



# ABLE News

## Spring 2018

AN ABLE UPDATE

IN THIS ISSUE

## A Word from our CEO

by Lance Davis

Hello everyone!!!

There have been a lot of changes over the past several months at ABLE! Besides the fresh faces you will see at the Workshop, we are also updating our branding, which includes our website. You can check that out at [www.okable.org](http://www.okable.org). Additionally, we are consistently updating our social media pages and have added an Instagram and Twitter page. Please follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @AbleinNorman. We will be updating those accounts regularly.

ABLE has also added to the list of opportunities for our service recipients. Some of the other jobs, activities, and volunteering our service recipients are doing include: participating with the Community Garden at the CSBI building, which includes growing herbs and vegetables as well as flowers; making Meals on Wheels deliveries, working on vending machines, making milk runs, doing can crushing at McFarlin Church, recycling, paper shredding, and cleaning up Norman parks through the Adopt-a-Park program.

Additionally, they are working at OU, at Red Lobster, and at Moore-Norman Technology Center.

Last, but not least, our program through DRS, Work Adjustment Training (WAT) offers our service recipients the opportunity to work with CASA and at Homeland. Our WAT Program Manager, Kristen Ross, is looking to expand the program and get our clients back into working at other companies, including T.J. Maxx, where they previously enjoyed working.

While at the Workshop, our service recipients stay busy with activities including, but not limited to, cooking, nutrition courses and other skill-building activities. ABLE is also looking to expand this to include an art and music class.

As always, we are wide open to any and all suggestions to help the service recipients have a meaningful day. Our partners United Way, The Parents Association, and The Mustang Club give us support with time and treasures to help us fulfill the needs for the service recipients. A special thanks goes to our Board of Directors for leading the 2018 Lilies for Life fundraiser, which raised \$4,545! The Board is an intricate part of the ABLE family, giving vital support and guidance.

Have a Terrific Spring!!!



### Upcoming Events

ABLE has a couple, upcoming fundraising events this summer and fall.

Page 2



### Fundraisers

ABLE is constantly looking to fund activities and client opportunities. Here, a staff member's daughter helps fundraise by encouraging parking in our lot during NMF.

Page 3

# Upcoming Events

by Niki Leonard

ABLE has several, upcoming fundraising events. We would love to have your support!

- On **Wednesday, May 30**, join us at Freddy's, located at 2401 W. Main in Norman for dinner. Order and mention ABLE between 5 – 9 PM, and Freddy's will donate 15% of their proceeds to ABLE.
- Pinot's Palette, at 228 E. Main in Downtown Norman, is hosting ABLE supporters on **Thursday, June 21** from 6:30 to 8:30 for patriotic patronage. We will paint the sky at twilight and enjoy drinks and snacks. \$10 from each \$35 ticket will be donated back to ABLE, for a possible total of \$480. Funds raised will support our service recipients' participation in Special Olympics bowling this fall. Register online at [www.pinotpalette.com/norman/event/237130](http://www.pinotpalette.com/norman/event/237130)
- ABLE's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Comedy Night will be held at The Mercury Events Center on **Friday, August 24**. Stay tuned to our website and social media for more details!



## COMEDY NIGHT

Comedian Scott Long, who has been seen on NBC, FOX-TV, and will have a special on Amazon Prime later this year, will entertain our ABLE supporters at our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Comedy night on August 24.

SCOTT LONG  
Scottcomedy.com and itsanautismthing.com



*Niki Leonard, ABLE's new Director of Development & Community Engagement.*

# New Development Director for ABLE

by Lance Davis

Niki Leonard joined ABLE at the end of March. She comes to us with a strong background in nonprofit fundraising, starting in the nonprofit world at ALSAC/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where she worked with community members, businesses and volunteers to fundraise for the worldwide children's hospital in the Tulsa area and Kansas markets for 4 ½ years. Niki was lead staff on the inaugural St. Jude Dream Home campaign in Tulsa, which raised over \$.5 million for the hospital.

Niki and her husband then moved to Dallas, where she was a Development Associate for two years with Dallas Children's Advocacy Center, an agency that provides support and

hope for the most abused children in Dallas County. Niki then returned to Oklahoma, and welcomed a son, Radek with her husband, Mike.

Niki is fitting in wonderfully with our ABLE family. She has 'hit the ground' running and is connecting with current ABLE friends, as well as making new ones. She is helping with branding and is working to grow our network and also extend our funding for the Residential and Vocational programs.

Join me in welcoming Niki!!

# Recent Grants & Fundraisers

by Niki Leonard

## Grants

ABLE recently received a grant award from the Kerr Foundation, which will allow us to begin the renovation and upgrading of our service recipients' restrooms. We are so grateful for this gift!

Additionally, we had two reviews in front of the United Way grant committee, and we have a positive outlook regarding the increase in that award this year, as well.

## Fundraisers

Thanks to the help of partners, volunteers, and staff, ABLE has recently raised funds to help with our vocational and residential programs:

### LILIES CELEBRATING LIFE

The annual fundraiser brought in more than \$4,500 for ABLE. Thank you, ABLE Board, for spearheading the fundraiser!

### NORMAN MUSIC FESTIVAL PARKING

ABLE utilized the Workshop parking lot on the evenings of April 26 and 27 and all day on the 28<sup>th</sup>, as well as the First Fidelity Bank lot all day on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> for Norman Music Festival parking. Through that, we were able to raise almost \$900, which will go towards art and other programs for our service recipients to utilize while at the Workshop.

### OKLAHOMA MUSTANG CLUB

Our ABLE friends, Oklahoma Mustang Club, are well on their way to their fundraising goal of almost \$8,000 for ABLE!

One way to support these efforts is by attending the Metro Ford of OKC All Ford Car and Truck Show, which starts at 9 AM on Saturday, May 19. It will take place at Metro Ford of OKC, located at 2800 W. I-44 Service Road in Oklahoma City. Starting at around 11 AM, a couple of our car-enthusiast service recipients will present the prize for their favorite cars. For more details, visit [www.okmustangclub.com](http://www.okmustangclub.com).



# Client Activities

by Niki Leonard

## Frontier City

With gracious contributions from the ABLE Parents Association, our service recipients had the opportunity to go experience the rides and other attractions at Frontier City on Sunday, April 8. Thank you, Parents Association!

## Prom

The University of Oklahoma Memorial Union's Food Court was transformed into a Masquerade Ball for the annual prom, hosted by The Student Council for Exceptional Children.

Approximately 20 ABLE residents and service recipients attended the prom at OU, held on Friday, April 13. They enjoyed entertainment throughout the night, including dancing and other activities.



## Nutrition & Cooking

Students from OU recently met with ABLE staff to educate them on healthy, yet economical food purchases and preparation. The information will be vital to our residents at our group homes, to help them lead healthy, active lives.

Additionally, each Thursday, the ABLE Workshop hosts a cooking class, where the service recipients can prepare and eat tasty treats.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!