



SERVING CHILDREN & ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

# Hand Print

Summer 2011

Helping Hand Center is a nonprofit serving children and adults with developmental disabilities in suburban Cook County and greater Chicagoland communities since 1955. We offer a range of programs and services, including outpatient therapies, early intervention, a school for children with autism, high school transition, residential homes, employment services, adult developmental training, and special recreation programs.

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## Special Recreation Program Participants

From left to right: Joe Hart (behind podium), Chris Novak, Anne Schmitz, Kelly Krause, Deon Sims, Lupe Villa, Richard Mercer, Matt Hoffman, Lisa Manata, David Ferris, John Finger, Joe Shaughnessy, Tim Van Beveren, Linda Chopp, Steve Shubat, Peggy Jean Neiweem, Casey Kufel, Mary Beth Webster.

## Special Recreation Celebrates Achievements

On June 17th, Helping Hand Center had its first annual Special Recreation Banquet where over 100 participants of the program and their families came out for what was a truly memorable night. The evening started off with a dinner provided by Moondance Diner and desserts made by participants of Special Recreation programs. Following was a performance by the Fantastic Fine Arts program titled "The Six Days of Special Recreation". Awards were given out to all participants of Special Recreation programs to honor their achievements for the past year. Lisa Manata, who participates in five different programs and who has not missed a program all year, was awarded "Special Recreation Participant of the Year" for her dedication to all programs and the positive attitude she always displays.

# A note from the Executive Director

## “It’s The Climb”

Everyday at Helping Hand Center I see children, adults, families, and staff who remind me of the Miley Cyrus song, “The Climb”:

*There’s always going to be another mountain...  
always going to be an uphill battle...  
it’s not about how fast I get there...it’s about the climb.  
The struggles I’m facing...  
sometimes they knock me down but I’m not breaking...  
keep moving...keep climbing...*

Each one of our clients has his or her own struggles, uphill battles, and mountains to climb in reaching their highest level of independence. Helping Hand Center staff members work tirelessly to provide resources and tools for the climb. Family members and guardians provide the support needed to continue all of this hard work. Our clients get knocked down, frustrated, and tired. But with the help of families, guardians, and staff they keep moving and climbing to reach their goals for independence.

Helping Hand Center has its own uphill battles and mountains to climb as well. Illinois State funding cuts, the economy, and overall increases in the “cost of doing business” are just a few. At times we feel knocked down, but we do not break. We cannot – too many clients and families rely on us to keep moving and climbing. So how do we do it? Just like our clients, we stay focused, keep trying, and work together with others to reach our goals. Thankfully there are many who help us; Community businesses who provide sponsorships and grants, individual donors who give money selflessly to support our programs and services, amazing staff who work diligently to provide quality services, volunteers who offer us their time and expertise, and Helping Hand Family Association who raise funds through dues and fundraising events.

You can help, too. Refer someone to Helping Hand Center, attend a fundraising event, join the Family Association (just \$35 a year!), or give a donation. These are just a few of the ways you can help make “the climb” a little easier.

Recently a family dropped by Helping Hand Center to give a donation because they wanted to give back for the services their son had received a few years ago. While they were standing at the front desk we overheard the 10 year old son say, “Every time I pass this place I say, ‘That’s where I learned to climb!’”. There is a great deal going on at Helping Hand Center — come join us so that we can help many more clients with their climb.

Sincerely,



Mary Beth Hepp



Mary Beth Hepp  
Executive Director



# Swing Fore The Hand 27th Annual Golf Classic

On July 18th, Riverside Golf Course welcomed over 75 golfers in support of the Helping Hand Foundation. The outing featured the longest drive and closest to the pin contests won by Steve Veroeven and Scott Wright. The hole in one games offered 3 outstanding prizes sponsored by Ettleson Cadillac-Buick-GMC Inc. At the end of the day the scoreboard revealed the foursome with the best score...check out their picture (on right)! None of the days successes would have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors. Thank you to all sponsors, golfers, and volunteers for supporting the mission of Helping Hand in serving individuals with developmental disabilities.



1st Place Winners  
From left to right: Dan Koutris, Bob Ackermann, John Maas, Andy Ackermann.

## Thank you to our 2011 Golf Classic Sponsors!

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### Hole Sponsors

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## Pace can help get you where you need to go

Pace operates a fixed route bus system, which is entirely accessible to people with disabilities. For those who are enrolled in Circuit Breaker, fixed route trips are free! Other people with disabilities pay only 85¢.

