

FLORIDA GRANTOR

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March 2019

- 2 *President's Letter*
- 3 *Grantee Spotlight - Miami Dade College*
- 4 *New Florida Chamber Report Shows More Floridians With Disabilities are Employed*
- 5 *Donor Spotlight - AdventHealth*
- 6 *High School High Tech Guideposts to Success*
- 8 *Disability Employment Awareness Activities Update*
- 10 *Thank You Arlene Shackelford*
- 10 *Corporate Champions*
- 11 *Sarah Goldman and Whitney Harris Appointed Co-Chairs of The Able Trust Alumni Association*
- 12 *Coming Events*



The Able Trust's mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment.

Latest Grant Award Recipients

Independent Living Resource Center



Guenevere Crum, Rep. Cord Byrd, Tyler Morris, April Baker, Priscilla Moench, Dr. Susanne Homant, and Sen. Aaron Bean

Miami Dade College



Dr. Joaquin G. Martinez, Dwayne Ingram, Bridget Pallango, Sebastian Ochoa, Dr. Eduardo J. Padron, and Dr. Lenore P. Rodicio

CareerSource Flagler/Volusia



Carlos Valderrama, Robin King, Dwayne Ingram, Dr. Susanne Homant, Rep. Elizabeth Fetterhoff, and Rep. Paul Renner



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A Message from the President



Two important pieces of research were released this year, both of which provide critical data regarding the hiring of people with disabilities. The results of these significant and well-done studies include data that should be very helpful in the diversification of Florida's workforce, to include people with disabilities.

We were very pleased to work with the Florida Chamber Foundation on research entitled, A Study of Employment of Floridians with a Disability, which reports the employment situation for working age Floridians with a disability. This excellent study concludes that the number of Floridians who are employed statewide is approximately 387,000, an increase of 39,600 since 2013. That is good news, but there are approximately 1,208,000 people with disabilities in Florida of working age, which equates to an employment rate of only 32%.

In addition to the statewide analysis, the study provides data on a county by county basis, which should be very valuable as each county reviews how it is doing in getting people with disabilities into its workforce and tapping that source of talent. As an illustration, the overall statewide employment rate of Floridians with disabilities (32%) is the average for the state. According to the study, St John's county achieved the highest percentage of employed people with disabilities, at 48.3%. See page four for more on this timely study.

We were excited to see that the number employed has increased from the earlier study as noted above. This means that the efforts of many philanthropic and social organizations are working. But the number is still low, compared to the employment of Floridians without disabilities, so we have a long way to go.

The second important study is a national study conducted by Accenture and further supported by Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities. This research studied the benefits to businesses that extended their workforce to include people with disabilities and the results are worthy of the attention of all businesses. The study found that those companies not only enjoy the skills and talents of the studied population, but the presence of workers with disabilities in their organization also generated other appreciable benefits: improved productivity, improved market share, enhanced reputation that promotes customer loyalty, and higher shareholder returns.

We believe these studies together make an excellent case for businesses to seriously plan to improve their inclusion of people with disabilities in their workforce. You can find a copy of the Chamber Foundation research on our website, and the Accenture study can be found at www.accenture.com. We hope all businesses will be inspired by these documents to more actively recruit and hire people with disabilities.

Kindest regards,

Dr. Susanne F. Homant, MBA

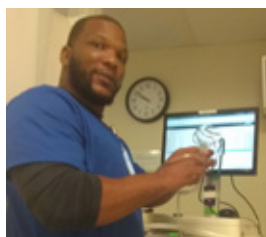
President & CEO

Grantee Spotlight: Miami Dade College

by Guenevere Crum

Miami Dade College in south Florida is a recipient of a Strategic Grant for the MEED+ (Model for Enhanced Employment Development Plus) Program. MEED+ focuses on three main goals with a theme of increasing the employability of students with disabilities at the College. These goals are: 1) increase internship and job placements for students with disabilities; 2) increase individual career development sessions and career services sessions; and 3) increase career services workshops for students and disability awareness workshops for employers and organizations in the community.

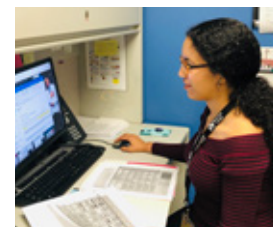
MEED+ has started on the Wolfson Campus and is providing current and alumni students with disabilities the support needed to gain employment in their chosen career field. Since kicking off the program this past November, staff has been busy promoting the program across campus and with area employers for internship and employment opportunities.



