BREAKING OUT OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Tim Lambright

ABIL Is Now Ability360
AFTER 35 YEARS, WE REDEFINE OUR BRAND

Arizona’s Universities
DO OUR ADAPTIVE SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS COMPETE?

Unsung Heroes
CELEBRATING OUR CAREGIVERS
Our services include:

- Consultation and Planning
- Special Needs Trusts*
- Guardianship/Conservatorship Filing*
- Financial Planning/Budgeting**
  - Government Benefits Eligibility, Analysis and Preservation
  - Letter of Intent
  - Professional Training
  - Continuing Education

We can provide you with a plan to help ensure that the future of the person with special needs is safe and secure.

866.949.6202
SilverTreeSNP.com
Studio City | Thousand Oaks | Scottsdale

**Securities and Investment Advisory Services Offered Through Voya Financial Advisors, Inc. Member SIPC.
*Legal advice is not given on behalf of Voya Financial Advisors, Inc. and is offered through SilverTree Special Needs Planning. SilverTree Special Needs Planning is not a subsidiary of nor controlled by Voya Financial Advisors, Inc.
For 35 Years

ABIL has been a leader, provider and resource for people with disabilities in our community.

Moving forward, we will be leading the charge under a new name, a new brand.

Same great people, same mission to enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

A positive change to reflect our vision present and future…
Introducing...
TY360

► Advocacy
► Home Care Services
► Employment Services
► Sports & Fitness
► Information & Referral
► Livability Magazine

www.Ability360.org

Continued Leadership & Trusted Services
Message from the President & CEO

I hope you all enjoyed our first edition of Ability360’s new quarterly publication, LivAbility, and I’m thrilled to see what we have produced as an encore in our second edition. In our last publication, I mentioned we would be announcing the ABIL name change in October, and we are thrilled to do so. I would also like to summarize the process that took us from ABIL to Ability360.

Last fall, we hired a consultant and conducted focus groups to gather input from consumers, employees, DEC partners, community partners, and some of our funders and donors. The findings from the focus groups were really helpful. First, there was overwhelming sentiment that a name change would be good for the organization. Second, the name Arizona Bridge to Independent Living was too long and sounded like a nursing home. The acronym, ABIL, was often mispronounced, always had to be explained, and just wasn’t recognized by anyone outside our immediate circle of friends, consumers and community partners. Third, the ABIL logo depicted a person in a wheelchair, lacked modern appeal, and did not accurately represent a cross-disability mission. Fourth, the mainstream community did not understand the relationship between the Disability Empowerment Center, the Virginia G. Piper Sports & Fitness Center and ABIL. The two former entities, of course, are owned and operated by ABIL, now Ability360. Thus, on top of a name that most did not like, an outdated, off-putting and misrepresentative logo, we had a brand identity problem across our organizational programs and facilities.

For these reasons, we decided to rebrand the organization. Once again, we needed outside expertise to lead us through the process so we hired a branding consultant. During the process, we explored dozens of naming possibilities, logos, color schemes, etc. In the end, the Board of Directors and our management team overwhelmingly landed on the name we chose. Finding the right logo and agreeing to colors was a little more challenging, but in the end, the vast majority of our team was quite satisfied with the outcome. Lastly, we presented the concept to ABIL staff in July, hoping for their buy-in. I think it’s fair to say that there was overwhelming support and excitement from staff about the new name, logo and colors.

I know what you’re thinking, “Why the name Ability360?” Actually, there were several reasons why we chose Ability360. First, you can still see ABIL in the name for those that cling to nostalgia. Second, we thought that it made sense to move toward the use of the word “ability” versus “disability”. Third, “Ability” is an actual word, not an acronym, and thus easier to understand. Fourth, the all-encompassing 360 concept demonstrates more inclusiveness of people with all types of abilities. Fifth, the new logo, depicted by the zero in 360 with the upward pointing arrow, seemed more modern, promotes positive and forward-moving energy, offered simplicity, but maybe most importantly, did not convey outdated stereotypical images of disability like the old wheelchair logo did.

