

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“The Arc Friendly Action” to elevate those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Clearwater, FL – May 15, 2018 - The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation is collaborating with area businesses to elevate and include individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"The Arc Friendly Action" is a new tool to work hand in hand with area businesses for the betterment of those served by The Arc Tampa Bay, leader in providing services to the intellectually and developmentally disabled in our community. This easily adopted initiative, available to businesses large and small, is designed to stamp out discrimination and inequality.

"The millennial generation is an altruistic group. They seek employment with businesses that are demonstrating social consciousness," stated John Greene, a volunteer with The Arc who formulated the new movement, "The Arc Friendly Action". Greene, the retired President of Agency Distribution for Prudential Financial, recently worked closely with The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation to develop a business plan to raise awareness and standing of the disabled community. "To assist area companies in attraction and retention of this talent base, the millennials, The Arc Tampa Bay is joining ranks to further measurable social change for persons with developmental disabilities," stated Greene. The program will be made available beginning June 15, 2018, and is available to all who express interest.

Participation in "The Arc Friendly Action" begins with defining an emerging leader in a company to act as a "champion." Designated champions will work closely with The Arc to further interest, awareness, education, and inclusion of the developmental population. Topics such as People First Language, Tolerance in the Workplace, and tips for interaction with persons with disabilities will be made available to these business partners. "Unleash the Power" is the motto for recognizing the untapped potential of all persons with disabilities served by The Arc Tampa Bay. Studies continually show people with I/DD have tremendous retention in the work place once given a chance to contribute. Working together with area businesses, unleashing the power to change will happen both within companies and outside in the community.

"The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation is looking forward to honoring area companies that provide safe, inclusive environments for all, and particularly those with intellectual and developmental disabilities," stated Madison Orr Hauenstein, Executive Director of the fundraising arm of The Arc Tampa Bay. "We will be adding a special page to our website to recognize these thought changing leaders utilizing 'The Arc Friendly Action' entitled 'The Company We Keep.' As the corporate landscape changes, so should our approach to engagement," Hauenstein continued. "We will be providing a complete activity map for implementation at any business, regardless of the size and structure."

Nate Freeman, principal at Network People, has already signed on to this endeavor. "I am proud to stand with The Arc Tampa Bay, advocating for those that society might look past. As "The Arc Friendly Action" is so well outlined, implementation at Network People will be fast and

seamless. I've already appointed my Champion for the occasional updates and encouragement from The Arc. As most of my workforce places value on people, this initiative matches our corporate goal for social responsibility and change," stated Freeman. "I applaud The Arc's initiative to help me offer a social platform for change to my employees."

In a recent Forbes article by Wes Gay, Millennials Are Effecting Change with Social Responsibility, focus is placed on volunteerism with millennials at their workplace. "The Arc Friendly Action" includes volunteer options, workshops, and sensitivity training to the company champions. These Champions will also have access to collaborating on the successes of their peers; other Champions of the same program at arrange gatherings.

The Arc Tampa Bay is an affiliated chapter of The Arc of the United States, the largest national organization advocating for the rights of persons with developmental disabilities. As a pivotal chapter in Florida, The Arc Tampa Bay is well aware of their responsibility to further the education of issues surrounding those with neuro-diverse challenges such as Autism, Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and other delayed disorders.

Businesses interested in receiving information about "The Arc Friendly Action" should contact The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation at (727) 797-8712, or email madison@thearcfoundation.org. Also, the website for The Arc Tampa Bay Foundation is: www.thearcfoundation.org

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