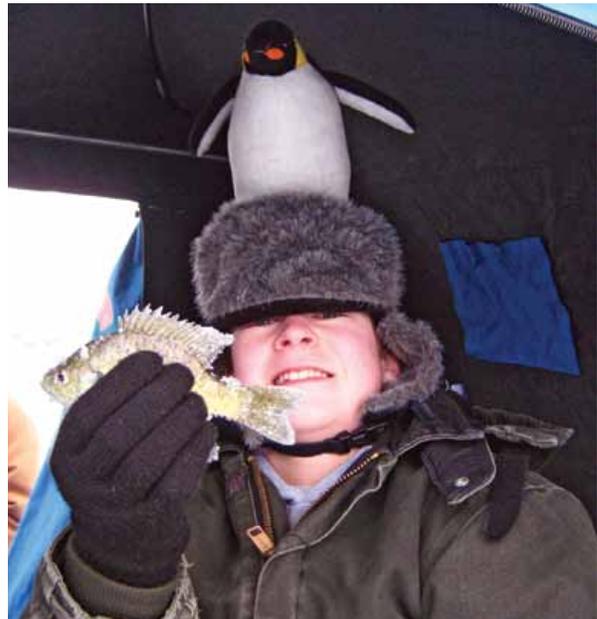


## Memories on Ice

Thirteen-year-old Max didn't quite know what to expect on his CCRI ice fishing trip. Once he and the group of fifteen reached Lake Lida they were instructed to take off their seat belts before they ventured onto the ice. It was explained that the seat belts were removed as a safety measure—if the vehicle broke through the

*Kent—  
“Nothin’ better than the sight of a gated winter community out in the middle of a lake on top of many feet of water.”*

ice they would be able to exit the truck. Max suggested that maybe they should walk out to the fish house instead. After a few reassuring words from CCRI's Eric Hilber, the truck headed out on the



Max caught some food for his hat.

frozen road and navigated through a city of fish houses. The adventure had just begun.

Once at their destination the team from CCRI promptly began getting everyone set up. Jason began by drilling the first two holes and concerns of breaking through the ice quickly melted away. Everyone marveled at the beautiful two-foot-thick ice.

*Chris—  
“we passed a famous bar on the ice, but we only got to see it from the outside.”*



Once they had everyone set up, Jason and Liz took a break from the action to enjoy the sun.

Continued on page 2



Jake, Ernie and Shawn swapped fish stories.

wing spanned kite. Once in the air, the kite was tethered to the truck where it flew 30–50 feet in the air unattended the entire fishing trip.

Although the group watched a large northern pike on camera, they were unable to coax it into taking their bait. John, who came armed with snacks, considered using a jalapeno Cheeto as bait. Luckily sunfish were easier to coerce.

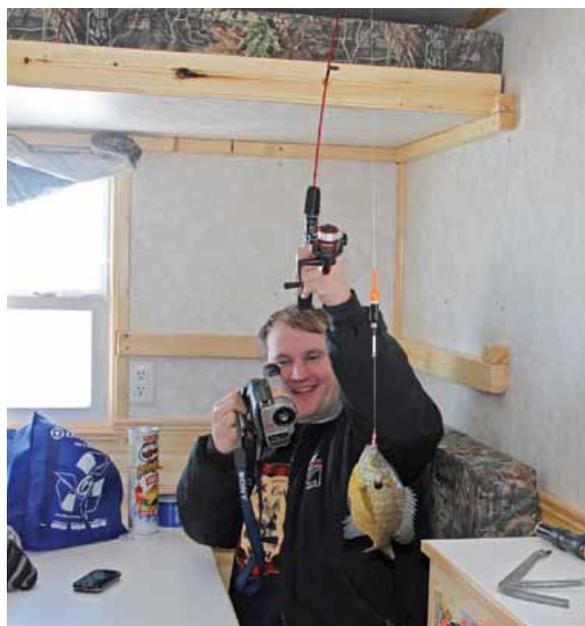
Chris was surprised that the ice house was “quite fancy” with a kitchen, dining room and bedroom. It was also fully carpeted and comfortable at more than 60 degrees.

*Shawn—  
“My fish was this big”  
(it grew each time he told  
someone about it)*

Chris and the other fishermen enjoyed watching all the underwater activity via a remote camera.

