

ASPIRE!

"Labels can only confine. Aspire to be undefinable."

- Colin Wright

A publication of United Disability Services

Summer 2023

Keeper of the Goal





Enhancing Lives through Community-Based Employment

A Message from Brian Thomas, President/CEO

Advice to Job Seekers

You, or someone close to you, may be a person with a developmental disability who is considering working in competitive, community-based employment. If so, here are a few things you may want to consider:

- Working regularly and earning a paycheck can be a very rewarding experience and can build self-esteem.
- A job is a great place to increase connections and to make new friends and acquaintances.
- Working to earn money might affect other benefits you are receiving, and this can be complicated. Before taking a job with competitive pay, you should consider having a benefits analysis performed, to help determine the impact it will have on your other income. UDS can help you with this analysis.
- Most people have more than one job during their working career. Don't expect that your first job will be the only job you will ever hold. Your interests, and the opportunities available to you, might change over time, leading you to a new job later.
- Organizations like UDS will help you identify your interests, develop job-seeking skills, and assist with outreach to potential employers. As needed, we can follow up with supports once you're on the job. We are here to help you achieve your goals!

Advice to Employers

Perhaps you are a business owner or manager who would consider hiring persons with disabilities. This can bring numerous benefits to your organization. Here are some advantages to taking this important step:

Positive Team Dynamics. Including individuals with developmental disabilities in your workforce fosters an inclusive and supportive environment. It promotes understanding, empathy and

cooperation among team members. Inclusion can improve overall morale and boost employee engagement.

Good for Business. People with disabilities, as well as their families and friends, often appreciate businesses that embrace inclusivity. It demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility, which may help you attract and retain customers who value that trait.

Diverse Perspectives.

Individuals with developmental disabilities often have unique perspectives and ways of thinking. They can contribute fresh ideas and innovative

solutions to your organization's challenges. Embracing this diversity can enhance creativity and problem-solving within your team.

Increased Productivity. Many people with developmental disabilities are highly motivated and dedicated to their work. They often demonstrate great attention to detail, reliability, and a strong work ethic.

Reveal and Utilize Untapped Talent. Many individuals with developmental disabilities possess valuable skills and talents that are often overlooked. By providing them with employment opportunities, you can tap into a pool of talent that may be underutilized in the job market.

Financial Incentives. Employers who promote an inclusive workforce by hiring people with disabilities may be eligible for tax credits and deductions.

Everyone benefits from an inclusive and supportive work environment, one that provides any necessary accommodations, and offers appropriate training to ensure the success and well-being of all employees, including those with developmental disabilities. UDS is ready to help you "explore, engage and excel" at employing these invaluable members of our community!

Everyone benefits from an inclusive and supportive work environment . . .

Brian

A Family Affair

If you're having fun, you've already won!

Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt. Those words are always spoken during opening ceremonies at Special Olympics competitions. Zach will represent All-Star Training Club by leading The Ohio State University's stadium of athletes in the oath at the upcoming state games in Columbus. During the ceremony they will light the torch, Zach will recite the oath and the games will begin! He is honored and already has it memorized. It is his dream to go beyond state games and participate in Special Olympics World Games someday.

Competition

During his 15 years with All-Star Training Club, which began with track & field, he has earned multiple medals at Special Olympics. Most notably, he's earned a gold medal participating on the ATC flag football team and three gold medals as a member of the state championship soccer team. Zach has played nearly every sport offered by the program and says he enjoys participating because it keeps him "fit and active." Of all the sports offered, basketball is his favorite.

Team Captain

According to Dan Lancianese, All-Star Training Club program

supervisor, "Zach is currently the captain of the soccer team that will be competing at the state championship this summer. He has been one of my main players for team sports and he's a standout golfer." Zach didn't even take a break during the pandemic when ATC sports were suspended. During that time he worked with Dan to create a virtual soccer tutorial, demonstrating tips and basic soccer drills that athletes could easily do at home.



L to R: Bill, Zach, Harley (Zach's therapy dog), Coquette and Ryan are ready for an evening of soccer, sunshine and fun.

