

## GOVERNOR SIGNS ABLE ACT LEGISLATION

Governor Mike Pence held a ceremonial bill signing for SB 11, legislation to enable the ABLE Act in Indiana, on March 21, 2016. Several self-advocates from around the state attended the ceremony.

The bill provides for the creation of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Board that will work to establish a qualified ABLE program in Indiana. This will allow individuals and families to make contributions to an ABLE account for qualified disability expenses that will benefit an eligible individual with a disability.

Both Vice President Shawn Fulton and President Melody Cooper were asked to testify on the importance of this bill.

"The passing of the ABLE Act means a lot to me because I know I can save up money and not have to spend it right away, and it will help our DJ business," said Fulton.

### View

[ABLE Act Bill Signing Facebook Album](#)

[Video of Bill Signing Ceremony, with Comments from Kim Dodson](#)

[Governor Pence Signs ABLE Act – WISH TV](#)



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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



As Disability Awareness Month ends, we are proud of all the good things our chapters have been doing to celebrate and raise awareness during the month of March. This is always a good month to reflect on how far we've come, but also realize that there is still so much to do so that people with disabilities are fully heard and understood.

We had self-advocate chapters who hosted mayors and legislators, put on events, passed out materials at local libraries, held dine-to-donate fundraisers and much more.

In addition, self-advocates have been able to use their voices at the state level. Over 100 self-advocates from all over Indiana attended the annual Valentine's Day at the State House event on February 11. We shared the message of the ABLE Act with our legislators and government officials, and thanked them for their work.

In addition, SAI Vice President, Shawn Fulton and I both had the chance to testify on ABLE Act legislation that would allow people with disabilities and their families to set aside money in special ABLE accounts. On March 21, Governor Pence signed the ABLE Act into law at a bill signing at the statehouse. Many self-advocates and families attended.

In April, Shawn Fulton and I will have the chance to represent SAI at the Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. We look forward to learning more about disability legislation and having the opportunity to speak to our legislators on Capitol Hill.

In honor of Disability Awareness Month, I encourage you to keep using your voices to produce change in your communities and in our state!



## #60Stories60Years

To help celebrate The Arc of Indiana's 60th Anniversary, they are gathering and sharing 60 photos and stories featuring people with I/DD, their families, and caregivers over a period of 60 days.

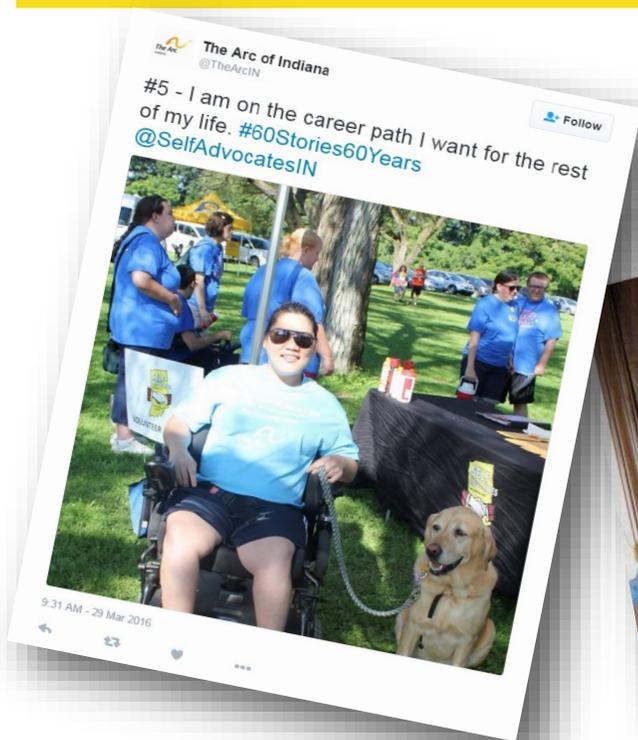
We all have a story to tell and The Arc would love to share yours!

To join in the #60Stories60Years project here is all you need to do:

Email a photo and your story to: [thearc@arcind.org](mailto:thearc@arcind.org)

Or, mail your photo and story to:  
The Arc of Indiana  
107 N Pennsylvania Street, Suite 800  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Attn: #60Stories60Years

Please be sure to include:  
Your Name, Phone Number, and  
Email address





# EnABLE US TO BE YOUR VALENTINE!

## 2016 Valentine's Day at the Statehouse

By LeAnn Dusenberry

On Thursday, February 11, 2016, self-advocate groups from around Indiana went to the Indiana Statehouse and passed out Valentine's Day cards. The theme was "EnABLE Us To Be Your Valentine." Over 100 self-advocates participated. Groups delivered valentine's to Governor Mike Pence, Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann, Auditor Suzanne Crouch, Superintendent Glenda Ritz, Treasurer Kelly Mitchell, and Secretary of State Connie Lawson, as well as the FSSA and DDRS offices. SAI chapters also delivered Valentine's to legislators from their own regions. Everyone had a great time and the legislators really enjoyed having us visit.

