living at home and not included in a family membership  
receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Single** \$35.00  
receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Single Lifetime** \$500.00  
receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Family** \$50.00  
**\*Names of all family members:** \_\_\_\_\_  
includes all immediate members of the family living in the home  
includes a family member with a disability living outside of the home  
receives two votes at meetings of the membership

**Corporate** \$100.00  
receives one vote at meetings of the membership

**Corporate Lifetime** \$2000.00  
receives once vote at meetings of the membership

**VIP**  
given yearly to chairs of "Best in the West" and *Golf Classic*  
given yearly to Head Coaches of Special Olympic Sports

**Additional Tax Deductible Donation:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish, you may donate to a specific program:

- Bowling  Education  Employment
- Self-Advocacy  Social Recreation  Special Olympics

**Total Amount Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail form and payment to: OR Join online at [www.arcoffortbend.org](http://www.arcoffortbend.org)  
The Arc of Fort Bend County  
123 Brooks Street  
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

The Arc of Fort Bend County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization

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*Achieve with us.*



Add us as your friend and  
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events at The Arc!  
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**facebook**

## Tyler Sims - Graduate of the SLPD Citizen's Police Academy

*Margo Pasko*



Congratulations are in order for Tyler Sims - he made the Sugar Land Police Department Facebook page! He is now a graduate of the 56th class of the Sugar Land "Citizen's Police Academy", and is an honorary junior officer. They gave him a police shirt with authentic police patches, a police hat, and they embroidered his name on his shirt. Proud mother, Susie Sims said, "Wow! This is Tyler's dream-come-true. He is now officially a part of the SLPD family and will be volunteering with them... for life. This IS his dream!" Tyler wears his uniform with dignity and joy, proud to show his involvement with the Sugar Land Police Department. Way to go, Tyler!