Tech-savvy Chris suggested mounting a big screen on the wall and attaching the remote camera. Nobody disagreed.

To add to the excitement of fishing, CCRI caregiver Ashraf brought his giant nine-foot



Chris captures his fish twice.

As morning turned into early afternoon everyone packed up and reflected on the day. It was a wonderful opportunity to experience the wonders of the great outdoors as well as strengthen friendships.

Just like most fishermen, the number of fish and their sizes started to multiply the closer they got to shore. They didn’t catch a lot of fish—but they had lots of fish stories to tell.



Lucas reeled in a keeper.

*CCRI is able to offer these wonderful experiences for the people we serve thanks to your generous donations.*

## CCRI's ARRM Cares Award Nominees

The ARRM Cares Award was established to allow member organizations like CCRI, a means of recognizing Direct Support Professionals who demonstrate a commitment to quality services. It's a wonderful opportunity for CCRI and its exemplary staff to be honored.

ARRM is a nonprofit association of 150 providers, like CCRI, dedicated to leading the advancement of community-based services that support people living with disabilities in their pursuit of meaningful lives. Since its beginnings in 1970, ARRM has and continues to demonstrate a commitment to support of Minnesotans living with disabilities and lead positive change.

CCRI is proud to have nominated the following:

### *Kirsten Haugrud*



Ben has struggled with his weight his entire life. Three years ago he was close to weighing 400 pounds. Due to ongoing health concerns he needed to move to an assisted living center.

In August 2010 Ben was introduced to Kirsten Haugrud. It became clear immediately that Kirsten

was going to exert all of her energy into helping Ben battle his lifetime struggle with obesity.

In order to qualify for surgery, Ben needed to demonstrate that he could follow a diet plan and lose some weight on his own. Kirsten took control and with Ben's input created informal programming rewarding him for his hard work and food choices. Her shifts often overlapped with meal time so she frequently reminded Ben of the strategies the dietician suggested to lose weight. Eighteen months later, after a lot of hard work and determination, Ben had lost 60 pounds independently and qualified for gastric bypass surgery.

Ben had successful surgery in February 2012 and has been steadily moving towards his ideal weight. While there have been many amazing DSPs that have helped Ben achieve this dream, it was Kirsten who was the driving force behind the success. He fondly acknowledges Kirsten as the staff person who took him to the initial informational meetings and appointments with dieticians. Ben says that he "respects Kirsten and is glad that she didn't give up on him and he knew that she believed he could do it."

Thanks to Kirsten, Ben is making plans to participate in activities he was unable to do in the past. Three months after surgery Ben completed his first 5K. This accomplishment confirmed that he now has the opportunity to start a new life. Kirsten has helped improve the quality of Ben's life and likely extended the length of it. What an impact she made for Ben!

### *Rachel Simons*



Zach is an 18-year-old young man that, up until this past summer, had never been away from his family overnight. He had never experienced the joys of packing up a sleeping bag, hugging his mom goodbye, and loading onto a bus for an exciting adventure until last

summer. Zach went to his very first trip away from home for three days and two nights to CCRI's Camp HERO, a fully-accessible camp located on the shores of Lake George. It was successful because he brought his iPad and his wonderfully supportive staff, Rachel Simons.

Zach uses the iPad to help him communicate with peers, staff and family. He needs individualized attention as he is not always aware of surroundings and tends to wander. Zach's mom knew that Rachel would take great care of Zach and keep a close eye on him, which helped her feel more comfortable in letting him go.

While at camp, Rachel set up a visual schedule for Zach to follow on his iPad so he knew what to expect. This made transitions easy and predictable. Zach also used his iPad to interact with all the other campers and make new friends. Rachel helped him put together sentences with his communication program to help him greet peers. When Zach would meet someone new, Rachel would also help him take a picture of the person to save in his iPad. Rachel also helped Zach take lots of other pictures on his iPad while at camp to document his experience. These pictures would help him tell his family all about his trip when he got home.

Camp ended up being a total success due to Rachel's hard work and dedication to Zach. Zach's mom couldn't have been more thrilled with how well the trip went and is excited for him to go again this year!