For these reasons, we are proud and excited to become Ability360. We’ll also be renaming the Disability Empowerment Center to the Ability360 Center. The Spofit will become the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center, and some of our programs will follow a similar nomenclature, such as Ability360 Employment Services.

As I mentioned last month, it is the goal for Ability360 to rebrand our public image to more accurately reflect what we do as an organization and who we serve. We also believe Ability360 will create better community awareness of how our organization helps people with disabilities. Ability360 will ensure consistency in everything we do and promote to the public. I hope you are as excited about our new name, Ability360, as we are!
ALWAYS LOOKING TO ASSIST

20% OFF SELECT TICKETS

- ADA ACCESSIBLE SEATING IN ALL PRICE POINTS, INCLUDING THE FLOOR!
- CAPTIONING FOR ALL GAMES...WATCH ON YOUR SMART DEVICE OR CHECK OUT ONE OF OUR 7" TABLETS.
- FREE WHEELCHAIR ESCORT SERVICES AVAILABLE.
- PAL CERTIFIED - NBA.COM/SUNS/PAL
- BONE CONDUCTION HEADPHONES (FOR THOSE WITH VISION LOSS) CAN BE CHECKED-OUT AT GUEST RELATIONS.

WE ARE PHX

602.379.SUNS / SUNS.COM

*USE CODE WORD: ADA
FEATURED

16 Breaking Out of Solitary Confinement
Tim Lambright’s journey to independence

24 October Focus on Employment
Practical resources and tips for job seekers

34 University Athletic Scholarships
Are Arizona adaptive sports scholarships competitive enough?

39 Unsung Heroes
Celebrating our caregivers as we recognize National Family Caregivers Month in November

43 Lance Greathouse
Mad Scientist on a Mission

More Stories
More Stories

12 Phoenix Votes Yes
   Proposition 104 transportation package passes

14 Mission Accomplished
   Wounded Warriors conquer Colorado

22 Ability360 Reintegration Program
   From nursing home to community

32 Getting Kids Involved in Adaptive Sports
   Opportunities for lifetime success

40 Independent Living Council Kickoff
   Ability360 consumers take the lead

42 Adaptive Sports Recap
   Local athletes among the elite

47 Top Ten List
   Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center's own Top 10

48 Preparing “Generation ADA”
   NCIL Conference promotes future advocates and leaders

52 Ability360: Development Corner
   Sports & Fitness Center changing lives daily

54 Broadway Recreation Center Grand Re-opening
   The home of AZ Disabled Sports transformed

57 Daring Adventures
   More than just an outdoor hike

58 Adventures with Don
   Explore the Arizona Science Center

61 Improbable Theatre Company
   Season in review and revealing something new

62 New to the Court
   Introducing amputee basketball and wheelchair lacrosse
Contributors

Jennifer Longdon
Jennifer Longdon is known to drink too much coffee, ask too many questions and then write about it. She has served on numerous Boards and Commissions focused on disability advocacy including the Phoenix Mayor’s Commission on Disability Issues, the Statewide Independent Living Council and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation Public Impact Panel. Jen has a T-4 spinal cord injury and uses a wheelchair full time. She’s a regular contributor to LivAbility.

Anna Werner
Anna Werner is a junior at Barrett the Honors College at Arizona State University and served as the marketing intern at Ability360 last summer. She is studying journalism and is passionate about fitness, writing and traveling.

Jim Boomer
Jim Boomer, a T5 complete paraplegic, works full-time at St. Joseph’s Hospital in neurological injury prevention. A camera enthusiast since high school, Jim’s passion for photography has flourished over the past 7 years. When not working, Jim enjoys capturing moments worth remembering.

Corey Kunes
Corey Kunes is a Program Coordinator for Daring Adventures and a recent graduate of the Therapeutic Recreation program at ASU.