Ashley

Recent graduates like Ashley and Selena have recently found employment and success thanks to the efforts of the grant-funded program. Ashley described his new full-time job at the hospital as the best he has ever had and stated, “Finishing my degree was a challenging effort but I’m so glad I was able to graduate. I now understand the difference a diploma makes on your professional profile. Before graduating, I never had the hourly rate that I have now. I have greater financial freedom, really enjoy working at the hospital and get to use all the technical skills I learned in my classes.”

Selena’s part-time job has given her a new sense of purpose and responsibility. She says, “Securing a job means having the capability of providing for one’s self. My current employment has taught me to always get the job done and I enjoy it very much. Apart from providing for myself, I am learning more about what it means to be employed and how to retain a job.”



Selena

The Able Trust offers Strategic Employment Placement Initiative grant opportunities to 501 (c) (3) organizations around the state of Florida. This grant award is offered annually and provides organizations a three-year time frame to design and implement their unique program that will provide employment skills and placement for individuals with disabilities. Organizations with grant support can construct programs to bridge the gaps between employers and individuals. The Able Trust continues to focus on developing career opportunities for individuals with disabilities and meeting the talent pool needs of employers in Florida. More information on The Able Trust grant program can be found on www.abletrust.org/grant-information.

2019 Able Trust General Support for Employment Grant Deadline Approaching!

Grant proposals are due no later than Friday, April 5, 2019.

Visit www.abletrust.org for more information or contact us at 850-224-4493.

New Florida Chamber Foundation Report Shows More Floridians With Disabilities are Employed



The Florida Chamber Foundation recently released its *Study of Employment of Floridians with a Disability Report*, which shows more Floridians with a disability were employed in 2017- with the unemployment rate for Floridians with a disability falling nearly 7 percentage points from 2013 to 2017.

The report, which also includes county data for several metrics, shows that:

- There are an estimated 2.67 million Floridians who indicate that they have a disability - 13.4 percent of all Floridians. In the 18 to 64 age group — the group most likely to be in the workforce — 1.2 million Floridians indicate they have a disability.
- The employment of Floridians with a disability has increased from 347,119 in 2013 to a total of 386,739 in 2017 — that’s an increase of 39,620 people.
- Florida’s unemployment rate for people with a disability has dropped from 23.2 percent to 16.3 percent from 2013 to 2017.

“It is very important that we conduct research as a basis to consider progress and to determine what we and our partners are doing to make Florida’s workforce more inclusive for people with disabilities,” said Dr. Susanne Homant, President and CEO of The Able Trust. “This study not only shows how Florida as a whole is doing, it gives us insight into how each individual county is doing. We have a large untapped workforce resource in Florida and I urge business leaders to take some time to investigate this group. There are some really talented potential employees just waiting for an opportunity.”

While a declining unemployment rate for Floridians with disability is good news, challenges and opportunities still remain.

“As we look toward 2030, we know Florida will need to create approximately 1.7 million net new jobs, many in industries that don’t exist today,” said Dr. Jerry Parrish, Chief Economist of the Florida Chamber Foundation. “As we look at the number of people who are not in the workforce and compare it to future needs, it’s important to continue our state’s momentum and focus on creating pathways toward economic opportunity, diversifying and growing our economy, and ensuring Florida’s cradle to career system is ready to create the talent Florida’s businesses need.”

According to the Florida Chamber Foundation’s research, strategies to improve employment by persons with disabilities include:

- Continue to grow and diversify Florida’s economy
- Provide more skills training opportunities
- Remove state and federal penalties that limit career growth opportunities
- Reduce overall poverty in Florida

The *Study of Employment of Floridians with a Disability* is supported by The Able Trust. It is an update on the research released in 2016 and is part of the Florida Chamber Foundation’s ongoing research.

The report can be found at www.AbleTrust.org.

Donor Spotlight: AdventHealth Orlando

by Mary Jo Hatala



AdventHealth (formerly Florida Hospital) is one of the largest nonprofit healthcare providers in the United States and is the only national healthcare company based in Florida. AdventHealth has 30 hospitals and freestanding emergency departments across the state with its headquarters in Altamonte Springs. AdventHealth Orlando is more than just a hospital, it is a designated teaching hospital, training physicians from around the world on newest technologies and procedures.