ARRM Cares continued on page 6

## The Seven Steps for E-mailing Your Legislator

E-mail has changed the way that we communicate and in many ways has replaced other forms of communication, such as phone calls or handwritten letters. This technological tool is fast, cheap and efficient. However, because it is a fast and relatively informal means of communication, many legislators view it as less credible than other methods.

If you use e-mail to communicate with your legislator, you should do so in the context of an ongoing relationship in which you use other methods as the foundation of your communication. To craft an e-mail with impact, follow these steps:

- 1. In the subject line of the message, state that you are a constituent** (For example—Subject: Message from a constituent on xyz issue). Most legislators have their staff sort and respond to their e-mail, and this strategy will increase the likelihood that your letter is read.
- 2. State your request concisely.** View your message as different from an electronic letter. Again, e-mail is less formal and much more brief than traditional written communication. Craft your message accordingly—keep it tight and short.
- 3. Provide personal examples and local context.** Use similar principles as those in letter-writing, but in a tighter format. If you are sending a generic e-mail written by a group of which you're a part, insert personal examples in the message.



- 4. Persuade a like-minded friend, family member or colleague to send an e-mail as well.** Again, quantity is critical. Legislators pay attention to issues when they believe that many of their constituents care about that issue. One e-mail is not convincing.

## We Can't Do I

CCRI is closely watching the action at the State Capitol. The last five years have not been kind to our industry. We have endured many cuts from the State and have not received a COLA (cost of living adjustment) for five years. The release of Governor Dayton's budget for fiscal year 2014–2015 came with good and bad news. While the budget did not contain rate cuts, it also sadly did not include a COLA.

High staff turnover rates due to low base pay make it difficult for providers like CCRI to maintain the consistent and qualified staff needed to continue providing high-quality services to people with disabilities. We need you to help encourage our legislators and the Governor to pass a COLA that will enable private providers like CCRI to pay staff competitive wages. Minnesotans with disabilities deserve a high standard of care!

As a family member or friend of CCRI, you can lend your support to this important cause

- 5. Report your e-mail.** If the e-mail is initiated by an organization, ask if they want you to report your e-mail. Some groups can monitor responses electronically without your having to report, but most want you to let them know. If you persuaded a friend, let them know that your friend will be reporting as well. Make sure that your friend follows through.
- 6. Follow up.** Again, because the impact of e-mail varies widely from legislator to legislator, be sure that you are using other methods to communicate with your legislator. Follow your e-mail with a phone call, handwritten letter, or visit.
- 7. Communicate more than once.** As with all other forms of communicating with your legislator, view your e-mail as part of an ongoing relationship. Keep in touch and tuned into your legislator and his or her position on the issue.

# t without You

by becoming involved and invested in the advocacy process. Putting a human face on our public policy issues and building a relationship with a legislator are the ultimate goals of successful advocacy.

**Act Now:** With new taxes on the table many special interests are asking for increases. Your legislators will push for funding services that mean a lot to them or people in their district.

**Key Message:** Let your legislators know that you are disappointed that an increase for disability services was not included in the Governor's original budget. Ask your legislators to make disability services a priority and to work to secure funding for a COLA in their budget.

Thank you for helping preserve essential services and advocating for a COLA on behalf of the staff who work so tirelessly to provide the much needed care to your family member or friend.

## Top Ten Tips for Calling Your Legislator

Making a phone call to your legislator is quick, easy, and can be done at a moment's notice. You don't need to be an expert on the issue in order to be persuasive; you just need to give your personal perspective.

- 1. Plan:** Before you make the call, plan what you are going to say. Your phone call will be very brief, so keep your message simple and to-the-point. Take a moment to think about it—you might even want to make some notes—and you'll find that your call goes more smoothly than if you were to call "off the cuff".
- 2. Message:** After identifying your request, think about a key point or personal story that supports your position.

- 3. Call:** Make the call.
- 4. Staff or Message:** You may not be able to reach your legislator if you are calling his or her office during the legislative session. Be prepared to talk to one of the legislator's staff or to leave a message instead.
- 5. Constituent:** Begin by stating that you are a constituent. Legislators are most responsive to the people who can keep them in office.