Anja Benjamin
A transplanted Southern belle, Anja Benjamin has lived in the Valley of the Sun for 5 years. Married to Dennis and mother to a 19 year-old cat, Jett, she loves Jimmy Fallon, Twizzlers and cheering on SEC teams. Anja has been the Executive Assistant at Ability360 for just over 5 years and is currently enrolled in a graduate program at Grand Canyon University.

Tim Binning
Tim Binning is entering his third season as the wheelchair track coach for Arizona Disabled Sports. As a father of two grown boys, one who has been involved in wheelchair sports for nearly 15 years, Tim knows the important and potentially life changing experience that adaptive sports can offer. Tim lives in Ahwatukee with his wife Allison and dog Sadie.

Jennifer Longdon
Jennifer Longdon is known to drink too much coffee, ask too many questions and then write about it. She has served on numerous Boards and Commissions focused on disability advocacy including the Phoenix Mayor’s Commission on Disability Issues, the Statewide Independent Living Council and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation Public Impact Panel. Jen has a T-4 spinal cord injury and uses a wheelchair full time. She’s a regular contributor to LivAbility.

Contact the Editor:
editor@ability360.org

Advertising:
advertising@ability360.org

Contributing Writers:
Susan Webb
Ed Myers
Lane Gram
Don Price
Amina Kruck
Reggie Mitzel
Sarah Olson

Keith Forte
Kevin Dumcum
Meghan Fable
Melissa Ann Santora
Brielle Carter
Loren Worthington
MovePHX

LivAbility is a quarterly publication of Ability360. President & CEO: Phil Pangrazio

The LivAbility Team:
Loren Worthington
John Beaubien
Carolyn Quenneville
Anja Benjamin
Reggie Mitzel
Volunteer: Rebecca Cavazos

Ability360
5025 E. Washington St.
Suite 200
Phoenix, AZ 85034
(602) 256-2245
www.Ability360.org

This magazine is printed with vegetable-based inks.
How Are We Doing?

LivAbility Magazine is interested in your thoughts, comments, gripes, concerns, suggestions and ideas for future stories. Send us an email and we will do our best to keep improving with each edition.

In our next edition we will be publishing Letters to the Editor.

editor@ability360.org
On August 25th, Phoenix residents voted overwhelmingly to pass Proposition 104, a comprehensive transportation package that will expand bus and light rail and fix our aging streets. The vote served to continue an existing 0.4 cent Phoenix sales tax as well as increase the rate by 0.3 cents for the next 35 years.

Funds generated will triple light rail miles, increase bus routes and frequency, increase Dial-a-Ride service as well as build over 1,000 miles of new bike lanes, fix street lights, sidewalks and increase shading at bus stops. The proposition will create “all-of-the-above” transportation solutions for Phoenix, easing congestion as we grow, and help people access work, school and visit family without a car.

On Sept. 9th, the City Council took the first steps to begin implementation of the plan, now called Transportation 2050. The Council created the Citizens Transportation Commission, which will be made up of 15 members and charged with advancing transparency, public input and government accountability through regular reviews of the plan.

The Commission will examine future innovative financing and funding mechanisms that will allow the plan to be implemented more quickly, and will also review street maintenance activities, bicycle improvements, transit improvements, and studies and construction of light rail corridors.

All recommendations developed by the Commission will be referred to the full City Council for consideration and final approval.

One of Mayor Stanton’s priorities for light rail expansion is a new stop located close to the Ability360 Center near 48th Street and Washington, which will significantly increase ease of access via public transportation.

Proposition 104 was supported by a broad cross-section of business and community leaders as well as Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton. The campaign was chaired by District 8 Councilwoman Kate Gallego.

Everything You Need To Get Out & Go!

- Medical Supplies
- Wheelchairs & Accessories
- Adaptive Sports & Recreation Equipment

10% OFF
promo code LivAbility

indemedical.com

480-704-3807 | info@indeMedical.com
Welcome to the second edition of LivAbility

LivAbility is a magazine for people with disabilities in Arizona. The free quarterly publication of Ability360 contains articles that promote an active, fulfilling lifestyle for every ability. LivAbility currently mails to 2,600 individuals and an additional 2,500 copies are distributed at various locations, predominately in Maricopa County.

