

Message from the President, Amanda's Success Story, Evening Stars, and more!

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March 2019  
News

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Dear Friends:

This month, AccessAbility is as busy as ever empowering to individuals achieve their full vocational potential and become integrated members of our greater community. This month we bring the story of Amanda, who found a job in the community that was the perfect match to support her passion for crafting. We also bring you the story of Trisha, who was able to reconnect and provide a better example for her daughter because of her involvement with Project Connect.

Thank you to all the generous community members, current and former team members, and friends and family members that continue to volunteer for AccessAbility event after event! We would be unable to provide these life-changing services without them. We invite individuals from all sectors and all walks of life to share their time and talents with our individuals served. If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering in any capacity at AccessAbility, please contact Jacki Gale at [jgale@accessability.org](mailto:jgale@accessability.org).

Although summer may seem a long way off, we are gearing up for our 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Rockin' 5K and Walk-n-Roll on June 8<sup>th</sup> at North Mississippi Regional Park! This annual event includes a

5k run, walk, or roll, a light lunch, and a live concert by Jake Nelson Music. Early bird pricing is in effect for this event until March 22, 2019 and you can register [here](#).

Thank you again. Our organizational success wouldn't be possible without the support of our strong community members!

Sincerely,

Michael J. Krebsbach, MBA, CPA

President & CEO

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## Amanda Finds the Perfect Job!



A cornerstone of AccessAbility's programming is assisting individuals to find vocational opportunities that their needs and interests. One such success story is that of Amanda L.

Amanda came to AAI in 2017 for help finding vocational opportunities. She found success working on AAI's production floor doing packaging and assembly work. Amanda enjoyed her work and enjoyed making friends in the process. However, Amanda wants to further challenge her vocational abilities by finding a job in the greater community.

Amanda, despite having severely limited use of the left side of her body due to a stroke and a brain tumor, is a skilled bead crafter, and even sells her beadwork at local craft fairs. She worked with her case manager and AAI's job developer to find a job in the community that would incorporate her love of beading. Amanda found the perfect fit at Joanne Fabrics! She started out doing stock

work, and is currently learning cashier/computer operations. The store manager works closely with Amanda so that eventually she will do all the same tasks as the other store employees.

Amanda keeps in close contact with her AAI job developer and case manager. She receives regular text messages, phone calls, and in-person visits to help with vocational reminders and additional training, if necessary. Both of her AAI team members are incredibly impressed with Amanda's vocational achievements and her ability to overcome barriers.

We look forward to Amanda's future vocational and crafting success!

(Photo: Amanda shows off her great beadwork!)

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## Trisha's Journey to "Normal"



Project Connect works with each person's individual situation to best meet their needs—including those with unique work requirements due to current involvement with the criminal justice system.

Trisha was able to serve the rest of her prison sentence on work release. However, there were very few work opportunities in her county of commit, so she was allowed to come to the Twin Cities to serve the rest of her sentence where work is more plentiful.

However, Trisha said, "Being let out on work release is terrifying and stressful. Finding a job with a felony is concerning. This is why so many people end up back in jail after they are let out, there are a lot of obstacles to returning the community."

One of AccessAbility's housing partners referred Trisha to AccessAbility. Trisha said she was relieved when she found out she would not only receive immediate work opportunities in AAI's social enterprise

businesses, but she would also receive educational opportunities to bolster her resume like earning her forklift operations and OSHA 10 certifications.

She said participating in AccessAbility's Project Connect has been beneficial for vocational and educational purposes, but has also allowed her to reconnect with her 7-year-old daughter.

“Things are more normal for her since I’ve come to AccessAbility,” Trisha said. “She knows I am working, and she gets to see me living in a house instead of behind a partition. She knows I go to church in the regular community. She sees me in regular clothes. In her mind, things are going back to being ok.”

Trisha will graduate from Project Connect in the coming weeks, and will return to the regular community completely. She said she is interested in finding a job utilizing her forklift and OSHA training, and said she is very optimistic about the job opportunities available as a women interested in the warehousing and construction industry.

We are proud of Trisha for her current success, and look forward to hearing about her life after AAI in a future newsletter!



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## **SHIRLEY'S 50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY!**

Shirley has been coming to AccessAbility's Day Training and Habilitation programs since 1968! Shirley works in AAI's in-house social enterprise business doing a variety of jobs. Outside of work, she thoroughly enjoys attending AccessAbility's Evening Stars events-- especially the Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day meals. She also likes to go out to eat at Applebee's, to do puzzles, and to watch sports, especially the MN Vikings!

Congrats on this great achievement Shirley!

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### **The Month of February in Pictures**



**Top Left:** Minnesota State Senator Eric Pratt visited the MRF during Project Connect's Open House on February 15th. Senator Pratt is pictured with Vice-President of Programs, Brad Janowski.

**Top Right:** More beadwork from person-served, Amanda.

**Bottom Left:** The Evening Stars Valentine's Dinner was a success!

**Bottom Right:** Trisha talks to visitors during Project Connect's open house on February 15th.



Thanks to

## OUR FEBRUARY EVENING STARS VOLUNTEERS

A HUGE thank you to Lynn Nouwen, Lorraine John, Stormi Oman, Jayden Lewis, Barb Kleckner, Darren Jones, Tyler Jones, Maddie Jones, Haylee Jones, and current and former team members Katie Swirtz, Amy Jones, Troy Spaulding, Kelsey Gale, Jacki Gale, Chelsa Olson, and Jackie Welle!

AAI is grateful for our loyal and generous community, team, and family members!

### UPCOMING EVENTS:



Evening Stars

**BINGO NIGHT**

Thursday, March 7th, 2019

6pm-7pm

\$5.00 per person-served

\$5.00 for staff members/guests

**360 Hoover St NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413**

Are you feeling lucky? Come join us on March 7th to take a chance at winning BINGO. A variety of Bingo games will be played. Refreshments will be served.

**Registration is required and due by 3pm on Wednesday, March 6th.**

Please contact Amy J at (612)331-5958 or [ajones@accessability.org](mailto:ajones@accessability.org) for more information!

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Join us for the 11th Annual

**[Rockin' 5K and Walk-n-Roll!](#)**

Saturday, June 9, 2019

9am-Noon

North Mississippi Regional Park

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# SAVE THE DATE

for  
AccessAbility, Inc's 2nd Annual Gala

"VIVA LAS VEGAS"

**10.18.2019**

Delta Hotels by Marriott  
1330 Industrial Blvd NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55413

For more information contact Ruth:  
(612)331-5958 or [rglaeser@accessability.org](mailto:rglaeser@accessability.org)



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