At the heart of the company is its over arching value of whole-person care: compassionate, life-long care of the body, mind and spirit.

“We believe each person is equally deserving of quality medical attention and unconditional love,” says Terry Shaw, President and CEO of AdventHealth.

Another key value is inclusiveness. AdventHealth has supported people with disabilities in Florida in many ways. First, AdventHealth is active in Project SEARCH, a transition-to-work program for young adults with disabilities. Three AdventHealth locations (Orlando, Winter Park, and Kissimmee) partner with Orlando-based Quest, Inc., as host sites for internships, with 9-10 young adults gaining valuable work experience and learning new career skills at each site. Quest, Inc. is also supported in Project SEARCH by The Able Trust. It is one of the largest nonprofit service providers to people with developmental disabilities in central Florida.

AdventHealth was Quest, Inc.’s first internship host partner when the program launched in 2010, and many Project SEARCH graduates have been hired by AdventHealth.

In addition, Jeffery Hurst, past Senior Vice President of Finance at AdventHealth Orlando, served on The Able Trust Board of Directors from 2014 until 2016. Currently, Doug Hilliard, Senior Executive Vice President of the Central Florida Division of Adventhealth, serves as an Able Trust Ambassador and is a candidate for Board appointment.

Last and importantly, AdventHealth has been a financial supporter of The Able Trust since 2013, sponsoring Disability Employment Awareness Month events, the Youth Leadership Forum, and the annual Ability Awards. Thanks to its commitment and generosity, AdventHealth is recognized by The Able Trust as a Platinum Sponsor.

“We are so thankful for AdventHealth’s generosity and support in our work to serve individuals with disabilities,”

*- Jessi Jackson Smith
Grants Officer at Quest, Inc.*

The Able Trust is grateful for the support of AdventHealth Orlando and the opportunities it continues to provide to people with disabilities to learn job skills, explore areas of interest, and move toward successful employment.

High School High Tech Guideposts to Success

by Allison Chase

Each year The Able Trust awards selected sites for outstanding work on each of the Guideposts for Success that create the foundation of High School High Tech (HSHT) programming. The awardees are honored at the HSHT Annual Conference Awards Reception. Presented below are the eight recipients of the 2018 High School High Tech Awards.

School-Based Preparatory Experiences



In order to perform at optimal levels in all education settings, all youth need to participate in educational programs grounded in standards, clear performance expectations, and graduation exit options based upon meaningful, accurate, and relevant indicators of student learning and skills. School-Based Preparatory Experiences, such as interest inventories, formal and informal vocational assessment, and school course counseling include activities to guide youth in the selection of programs of study that are grounded in state, professional, and industry standards and that provide the educational prerequisites for STEM and other careers.



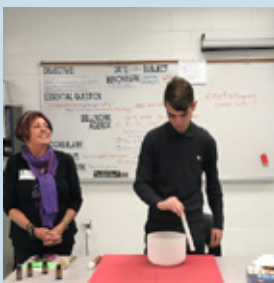
Career and Work Based Preparation



Career preparation and work-based learning experiences are essential in order for youth to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers. These experiences often require collaborations with other organizations. Activities may include exposure to post-secondary education through workshop presentations, online research, and tours of postsecondary institutions; industry site visits; job shadowing to learn first-hand about specific occupational skills related to a career pathway; work readiness training designed to improve job-seeking skills, work-place basic skills, computer literacy, and job search proficiencies, such as writing resumes and preparing for interviews; and internships to learn about a particular industry or occupation and the requisite education and career paths.



Youth Development & Leadership



Youth development is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that help them gain skills and competencies. Youth leadership is part of that process. Activities may include adult mentoring; providing role models through guest lectures and mentoring activities; and traditional leadership and youth development activities, including community service, volunteerism, and service learning.



Connecting Activities



Youth need to be connected to programs, services, activities, and supports that help them gain access to chosen post-school options. Activities may include connections to mental and physical health services; linking youth to transportation options for accessing programs, education, and work participation; tutoring; post-program support such as DOE/DVR services; assistive technology, which allow youth

with disabilities to maintain or improve their functional capabilities, become more independent, and pursue opportunities for future education and employment; and financial planning which includes exposure to budgeting, checking/savings accounts, credit card information, identity theft/fraud, and basic financial literacy.