# Decatur Co. Self-Advocates Celebrate Disability Awareness Month

Greensburg Mayor Dan Manus made an official proclamation in honor of March Disability Awareness Month. The mayor also toured Decatur Developmental Industries, courtesy of the Decatur County Self-Advocates group. The group hoped to spread awareness and inclusion during their activities. The visit was a part of their month long celebration of Disability Awareness Month. The mayor's proclamation and visit were published in a story in the Greensburg Daily News. You can read the full story about the visit and learn more about Decatur County Self-Advocates here: [Disability Awareness Month](#)



**YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE**

Remember to Register to Vote by **Monday, April 4** if you want to vote in the Indiana Primary on Tuesday, May 3. This is your chance to be heard! You can register online at: [WWW.INDIANAVOTERS.IN.GOV](http://WWW.INDIANAVOTERS.IN.GOV)

Be on the look out for more information about SAI's 'Count Me In' Campaign!

## SELF-ADVOCATES SPEAK TO NURSING STUDENTS

On Tuesday, March 22 a group of self-advocates travelled to Purdue University to speak to a class of nursing students. The panel consisted of Self-Advocates of Indiana President Melody Cooper, Treasurer Nicki Hinkle, and My Life My Choice Interviewer Denny Allman.

Self-Advocates took turns telling their stories and then the nursing students and professor took turns asking questions. Many of the questions were about healthcare accessibility for people with disabilities.

The panelists shared the positive and negative experiences they have had with healthcare professionals, and gave suggestions on how to respect and communicate with people who have disabilities. The most common answer from the panelists was to 'show people with disabilities the same respect you would anyone else.'

One nursing student said "[the panelists] provided a great learning opportunity as a student nurse and I will use the information in my practice."

**PURDUE**  
UNIVERSITY



# AROUND INDIANA



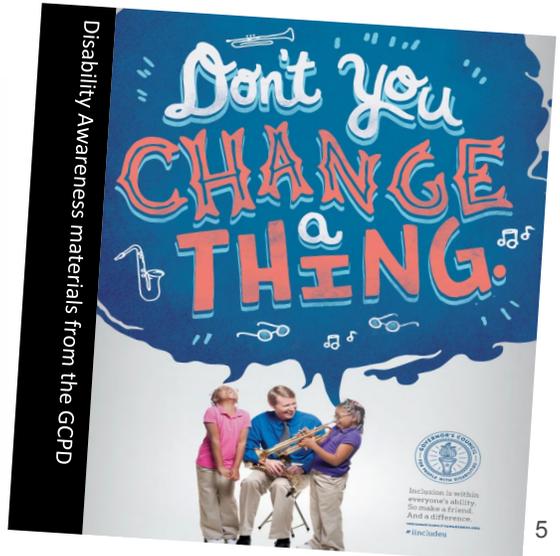
Awesome Westside Advocates hosted a Disability Awareness Booth at the Brownsburg Public Library. They passed out bookmarks and information.



Mosaic and United Voices for Change Self-Advocacy Group hosted a Discover the Possibilities Event for the community at the Vigo Public Library.



SAI Board Members passed out popcorn and water and a disability awareness message to St. Patrick's Day parade-goers and The Bank of Indianapolis.



# SAI BOARD APPROVES NEW LOGO

By Melody Cooper

At the March 17 SAI Board of Directors Meeting, board members voted unanimously to adopt a new logo for SAI. The logo was designed by Rob Coco, Special Events Manager at The Arc of Indiana. I believe that the logo represents what we stand for and believe in, speaking for our rights and using our voices. The logo really stands out and shines. We will be updating SAI materials and our website soon to reflect the new changes. If you need a copy of the new logo, please email [acircle@arcind.org](mailto:acircle@arcind.org)



## SAVE THE DATE

**MAY 18**

Statewide Meeting

*Location TBD*

**JUNE 15**

Board Meeting

*Location TBD*

**JULY 15**

SAI Picnic

*Eagle Creek Park*

*10 AM-3 PM*

**SEPTEMBER 14**

SAI/DSPIN Conference

*Location TBD*

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