Pace also provides pre-arranged origin-to-destination service for persons with disabilities who are eligible through the RTA. Pace's ADA Paratransit Service operates in the six-county Northeast Illinois region, including Chicago, and costs \$3.00 per ride. For people with disabilities, fixed route is less expensive than paratransit for getting around the community and gives people the freedom to travel without arranging a ride in advance.

Visit [pacebus.com](http://pacebus.com) or call 847-364-PACE for more information.





Erin Jacobson (right) volunteers her time teaching clients how to live healthier lifestyles. Joe Corbitt (left) participating in fitness activities.

## Moving Towards a Healthier Lifestyle in Adult Day Programming

Over the years, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed that there is a high prevalence of obesity and diabetes among disabled populations. Therefore, five years ago they decided to fund a program called the National Center of Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD). This program was to provide an array of free resources to organizations like Helping Hand as well as schools, families, and friends to safely educate those with disabilities on how to get involved in sports and exercise, and lead a healthy lifestyle. One of the many programs offered through the NCPAD is the “14 weeks to a healthier you!”. Staff from the adult day program, as well as residential staff had the opportunity to attend a free day service about the program, which included two large binders with a step-by-step plan and DVDs which correspond with each week. Each week includes a new topic relating to exercise, nutrition, heart health, etc. Past fitness team lead Erin Jacobson, and new team lead Ashley Colleti decided that this would be the perfect program to implement throughout the summer. Erin recently left to move forward with her plans to become an occupational therapist, so the NCPAD gave her the ability to come back to Helping Hand and be a part of a beneficial volunteer program. With the full help of Ashley, she and Erin began the plan the first week of June. The clients involved are having a blast and feel that this program is giving them the opportunity to move towards a healthier lifestyle. Once the summer is over, Ashley is hoping to continue the plan with a new group of clients to continue the great opportunity given to Helping Hand by the NCPAD! For more information about the NCPAD visit [www.ncpad.org](http://www.ncpad.org).

## The School for Children with Autism Puts On Performance

On June 16th, the all-school performance was a huge success! Each classroom and all the students worked hard to complete an entertaining and fun performance to “show-off” for their parents and family members. In Classroom A, the students dressed up as ingredients and sang the “Make a Pizza” song. Andrew Celio, classroom A’s teacher commented, “The performance was awesome and each classroom did a great job with transitioning between the groups.” Classroom B acted out the Little Red Dog, an adaptation of the Little Red Hen play. Anna Marquadt, the classroom’s teacher stated, “The play helped emphasize the importance of sharing and teamwork to achieve successful results.” The high school age students in classroom C performed a “Music throughout the Ages” tribute. The students expressed their thoughts through speech, song, and augmentative communication devices. Teacher Anna Rodney thought, “It was a touching performance that helped demonstrate each student’s growth and maturity both academically and socially.” Finally, classroom D, the youngest students, sang the “Five Little Ducks” song.

“The song targeted counting and direction following that we could also carry over in the classroom,” stated teacher Kathleen Madden. Each student wore a duck shirt and finished the song by jumping in a pool. The evening was filled with proud parents and finished off with a reception where the cookies were donated by Turano Baking Company.



# Fenwick Hockey Team Signs Up to Volunteer

Last year, on Tag Day 2010, 35 Fenwick Hockey Team members volunteered their time to collect donations for Helping Hand Center. We're excited to announce that they're back to lend a helping hand this year. Wendy Smith-Fleming, Fenwick Volunteer Organizer, stated, "We want to develop a long-term relationship by providing service to the organization and giving more visibility to Helping Hand."

Hockey Team members have the opportunity to volunteer at events, work with the after hours Special Recreation program, or sign up for residential home maintenance projects. We have even developed a Spokesperson Training Program where students and parents can become a spokesperson for Helping Hand Center. Students may also choose to organize their own fundraiser.

Joe Hart, Helping Hand Center's Supervisor of Special Recreation, is a graduate of Fenwick High School and is excited to organize, train and involve the students. "I volunteered at Helping Hand Center when I was in high school and that's what got me interested and working here today. I'm excited to involve and mentor these students," said Joe.



Paul O'Toole, Fenwick Hockey Team member, volunteers his time at The Helping Hand Thrift Shop in Brookfield.