Schedule an Advertisement
Advertising@ability360.org

Ability360™
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED
Wounded Warrior Project Alumni Rise to the Challenge

by Sarah Olson, Military & Membership Coordinator, Ability360

Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center’s Beat the Heat program challenged Wounded Warrior Project Alumni to put their best foot forward. Alumni were challenged to scale the 35-foot rock wall, kayak with Daring Adventures, spend time in the pool, participate in a wellness class and volunteer 40 hours with an organization that assists veterans. Beat the Heat challenge winners’ payoff was a week in Telluride, Colorado, with Telluride Adaptive Sports Program to enjoy outdoor activities in the cooler temperature.

Alumni arrived in Telluride on Saturday with enough time to unpack and unwind before the week of activities began. Sunday, Alumni enjoyed an hour of Mindful Meditation followed by a beautiful 2.5 mile hike up the Bear Creek Trail, which led to a refreshing waterfall. Alumni were challenged both mentally and physically on Monday with outdoor rock climbing. Several warriors took the challenge and ran with it, climbing several of the stations. The ladies appreciated the physical challenge of pushing past their own limits while also being presented with the mental challenge of how to scale the rock and reach the top. After down time, the ladies headed down the mountain for a relaxing evening of art therapy. Painting allowed the ladies to channel their inner Picasso with landscapes and nature designs.

Tuesday was a morning of fun on the water. They chose to forgo kayaking and stand up paddle boarding for white water rafting. Luckily, the area had received enough rain the previous couple of nights to provide a level 2 experience on the water. Warrior Alumni enjoyed the laughter and the teamwork it took to get them down the river, oftentimes stranding themselves on the boulders. A few splashes and nature hugs with rocks and trees later, the ladies, with the help of their guide Skip, made it down the eight-mile stretch of the river. White water rafting proved to be a morning workout; however, those up for the challenge joined Adrienne from TASP for another eight-mile jaunt on a mountain bike. Weaving in and out of the tree line, they came to an open field that seemed to be a resting spot for a herd of elk. There were about 30 head of elk soaking up the sun, definitely not a sight that we are used to seeing in Phoenix.

On Wednesday, the ladies ascended the side of the mountain to Ajax Peak, which stands about 12,785 ft. The trail, filled with many switchbacks and beautiful waterfalls, could not deter their determination to conquer such a mountain. A view from the top offered a 360-degree view of Bridal Veil Basin, Silver Lake Basin and much, much more. A great view to end a great week of adventure!

Learn more about Ability360’s Beat the Heat Program at www.Ability360.org or call (602) 386-4566
Tim Lambright entered solitary confinement at age 33. All of his material possessions and things he identified himself with socially and professionally had been stripped away. Life as he knew it had changed forever.

Tim did not enter this solitary confinement by choice, nor was he forced to go as a consequence of illegal activity. After a motorcycle accident left him with quadriplegia, moving to an assisted living home was the only option Tim had.

“I jokingly referred to it as solitary confinement because it felt like living in a jail cell,” he said.

The son of two artists, Tim grew up in a family of six on a farm in Indiana. His life was fast paced and exciting, filled with hobbies like snowboarding, long boarding and racing street bikes and ATVs.

After graduating from Miami of Ohio, Tim was offered his “dream job” and moved to Chicago. After what he referred to as a “quarter life crisis”, Tim moved to San Diego at age 23. At the time, he did not know that a greater crisis was just around the corner.

At age 26, Tim moved to Phoenix, Arizona. He stayed busy at his job, working as a business entrepreneur, but still made time for his dogs, photography and racing motorcycles.

In March 2012, a friend talked Tim into competing in a motorcycle race in Flagstaff, Arizona. The night before the race, Tim and his friend rode the 25-mile course and worked on his bike, adjusting the suspension.

“The next morning when I went to race, something inside of me was screaming ‘this is a bad idea,’” Tim said. “The last thing I remembered was pulling up to the starting line. Then I woke up in the hospital and wasn’t able to move.”