- 6. Persuade:** Get to the point. Try to get the legislator to state their position on the issue, and try to persuade them using the points you developed.
- 7. Thank:** If the legislator agrees to support your issue, thank them. Regardless of their position, thank the legislator for their time.
- 8. Recruit:** Persuade a like-minded friend, family member, or colleague to call as well. Particularly with phone calls, quantity is critical. Legislators pay attention to issues when they believe that many of their constituents care about that issue.
- 9. Report your call:** When you are part of a lobbying effort, your participation is helpful only if the people mobilizing the effort know about it. Let your agency or ARRM know you made the call.
- 10. Call Back:** Call more than once. Quantity is as important, if not more important, than quality in grassroots advocacy, because a high number of calls indicates to a legislator that many people in their district care about an issue.

ARRM Cares continued from page 3

## Barb Bisson



When Barb first met Jenny, she was struggling with behavioral challenges regularly. These challenges impeded Jenny from enjoying life to the fullest. She was not able to successfully enjoy events in the community she used to like such as concerts and plays.

Barb persevered and started to slowly gain Jenny's trust. She would do little things like paint her nails, apply makeup and style her hair. Once trust was built, Barb was able to get Jenny back out into the community with small things like walks around her neighborhood and trips to the store.

When Barb recognized that Jenny was able to deal with her challenges better she was excited to take Jenny to the play "Beauty and the Beast" at Moorhead High School. When they returned Barb was so excited to tell the team what a fabulous event this was for Jenny and that she made it through without any struggles. This was a huge milestone for Jenny and Barb's enthusiasm about this success helped her co-workers feel more confident in assisting Jenny out in the community.

## Anna Leier



Kate has achieved milestones in her daily life since working with Anna. Anna is Kate's main caregiver. Anna's constant positivity and calm, yet persistent, demeanor is the perfect match for Kate's needs. Anna is quite determined when trying to persuade Kate to try new

things and helping her live a healthier life.

Kate has had difficulty being motivated to exercise and Anna's enthusiasm and creativity has helped Kate achieve a work-out goal that has been a long time in the making. Kate, who has a history of refusing to exercise, is now willing and motivated!

Anna talks with Kate frequently about things that can be done to help improve Kate's health, but Anna then took the next step and started adding these things into her own daily life. This showed Kate that she wasn't asking anything of Kate that she, herself, wasn't willing to do.

Anna started to set healthy eating examples by eating smaller amounts of more nutritional foods. Anna advocated for a new menu plan for Kate. She looked into ways of rewarding Kate and giving her more independence in choosing her menu on a daily basis.

As Kate has struggled with her weight and body image over the years, this camaraderie was a welcome influence. Anna has earned Kate's trust, which is not an easy thing to accomplish, and Kate's life will never be the same now that she has had Anna's inspirational impact on her everyday life.

## Wayne Zitzow



It was a call in the middle of the night beginning a journey of heartbreak, despair, and hope. A call no parent is prepared for—a car accident. A stranger's voice letting them know their son, Jon, was in the trauma unit in Minneapolis and they should come immediately. When they first saw Jon, there were so many tubes

and machines it was impossible to believe it was their son. Jon the state champion breaststroke swimmer, was in a coma and unable to breathe independently.

It was thought Jon would likely remain in a vegetative state, but he proved the experts wrong. He relearned how to breathe on his own, eat, and walk. Due to the brain injury, Jon had lost his ability to speak, but was communicating through facial expressions and hand gestures.

Jon's journey brought him to CCRI where he met his caregiver Wayne. Wayne has been instrumental in getting Jon to where he is at today. Jon has sensory limitations due to his injury. The biggest obstacles were human touch and environments with many people. Wayne has worked tirelessly with Jon to help desensitize him in these environments. At first, a simple shower caused Jon to yell and throw things upwards of 300 times per shower. The yelling caused Jon to be evicted from his first apartment. Wayne comes up with new ideas, tries them out, and passes them along to other staff. Today, showers are truly the simple task they should be.

Five years ago, entering unfamiliar environments or encountering unfamiliar people caused Jon to yell aggressively and shield his face. Today, a non-verbal prompt from Wayne is all it takes to have Jon stop shielding his face. Jon rarely yells anymore, decreasing his chances of being evicted again.