## Mark your 2011 Calendars

### August 1-5

Summer Vacation  
School for Children  
with Autism Closed

### August 19

6pm - 9pm  
Kohl's Activity Night

### September 5

Labor Day Holiday  
Helping Hand Center Closed

### September 10

Helping Hand Center  
Donation Day

### September 16

6pm - 9pm  
Kohl's Activity Night

### September 18

11am - 3pm  
Family Picnic  
Walker Park, Burr Ridge

### September 28

7pm  
Family Association Meeting

### October 5

8:30am - 10:30am  
Family Association Staff  
Appreciation Breakfast

### October 16

1pm - 3pm  
Donor Appreciation Tea

### October 21

6pm - 9pm  
Kohl's Activity Night

## A Special Day For Special People

The School for Children with Autism students enjoyed a fun-filled carnival at the 21st annual Norm Meyer Special Day for Special People. The students and staff were invited to participate in this day which included carnival rides, food, face painting and a petting zoo. The event was established by Norm Meyer, the original owner of Midway Entertainment, a traveling amusement park business. The Orland Park Lions Club dedicated one day of the Orland Days specifically to continue this cause. Becca Palmer, an individual teaching assistant commented, "It was

great to see all the kids applying what they have learned with the other schools and groups." This year, 1,500 kids and adults in the community participated.



## Employment Services Department Receives Award

In May, Helping Hand Center's Employment Services Department was honored by the LaGrange Area Department of Special Education (LADSE) for their ongoing work with students with disabilities from local high schools. Three awards were presented to Helping Hand Center in recognition of our training and employment opportunities provided through SubCon Packing and Assembly, the Helping Hand Thrift Shop in Brookfield, and the Hand Stand Concession Stand. Each of these facilities serves as a training site where students can gain on-the-job experience and work skills, as well as earn a steady pay check.

Helping Hand's Employment Services Department works with over twenty students from local high schools, each of whom is preparing for graduation and transitioning into the workforce. Ideally, through the services provided, students will be able to gain independence and find employment in the community.

Aside from vocational training and employment opportunities, through our Building Bridges to the Future grant, Helping Hand is also able to provide the parents and families of transition students information regarding Individualized Education Plans, adult service providers, community resources, and assistance with public benefits.



Employment Services Department

Front Row: (left to right) Courtney Cooper, Krystina Monteleone, Natalie Maurin. Back Row: (from left to right) Russell Stovall, Beth Hooton, Brian Blankenship, Rodney Ervin.



Linda Chopp receives a gold medal in the standing long jump.

## Special Olympics Team Takes Home The Gold

After finishing up a very successful basketball season, Helping Hand Center's brand new Special Olympics team, The Wildcats, continued to excel when they competed in Track and Field. Nineteen athletes competed in forty different events at the Area 5 Spring Games at North Central College in Naperville. Nine athletes (Deon Sims, Kevin Dahmer, Lisa Manata, Kim Thomas, Chris Novak, David DeVeno, Mary Beth Webster, Kevin Finch, and Linda Chopp) all won gold medals and qualified to participate in the state tournament at Illinois State University on June 10th and 11th. At the state tournament, Linda Chopp won a gold medal in the standing long jump, Mary Beth Webster won a gold medal in the 100 meter walk, and Chris Novak won a silver medal in the softball throw.

The Wildcats have recently started their softball season and competed in the Area 5 tournament on July 24th.

# We Will Soon Be Opening the Doors To Our New Residential Home

Construction is set to finish this September on our new residential home in LaGrange Highlands. The home offers 24-hour supervision and accommodates eight adults with developmental disabilities. All of the adults will have the luxury of having their own rooms.

This is the second home we have built from scratch and brings the total number of homes we oversee to eleven. Currently, we provide a range of services from independent living to full-time supervision for over 60 clients.

For more information about the new home or how you can contribute, please call Beth Patterson at 708-352-3580 x 228.



Helping Hand's Newest Residential Home  
Located in LaGrange Highlands.

We can't thank the following donors enough for their thoughtful donations, gifts, and construction discounts. Our donors generosity is truly helping turn our house into a home.

We are so grateful to have friends as special as...

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Gifts continue to come in. Visit us at [www.hhcenter.org/news-events](http://www.hhcenter.org/news-events) as we will continue to update the list of our donors.



SERVING CHILDREN &  
ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

9649 West 55th Street  
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www.hhcenter.org

## Your gift provides...

a place to call home	futures of independence	expanded job opportunities	special recreation
\$500	\$250	\$100	\$50
			

Any gift will help an individual with a developmental disability achieve their highest level of success!

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