

CAP ABILITIES

ABILITY WORKS, INC.

Ability Works employs over 50 people with developmental disabilities and 100 people overall.

Working to Meet Your Needs

from the director

Is Ability Works Selling Their Building? Is Ability Works Closing?



Following hints (some not so subtle) in the newspaper, we finally have some information we can share with you.

First of all, Ability Works did not seek to sell our property. We were approached by our neighbor, the Health Department, so that they can continue a valuable project to address the drug epidemic in our communities, a concern of everyone in our community.

The opportunity to sell our property has come at a time when the world of service delivery for individuals with developmental disabilities is rapidly changing. The traditional model of "facility based" services is transitioning to a community based model. We have embraced the change and have been moving our services more into the community, leaving fewer people in the building on a day to day basis.

We currently support individuals at over 10 volunteer sites on almost a daily basis. Others are going on outings to discover what opportunities are available in our communities. And yet others are working in the community instead of the "facility based" setting. At present, we have two groups that are entirely in the community for their full program two days a week. This model is soon to increase to three groups, three days a week. Feedback from staff and individuals indicate that they really like going out and about. We anticipate, based on national trends, this movement will not reverse.

With all that in mind, the approach by the Health Department to acquire our property presented an opportunity for us to move to community based services a little sooner than expected. We have a firm grasp on what it takes to support people to become part of their community, and we have well experienced staff to make it happen.

The Commissioners of Erie County gave their support to the project and a formal agreement is being developed. We are actively looking for appropriate alternate location(s) to provide services.

Please note: **We are not going out of business!** Ability Works is a health provider with great services and our plan is to continue this tradition long into the future.

We trust that if you have questions you will call and ask. You may direct questions to Allison, Laura or Celeste, as we will have the most current information. We commit to sharing information when we have information to share, including timelines for transition, and future location(s) of our home base, etc.

We maintain our commitment to providing quality services with our highly trained staff no matter where our home base is located.

Thank you all for your continued support.

annual sunset cruise

On Thursday, September 21, 93 people boarded the Goodtime I at the Jackson Street Pier for our fifth annual Sunset Cruise. In 2013, Ability Works began offering free events that were open to anyone over the age of 15 receiving services from the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The sunset cruise was a fan favorite, so the tradition continues.

This year's even was another success, with perfect weather, a beautiful sunset, and many new faces. DJ Manny provided the music for the evening and was a big hit with the dance enthusiasts! The captain and his crew were great, and spun us around for two hours of beautiful scenery—including an up close look at Cedar Point—on the calm waters of Sandusky Bay.

If you would like to learn more about the free events hosted by Ability Works, give us a call and we will add you to our events mailing list.



did you know?

A bipartisan group of federal lawmakers is coming together in an effort to promote policies aimed at increasing employment among people with developmental disabilities. Five members of the U.S. House of Representatives said in October that they are launching the Bipartisan House Working Group on Employing People with Disabilities. The group will work to identify policies and regulations that could be established or changed to make it easier for people in this population to enter the workforce.

Ability Works helps many individuals in Erie County fulfill their dreams of working in our community, but too often our laws and regulations create barriers to entry into the workforce. Traditionally, people with disabilities have risked losing access to Medicaid, Social Security and other government benefits if they earn too much money each month. That is starting to change with the implementation of a 2014 law that allows individuals with disabilities to open ABLE Accounts where they can accrue up to \$14,000 per year without jeopardizing eligibility for government supports.

STABLE, Ohio's ABLE program, was the first ABLE account program in the country open to the public. This makes tax-free accounts available to cover qualified expenses such as medical and dental care, education, housing, transportation, assistive technology, employment training, and other community-based supports. To find out if you or someone you know is eligible, you can access the information at www.stableaccount.com.

employee spotlight

Riley Johnson

The Ability Works Community Employment Department would like to spotlight Riley Johnson for our winter issue. Riley is currently looking for a full-time job in the Dietary/Culinary field. Riley is a recent graduate of Margareta Schools and EHOVE. At EHOVE, Riley majored in Culinary Arts and helped cook the meals for students every day. Riley also just received her driver's license and is willing to drive anywhere in Erie County to work and earn a living. Riley currently works PRN at Margareta School District in the dietary department and really enjoys the work but needs a more steady income.

Riley has a dream of owning her own bakery and loves to cook and bake. Riley is also avid in archery and enjoys taking care of her dog, Bailey. Riley is willing to learn and work hard. If you are interested in meeting Riley and discussing possible employment with her, please contact Mary Kalizewski at 419-626-1048, ext. 3102.



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Capabilities is a publication produced by Ability Works, Inc. and The Krabill Marketing Group, LLC. Inquiries can be addressed to ayoung@ability-works.com

Working to Meet Your Needs

halloween happenings!

The 12th Annual Halloween Happenings! Event hosted by Ability Works was a **huge** success! The line was waiting outside the door 1/2 an hour prior to the start of the event, and they kept coming until the doors closed at 7:30. Thank you to all of our vendors: Ability Works, The Assurance Network, Erie MetroParks, Coaster City Taxi, Barry's Bagels, Ghostly Manor, Goodwill, Cooking with Korena, Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities, LulaRoe, Serving Our Seniors, and Superior Fire, all of whom hosted a trick-or-treat table. Thanks, too, to WCPZ Radio, 102.7FM. And thank you to our wonderful, creative staff which pulls this event together every year! Enjoy a few photos from the event here, or visit our Facebook page to see all of the photos from the event! Feel free to download what you'd like.



calendar of events

Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Break
& **Nov. 24** Ability Works is CLOSED

Dec. 25 Holiday Break
through **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**
Jan. 1 Ability Works is CLOSED

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