Last summer, Wayne accompanied Jon to Lake George, MN for CCRI's annual Camp HERO. Starting with the car ride to camp, Wayne did everything he could to ensure the trip started out right. Jon spent two days at the camp without any outbursts!

Wayne has spent the last 5 years ensuring Jon has the tools he needs to be successful in every environment. Wayne has ensured the journey for Jon and his family is now one of hope.

### *Brianna Huston*



Tommy is diagnosed with benign macrocephaly, chronic migraines and an undiagnosed muscle and tissue disorder. If Tommy were to fall, bump his head or move too much it could cause a brain bleed, concussion, bruise to the brain or kill him on impact. His family knew they

needed help to give the acute care that Tommy needed but were nervous to trust someone to care for their fragile child—until they met Bri Huston.

Tommy's disability doesn't allow him to exert his three-year-old boundless energy and it's difficult for him to fully understand why he can't run and play like his older sister and peers. This causes outbursts and extreme sadness. Bri is able to find creative ways to get Tommy through the tough times. She comes to each shift with fresh energy, new games to try, creative stories and a joyful attitude.

Tommy can't travel to pre-school so Bri brings pre-school to Tommy. Whether it is the sound of a letter, the sequence of counting or helping Tommy to understand the things he sees and experiences every day at his farm, Bri uses every opportunity to teach Tommy the basics. She also spends hours in his therapeutic salt water pool. The trust they have built allows Tommy to exercise and move freely in the water. There has been great improvement in his mobility as a result.

Not every shift is easy and Bri's constant communication with the family keeps Tommy both physically and mentally healthy. Bri will spend hours holding and rocking Tommy through a bad headache and she goes to every possible doctor appointment, including Tommy's ongoing Mayo Clinic evaluations. She tenderly handles Tommy's frustrations about his body, yet knows just when to get a parent involved on any given issue.

Bri is conscience at all times of Tommy's extreme health risks. She is responsible for holding and transferring him and ensuring that he is using his equipment appropriately and understands fully that his life depends on it. The family shared

that they are "at ease" when Tommy is in Bri's care and if "every child with special needs had a Bri, they would never wonder their worth, or if they were safe. She has been the biggest blessing throughout this experience."

Bri drives more than 25 miles each way four times a week on winding country roads to work with Tommy. Her devotion to Tommy is amazing and it is not surprising that Tommy so perfectly refers to her as, "Bri, you are my beautiful."

### *Jolinda Michels*



In March 2012, CCRI began to plan a dream trip to Hawaii for three individuals. MANY caregivers were interested in leaving our cold Midwest winter and were thrilled for the opportunity to chaperone a tropical vacation. In August, interviews began to find the best candidate

to accompany Sara, Brandon and Adam to Hawaii. Jolinda blew the interviewers away with her client-centered approach to the trip. Her main focus was how she could make this trip to paradise memorable for the people we serve.

She spent hours getting to know the travelers, spending time in their homes, taking them to activities in the community and making sure they felt comfortable with her before the trip. She even arranged to meet families so the parents would feel comfortable with who was chaperoning their child on this dream trip.

Jolinda visited with the travelers about what events and sites they each wanted to see/attend. She developed an itinerary so they had a guideline to follow but made it flexible enough for the group to adjust plans if necessary.

While in Hawaii, Jolinda made sure the group was able to experience all they could.

When the group arrived home, Jolinda continued to make the trip memorable. She spent countless hours gathering pictures, information and brochures to compile into a memory book for each person. Each enormous scrapbook was as unique as each of the travelers featured. She captured many wonderful memories and favorite experiences right down to the ABC convenience store! Sara, Adam, and Brandon have enjoyed showing their books to their families and friends. This has allowed them to detail the experience to others and relive this amazing adventure in their lives. Jolinda ensured this was a trip they will never forget! It was truly paradise!



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**Reaching Independence**

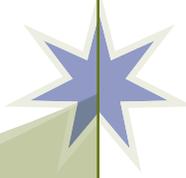
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The mission of CCRI is to enhance and enrich the lives and learning of people with disabilities.

The vision of CCRI is to provide an environment where people of all abilities may experience life's possibilities.



## Save the Date

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual FM Crusaders MC  
Motorcycle Show and Auction  
benefitting Camp H.E.R.O.  
Saturday, March 16, 2013**