Family Involvement and Supports



Family involvement is about promoting collaborative alliances with families that will increase participation in promoting the social, academic, and occupational growth of youth, leading to improved post high school outcomes. Because of the diversity of family experiences and living situations in the current world, many youth require services and systems that recognize an expanded definition of “family,” which includes grandparents, relative caregivers, and other relatives and non-relatives and which

takes into consideration unique cultural issues and practices. Activities may include provision of educational/resource information to families; and opportunities for families to participate in appropriate program activities including but not limited to: HSHT events, Parent Advisory Councils and mentoring.



Communication Skills



The ability to communicate both verbally and in writing with a wide variety of people, maintain good eye contact, write clearly and succinctly, demonstrate a varied vocabulary, and tailor language according to the audience are all essential skills that employers seek out. Good verbal and written communication means getting the message across with less chance of misunderstanding. The desired outcome or goal of any communication process is to understand or to be understood. The

development of communication skills should be incorporated into all Guidepost/HSHT activities. Activities specifically focused on communication skills may include speech, essay, and research trainings/competitions including training provided by other organizations such as Toastmasters and participation on debate and parliamentary procedure teams; journaling and writing assignments related to HSHT activities; formal and informal presentations related to HSHT activities; electronic, technology, and social media etiquette; technology training including use of technology for school and work; career-based communication training via job shadowing, information interviews, mock interviews, internships, and volunteer experiences; project based learning; service learning; and soft skills workshops.

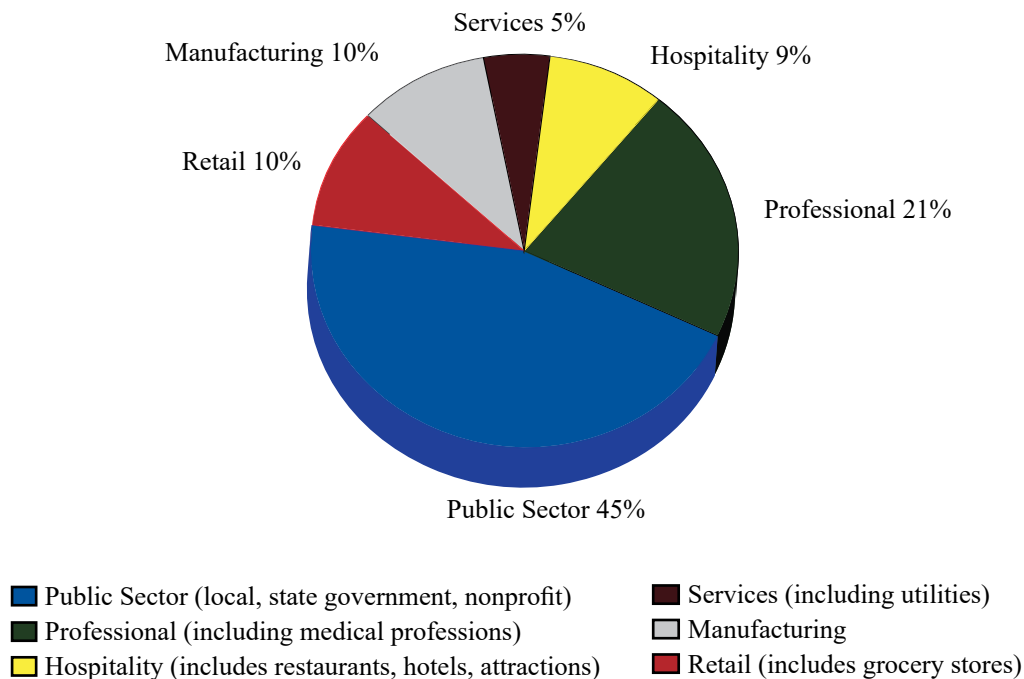


Disabilities Employment Awareness Activities Update

by Joseph D'Souza

In 2018, Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM) activities were made possible due to the hard work of 80 community liaisons working in 62 counties throughout Florida. **Together with over 240 businesses and organization partners, DEAM activities were able to provide career exploration opportunities to over 1,600 participants.** The 2018 DEAM season was launched in September with a morning kickoff in Orlando. Over 100 representatives of the business community, government, and the public sector came together to show their support of employing individuals with disabilities and the importance of DEAM. The DEAM launch was highlighted by keynote speakers Melisa Lewis, a registered nurse at Halifax Health Medical Center; Arlene Shackelford, Lead Human Resource Compliance Advisor for Florida Power & Light/NextEra Energy and Board Member for The Able Trust; and Senator Bill Galvano, Florida Senate President.