Family

Comedian Jerry Seinfeld said, "There's no such thing as fun for the whole family." Zach's family might disagree with that statement. The entire family is actively involved in All-Star Training Club. His dad and brother assist with coaching or as partners in unified sports, willing to help out whenever

and wherever they are needed. Mom makes sure Zach is registered for upcoming sports and is a cheerleader on the sidelines, along with Zach's dog, Harley. Lancianese says, "This family is the epitome of what I envision for All-Star Training Club—a complete family affair!" Mom says that involvement with the program has not only provided Zach with exercise but he has definitely benefited from the socialization and camaraderie provided by the program.

Zach is a proud alum of St. Vincent-St. Mary High School and now works for his local Marc's. He enjoys landscaping and visiting with family members who live in Columbus each time they travel there for Special Olympics. He's an all-star athlete and we are proud to have him on our team.

The UDS All-

Star Training Club provides integrated, competitive sports where everyone, regardless of ability, is encouraged to participate, try new sports and learn new skills. If you'd like to learn more about All-Star Training Club contact **Jeff Campano at 330-762-9755, ext. 233**, or visit **AllStarTrainingClub.org**.

Summer Youth Work Experience Returns

This year's Summer Youth Work Experience is here! It is once again being held at the Akron-Summit County Public Library and provides a means for high schoolers to gain skills through practical work experience. This experience is for students 14 and older who are referred by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. Last year, those working with UDS were able to help the library organize its books and get them back on the shelves. It's a great experience for youth looking to build their resumes while showing they have what it takes to get the job done!

The first session is taking place this month and the second session will begin in July and run through August. The first session is three days a week and the second session is five days per week with students working from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Students also receive a paycheck! UDS thanks Jenn Gorski, assessment specialist, for her role in organizing the groups and helping our youth grow! Gorski is a staff member of the Community Employment Services program, which helps youth and adults prepare for the workforce and develop the skills necessary to find jobs. If you would like more information about summer youth services, contact her at jgorski@udsakron.org.



Borrow some

SUMMERTIME

Fun



Having family and friends over for a birthday party or cookout? Make a splash at your next gathering with one of our water tables or watch as kids jump for joy on our mini trampolines. Whether they splash, slide, ride or roll, summer smiles are guaranteed when you borrow items from the Toy & Resource Center! Stop in become a member today!

TRC Hours:

Tuesday	2-5 p.m.
Wednesday	2-5 p.m.
Thursday	11 a.m.-2 p.m.



PRESENTING SPONSOR:



Welcome:



July 29, 2023

6-9 p.m.

Spins Bowl Akron

2911 E. Waterloo Rd., Akron

OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD FUN FOR EVERYONE!

4 or 5 Bowlers Per Team/\$65 Per Bowler

2 hours of bowling ♦ shoe rental ♦ appetizers/pizza/soft drinks

50/50

Register by Friday, July 21, 2023

RAFFLE

For more information call 330-762-9755, ext. 243

To register or donate go to:

www.UDSAllStars.org

MEDIA SPONSOR:



Benefiting UDS All-Star Training Club and opportunities for integrated sports.

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Thank you!

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- Consumer Outreach Specialist
- Direct Support Professional I
- HR Generalist



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For position descriptions and requirements go to udsakron.org or scan the QR code above.

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UDS is a non-for-profit organization [501(c)(3)] with programs accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

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◆
You can make a difference in the life of someone with a disability by donating today.
To learn more visit: www.udsakron.org/donate



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Volunteer Feature: Carrie Roseberry



After a career as an intervention specialist in the Copley-Fairlawn schools, Carrie found retirement a bit boring. She missed her connections with her students. Thankfully, RSVP, a volunteer network through VANTAGE Aging, connected Carrie to UDS and she now spends Tuesdays and Wednesdays in our Sociabilities program and boredom is never on the schedule. "I enjoy volunteering so much! The staff and consumers have all been so welcoming."

She's learning each person's unique personality and even reunited with a few of her former students who are in

UDS programs. She enjoys working on projects, reading and going on outings with the adults in the program. "The work I do at UDS is just as rewarding as working for a paycheck. I get a paycheck in my soul!" Her favorite part of the day is the enthusiastic greeting she receives when she arrives to volunteer.

Carrie encourages everyone to find a place to volunteer. "You get back so much more than you give."

For information on how you can volunteer in a UDS program, contact **Amy Tubergen** at atubergen@udsakron.org.