During a rough area in the race, Tim shot off the course going 40 miles per hour.
Chicago. After what he referred to as a "quarter life crisis", Tim moved to San Diego at age 23. At the time, he did not know that a greater crisis was just around the corner.

At age 26, Tim moved to Phoenix, Arizona. He stayed busy at his job, working as a business entrepreneur, but still made time for his dogs, photography and racing motorcycles.

In March 2012, a friend talked Tim into competing in a motorcycle race in Flagstaff, Arizona. The night before the race, Tim and his friend rode the 25-mile course and worked on his bike, adjusting the suspension.

"The next morning when I went to race, something inside of me was screaming 'this is a bad idea,'" Tim said. "The last thing I remember was pulling up to the starting line. Then I woke up in the hospital and wasn't able to move."

During a rough area in the race, Tim shot off the course going 40 miles per hour.

"The last thing I remembered was pulling up to the starting line. Then I woke up in the hospital and wasn't able to move."

Photo by Jim Booner
He was forced over the handlebars and flew head first into a tree shattering his C5 vertebrae. The two riders behind Tim, coincidentally an EMT and a safety rider hired to monitor the course, helped stabilize him and called for help.

"I don't remember anything about the accident or going to the hospital," Tim said. "The first thing I remember was some time after my neck surgery, waking up and not knowing quite where I was, but having the feeling that I couldn't sense my body."

Tim spent three weeks in the ICU at the Flagstaff Medical Center before being transferred to the Barrow Neurological Institute at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Phoenix. His parents temporarily moved into Tim's condo in Phoenix to be close to him.

"When I was in the hospital, everything had been stripped away from me, not by choice," he said. "All of the things that I generally identified myself with were gone. Ironically, I was left with this profound sense of peace at first, because I didn't have to worry about anything."

All of the things that I generally identified myself with were gone.

While in the hospital, Tim connected with Loren Worthington, who put him in contact with Don Price at Ability360. Price met with Tim and provided him direction and information.

"He was there every step of the way with the resources Ability360 offers to connect me to the right people," Tim said. "He reached beyond the normal limitations and barriers of someone with a spinal cord injury to help me."

After two months in acute rehab, Tim was discharged from the hospital. Unlike most spinal cord patients who transition home, Tim did not have relatives in the area with whom he could live.

"My only option to go live with family would have been to move back to Indiana," Tim said. "But it would have separated me from the parts of my world I had left, which were my friends and the relationships with people that I had."

Tim's options were limited: either go to a group home or move to an assisted living nursing home. In May, his parents helped him find an assisted living home that would take him, and he moved in.

"When I left the hospital, it became less like a dream and more real," Tim said. "It was really hard to accept at that point that that's where my life had brought me. In the hospital, I was full of hope, joy and gratitude. But the transition when I moved out was difficult."

**Life in a Nursing Home**

In denial of his new life, Tim refused to even furnish his room in the assisted living home. When he first moved in, his wheelchair, bed and two camping chairs were all that he had.

When I got to the assisted living, I felt like I had lost hope”, Tim said.

"There wasn't a light at the end of my tunnel. I got the sense that this was my new life, and it was so far from the active, social life that I had led before. It was really a difficult thing to embrace. I was fighting the daily challenges of not being able to do really simple things for myself."

I had no control over anything in my world.”

Though family and friends came to visit Tim, he spent the majority of his days alone. He avoided interacting with others because he felt insecure, like he did not fit in. People stared, he said, not only because he was in
Ability360 offers to connect me to the right people, “Tim said. “He reached beyond the normal limitations and stripped away from me, not by choice, “ he said. “All of the things that I generally identified myself with were gone. I wanted to be close to him again. “

His parents temporarily moved into Tim’s condo in Phoenix to be close to him. His sister Tina Lambright moved from Michigan to be with him. Before the accident, Tina said that she and Tim were close and would talk almost every other day, but after the accident, he was distant. “He wasn’t texting or calling as much, and he was going through something really huge in his life,” she said.