Breakdown of Industry Participation in DEAM Activities



An example of one of the numerous DEAM events that took place throughout Florida:

Broward County

Red Smith Foods Inc. is a 45 year-old family-owned and operated company in Davie, Florida. They are a leading provider of pickled snack foods. Students with disabilities from Atlantic Technical College were fortunate enough to tour the Red Smith Foods' state-of-the-art manufacturing facility to learn about the business and careers in manufacturing and distributing.





Make A Difference With Your Donation to The Able Charitable Foundation, the Fundraising & Development Arm of The Able Trust!

There are many ways you can support the goals of making successful employment available to Floridians with disabilities, and a gift of any amount will make a difference. For general contributions in support of our youth, mentoring and grant programs, you may click the "Make a Donation" button on our website, www.AbleCF.org, or mail your gift with the form below to:

The Able Charitable Foundation, 3320 Thomasville Road, Suite 200, Tallahassee, Florida, 32308-7906

Tax Deductible Donation Amount (\$): _____

Cash, Check or Credit Card Donations are Accepted. Please make checks payable to The Able Charitable Foundation.

Is this donation (*please check one*):

- To honor someone _____
- In memory of someone _____
- For a special occasion _____

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Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Credit Card Type: _____ Credit Card Number: _____

Credit Card Expiration Date: _____ Credit Card CSV: _____

E-mail: _____

Please add me to The Able Trust's email list mailing list (check one or both).

The Able Charitable Foundation supports The Able Trust's mission to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. Since its establishment, The Able Trust has awarded more than \$41 million in grants to nonprofit agencies throughout Florida for employment-related purposes, enabling thousands of Florida citizens of all ages with disabilities to enter the workforce. The Able Trust youth programs provide career development and transition for thousands of high school students with disabilities, helping to reduce the dropout rate and prepare young adults for life beyond high school.

For more information about The Able Trust visit www.abletrust.org.

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Thank You Arlene Shackelford

by Todd Schimpf



The Able Trust would like to thank Arlene Shackelford for her service and contributions to The Able Trust. In December 2018, Arlene resigned from The Able Trust’s Board of Directors due to her retirement and subsequent move to another state. Arlene has served The Able Trust as a volunteer Board member since 2013. She was appointed by the Governor to that position and brought her extensive business expertise to the work of the Board. Arlene is very passionate about fairness, diversity, inclusion, and engagement, and volunteered her time and energy to support the mission of The Able Trust. She served in various capacities for The Able Trust during her tenure, including chairing The Able Trust’s Ethics, By-Laws and Policies Committee and service as a member of its Grant Committee.

A native of Miami, Arlene is a seasoned human resources professional with more than 30 years of work experience in the airline, banking, and utility industries. She was recognized by *Success Magazine* in 2009 as one of South Florida’s Most Influential and Prominent Black Business Women.

Her broad experience in the human resources field was invaluable as she helped guide The Able Trust for the past five years. Arlene was always quick to help out and had a smile that was infectious. The Board, staff and volunteers at The Able Trust are privileged to have worked with her. The Able Trust would like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude for all that Arlene has helped accomplished. The Able Trust has been fortunate to have benefited from her creative and inspired leadership.

Thank you Arlene.



Corporate Champions

The Able Trust created the award category of “Corporate Champion” to recognize those businesses that support its mission through workforce inclusion policies, welcoming people with disabilities as customers and employees, and through financial support that has exceeded \$100,000 over the years. Darden, Publix, Walt Disney World Resorts, and Wells Fargo have exemplified these traits through a strong commitment to supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce that includes workers with disabilities, and supporting organizations like The Able Trust as it strives to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. The annual support of these organizations has helped sustain Able Trust grant initiatives and other employment-related programs such as Disability Employment Awareness Month in addition to nationally-recognized youth programs such as Florida High School High Tech. The Able Trust is proud to recognize its distinguished list of Corporate Champions.



Sarah Goldman and Whitney Harris Appointed Co-Chairs of The Able Trust Alumni Association

by Todd Schimpf

The Able Trust is excited to announce that Whitney Harris and Sarah Goldman have been appointed Co-Chairs of The Able Trust Alumni Association.

The Alumni Association, established by The Able Trust in 2015, was created to increase communication between past program participants and The Able Trust. The Alumni Association is dedicated to actively supporting The Able Trust's mission of being a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment.

