



Reaching Out

A Publication of By Their Side, Inc.

Spring 2015

Celebrating 50 Years!



In 1965, By Their Side’s founding parents came together to address shared concerns about who would advocate for their sons and daughters with a disability after they were gone. With guidance from parents on the Board, over the years By Their Side has evolved from volunteer visitors into a professional advocacy service monitoring health, safety, specific advocacy concerns of parents, and opportunities reflecting preferences and life enrichment.

Save the Date

**“Celebrate the Journey and Plan for the Future”
Saturday November 7, 2015 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
Olive Grove Restaurant in Linthicum.**

Enjoy guest speakers, a delicious buffet lunch including Olive Grove’s famous crab cake, and a champagne toast (courtesy of the Board of Directors.) Learn the results of our multi-agency and parent focus group, **“Issues and Resources for Families Planning for the Future of an Only Child.”** The issues resonate for families of all sizes. **Look for your registration form in the Fall Newsletter.**

Guests are always welcome.

Have a memory of MTRC’s journey to share? Please send it to us! Thank you.



International Community Education

At the invitation of the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitor’s Program in Maryland, on April 24, 2015 By Their Side representatives met with a delegation from the United Arab Emirates to share best practices of non-government organizations on the topic of disability rights and advocacy.

In UAE countries, vocational programs teach skills such as jewelry making and livestock management, and efforts are underway to increase community presence. Sharia Law appoints the eldest brother or other relative to provide care after parents are unable. The government provides (Continued on reverse)



By Their Side’s Judy Volkman, Tracy Wright, and Kathy Vecchioni meet with United Arab Emirates Delegation.

Lifelong Advocates for Marylanders with Developmental Disabilities

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International Community Education, Cont.

\$1700/month to relatives to subsidize care. Programs to support independent living are not available. Individuals without relatives live in large congregate housing.

By Their Side Board members Judy Volkman and Tracy Wright, and Executive Director Kathy Vecchioni, discussed why parents started By Their Side 50 years ago, challenges faced, and how the program operates today. They explained that because the service is family funded, advocacy can remain focused solely on the advocacy needs and preferences of the individual. They also discussed the importance of advocacy in assuring rights and self direction. Asked if siblings are receptive to the advocate's involvement after parents are gone, they explained that siblings typically welcome their By Their Side Advocate as a resource and partner to help advocate within an unfamiliar service system.

"Achieving a Better Life Experience"

The ABLE Maryland Act was signed into law by Governor Hogan on May 12, 2015. A task force will now develop Maryland's ABLE program, so people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families can create savings accounts to pay for disability related expenses without jeopardizing benefits. Look for public input hearings in coming months.



HOLD THE DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2015

BWI Hilton/Linthicum Heights

Join By Their Side for the first ever

Maryland Conference for Siblings

of People with intellectual/Developmental Disabilities.

Hear thought provoking speakers, gain knowledge, enjoy an opportunity to connect, and more.

Tracks for siblings of all ages.

Hosted by the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, Arc Maryland, and By Their Side.

For information, visit MDSibs.com

New Advocate Update

We wish **Marilyn Folus** the very best as she retires. A By Their Side Advocate for 12 years, Marilyn offered a wealth of experience and compassion to those she served. Thank you, Marilyn!

Kari Borgealt, BA, Montgomery County. Kari was a service coordinator/supervisor for 20 years, and is a coach for individuals in Fredrick.

Ann Brady, BA, Anne Arundel County. Ann's extensive experience includes management of residential and medical day care services.

Cathy Raggio, M.Ed., Southern region. Cathy's experience includes Cabinet Secretary for the MD Department of Disabilities, and Executive Director of both MD Developmental Disabilities Council and Independence Now.

Candice Tritch, MA, Baltimore. Candice has 30 years of experience as service coordinator and teaches in her studio, Dance Alchemy.

Welcome New Board Members

By Their Sides' Board of Directors sets our direction and provides the wind in our sails.

Joan Chevalier is a linguist teaching Russian at the Naval Academy. As a member of By Their Side's Sibling Panel, Joan says her interest in language likely arose from communicating with her brother.

George Failla, Jr. Esq. served as Deputy Director of the MD Department of Disabilities and brings a wealth of knowledge about opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities. He has worked extensively with the MD Department of Education.

Mary Scott is a By Their Side parent and is active on councils that develop community capacity. As Transitioning Youth coordinator for Baltimore Co. Public Schools, Mary helps families prepare for life after the education system.

Judy Volkman joined the Board in 2014. A By Their Side parent and retired professional, Judy worked with Tracy Wright on Arc Maryland's Ask Me Project, where they assisted individuals to evaluate their services. Judy also worked in residential services.

Tracy Wright joined the Board in 2014. Tracy's work with Arc Maryland on various projects allows her to promote the self advocacy of people in services.