Tina said she knew if she wanted to still have a relationship with Tim, she needed to be close to him. She dropped everything and moved into his condo in Phoenix. “It wasn’t that I needed to be there just to help him as much as it selfishly was to have one of my best friends back again,” she said. “I missed my friend, and I wanted to be close to him again.”

With Tina’s help, Tim was able to bring his dogs to the assisted living home. She said she immediately saw a difference in Tim once the dogs were back in his life. Tim said his dogs, Mina and Juno, are family, and having them back in his life motivated him to get out of the darkness. “When my dogs moved in, I realized I wasn’t the pack leader anymore,” he said. “Our relationship dynamic had really changed. I knew that if I wanted to reestablish our relationship then I needed to be a bigger part of their lives.”

When Mina and Juno first moved back in with Tim, he could not feed or walk them, but soon thought of creative ways to overcome those obstacles. He would take the dogs out to the dining hall at dinnertime so the other residents could interact with them. “Not only did they help me from a therapeutic standpoint, but they really brightened the lives of a lot of people in the community,” he said.

Tim said walking his dogs around the parking lot of the assisted living home was the first of his hobbies he was able to do again. At first, Tim found it difficult to walk them on their leashes, but he soon trained them to follow him freely. Their short daily walks soon grew to four-mile trips down the canal. “Walking them [my dogs] became the only independence I had where I would leave the assisted living home; it was my freedom.”

“Being inside all the time was really debilitating,” he said. “Walking them became the only independence I had where I would leave the assisted living home; it was my freedom.”
Moving Toward Independence

Tim said his friend and business partner Jason also brought brightness to his life. Jason would encourage and challenge Tim to move forward, even at his darkest times.

“He would come and just sit with me,” Tim said. “The first night in assisted living I felt angry; part of me wanted to be alone, but part of me wanted someone there. Jason sat in a camping chair in my room for four hours while I sat in my chair and cried.”

One evening while visiting Tim, Jason suggested they start a business project together, establishing an outpatient drug and alcohol recovery center. Tim said working on the new company was a catalyst in integrating back into the community – it gave him foundation. In finding ways to help others, he found a new purpose and motivation to move forward.

“What was important was that I just try. It was a huge turning point from languishing in boredom to reengaging in life.”

“It didn’t matter whether or not I could succeed,” he said. “It didn’t matter whether I could do all the things I needed to do. What was important was that I just try. It was a huge turning point from languishing in boredom to reengaging in life.”

Tim voluntarily helped create Springboard Recovery with Jason, and the treatment center opened in November 2014 – the same month Tim received an eviction notice from the assisted living home.

Tim had previously made plans to move in March, giving himself enough time to find a suitable place to live. His caregiver, Esmeralda Sanchez, was pregnant at the time and would be taking maternity leave in December. Since the assisted living home had failed to find a replacement for Esmeralda, there was no one that could provide care for Tim’s injury, and he was considered a liability.

Over the next month, Tina called and visited around 50 apartment complexes, but found nothing that would fit Tim’s needs. Most apartments required modifications that would have cost him over $10,000, and he did not have enough time to apply for financial aid.

Just when finding a home seemed impossible, Tina suggested trying a newly-built apartment complex in Tempe. Tim knew he could not afford to live in the apartments, but Tina went to the leasing office anyway. The manager of the leasing office, whose best friend was a quadriplegic, understood Tim’s situation and connected him to the owners and developers of the complex. They agreed to make all of the modifications to an apartment to make it accessible for Tim, free of charge! In mid-January 2015, Tim Lambright moved out of the assisted living home and into an apartment of his own.

“My entire emotional state and psychological state have totally changed since I moved out,” he said. “Things are harder than they were when I was in assisted living, because I could push a pager button and someone...”
would be there in a matter of minutes, and now I don’t have that luxury.”

Sanchez still works as Tim’s caregiver and comes every morning and night to help him. She said she admires Tim a lot and considers him a close friend.