"I am excited by the opportunity to work with Whitney and help shape the Alumni Association," stated Sarah. "My participation with The Able Trust helped give me confidence and opened a lot of doors for me. The Able Trust has changed my life and the lives of thousands of Florida teens with disabilities. I look forward to helping others with disabilities make similar discoveries."

"It is a pleasure to join my dear friend Sarah on the leadership team of The Able Trust's Alumni Association," stated Whitney. "To be an alumnus of The Able Trust programs has helped me in many ways. The Able Trust has exposed me to many incredible leaders in the disability community. As I have grown into a leader, I appreciate any opportunity to help others realize their potential."

Sarah's life with cerebral palsy and Whitney's with a physical disability has been about overcoming barriers and not letting those challenges stop them from achieving their goals.



Sarah Goldman

Sarah got her start with The Able Trust through the Florida Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). The experience of the YLF gave her insights into herself and her potential. She realized she could have a meaningful career and self-reliant future. Sarah has a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in social work and has used both her education and personal challenges to advocate for others with disabilities. Sarah represented the United States as an ambassador at the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing and in 2014, she was appointed to serve on the Governor's Commission on Jobs for Floridians with Disabilities. Since then, Sarah has continued advocating for individuals with disabilities by contributing to policy initiatives within the Florida Legislature. Sarah is currently the District and Legislative Aide for Representative Ben Diamond. Sarah has a passion for helping individuals with disabilities find their voice and recognize their strengths and gifts to use to impact the world.



Whitney Harris

Whitney is also a homegrown youth leader that got her start in 2007 at the YLF. Through resources that were presented to her during that first Forum, Whitney was able to become a client of the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). With the help of VR and the growing team of friends she met through giving back as a volunteer to the YLF, she attended Pensacola State College before eventually finishing her Bachelor's Degree at St. Petersburg College. Whitney has earned many opportunities, including running an internship program for the Florida Chamber Foundation and serving on the National Association of Youth Leadership Forums, the Florida Independent Living Council, the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living, and the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. Whitney is currently the Comptroller for the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology. She recently began her Master's Degree in Nonprofit Management through the University of Central Florida and hopes to one day run a nonprofit that helps youth with disabilities in the same way that The Able Trust helped her.

"We are excited to have Whitney and Sarah as part of the leadership team for the Alumni Association," said Dr. Susanne Homant, president and CEO of The Able Trust. "They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to help continue the growth of the Alumni Association. Whitney's and Sarah's skill sets complement each other, which will only make the leadership team that much stronger."

For more information on the Alumni Association or to join, visit www.abletrust.org/about-us/able-trust-alumni-association.

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Memorial Gifts

There are many ways for you to make a gift in remembrance of someone special that will have meaningful significance for years to come. Here are a few options to consider:

Make a Deductible Gift and Receive Life Income

You may wish to make a memorial gift while providing current life income for yourself. If your memorial gift is made to fund a charitable remainder trust, you can receive income monthly, quarterly or annually. You receive a charitable deduction for your gift this year and avoid paying capital gains tax on the sale of your appreciated assets. The remainder passes to us as a gift in memory of your loved one. Please contact us for more information on charitable trust plans.

A Memorial Gift of Cash or Property

A gift of cash is one of the simplest ways to remember your loved one or friend. You receive a tax deduction for the value of your gift to The Able Trust. Please designate the person you wish to remember and the best way that we can honor them. If you are making a memorial gift of non-cash property, your deduction may depend on the type of property proposed for gifting. Please call us to discuss the treatment of your gift and the best way to transfer your property to us.

Contributions are deductible according to applicable IRS guidelines. The Able Charitable Foundation and The Able trust are nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations and in compliance with the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act.

Coming EVENTS & MEETINGS

March 20

*Developmental Disability
Awareness Day
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL*

March 20 - 21

*Able Trust Board of Directors
Meetings
Tallahassee, FL*

March 24 - 29

*Children's Week
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL*

April 4

*Regional Jeanie Amendola Speech
and Research Competition
Golden Eagle Country Club
Tallahassee, FL*

April 5

*Regional Jeanie Amendola Speech
and Research Competition
Veterans Memorial Park
Gainesville, FL*

April 12

*Regional Jeanie Amendola Speech
and Research Competition
Celebration Town Hall
Celebration, FL*

April 13

*Regional Jeanie Amendola Speech
and Research Competition
Miami, FL*