“When Tim moved out of the assisted living home, it was pretty amazing,” Sanchez said. “He was a whole different person. For once in a long time he felt like he was free. Being in his own place gave him some of the independence that he needed.”

Even three years after the accident, Tim said his life is still full of many firsts. He has to think differently about everything.

“My life is a lot more challenging on the day-to-day basis than it ever was before,” He said. “It takes two to three hours for me to get up and get out the door with a caregiver, but I’ve found ways to make it work for me. I find the little perks in the experience.”

Tim now works for Springboard Recovery mostly from home by using his laptop and phone and goes to the office once or twice a week. He said that he has been able to use his creative energy to piece the company together, which has given him an even greater sense of accomplishment.

“It’s like a Swiss watch with different gears,” he said. “There are different pieces and somehow they all fit together to work. That’s how I picture a business opportunity and how I picture my transition to being independent. There are all of these little pieces, and I slowly have to work through them to make them fit together.”

Tim said he was probably more aggressive in making the transition than most people. He said he reframed the way he looked at things that seemed impossible and opened his eyes to new opportunities.

“Everywhere you turn you’re faced with challenges;” he said. “The trick is to find a way to navigate around or over the obstacles. It’s like running a marathon. The first couple miles are always tough, and then you get into a groove. Around mile 20, you hit a wall where your legs turn to concrete and your will can start to diminish, but to not complete it would just be insane. You just ran 20 miles; you’re almost there. You can’t give up.”

Tim visits the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Complex regularly and says that interacting with and meeting new people there encourages him.

“Getting to see other guys like me that have families is reassuring,“ he said. “I don’t need to know how it’s going to work out, but that engagement in the community, seeing how to do things or just finding hope that something is possible really was critical for me.”

Tim said he now has a new normal. His view on life has shifted. His accident made him slow down and focus on what really matters.

“It’s made his life fuller and helped him to be a more understanding and gentle person,” Tina said. “His measure of success has broadened and deepened.”

Tim said that through it all, he is thankful for what he has been through because it has taught him so much about himself and about life.

“The greater beauty and irony of the whole thing is that I can honestly say I am a happier, more peaceful man today than I was before my accident.”

“Even though I had all the trappings of life before - all the things that someone would think that they would want in their early thirties as far as a career and lifestyle - I can look back and though I don’ have all those things today, I have a lot more joy in my heart and in my life.”
The Reintegration to Community Living program at Ability360 gives individuals empowerment, support and the resources they need to be more independent.

In the past five years, the program has helped 107 consumers, ages 65 and younger, move out of nursing homes and into the community. Over 200,000 adults under age 65 were living in nursing homes in 2012, according to the latest Demographic Characteristic of Nursing Home Residents in the United States Report from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Centers for Independent Living, like Ability360, were established to provide core services that assist individuals - like some of these adults in nursing homes - to live more independently. In July 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act into law. In addition to education and workforce reauthorizations and revisions, this Act also defined Transition as a fifth core service to join the previously-mandated family of core services provided by CILs: Advocacy; Information & Referral; Independent Living Skills Training; and Peer Support/Mentoring.

“Reintegration is a program that we’ve been involved in from the get go,” Reggie Mitzel, Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer at Ability360, said. “We’ve been helping people transition from nursing homes to independent living options for years.”

Though Ability360 has been working to help people live more independently since its founding in 1981, Fernando Cruz formally started the Reintegration program in 1998. Stacey Zimmerman, independent living advocate at Ability360, took over the reins this past May and is currently working with 25 people.

“There are some people who need nursing homes, but occasionally you get that younger individual who with a little help can still be on his or her own,” Zimmerman said. “A lot of people don’t realize that there is a choice. Some people think that the nursing home is it. They don’t realize that there are such things like Centers for Independent Living that can help them plan, budget and

Ability360 is hiring

Earn $9.50 - $11.50 per hour
figure out how to make this work. There's nothing worse than people not being independent because they don't know there's an alternative."

Once a consumer reaches out to Ability360, Zimmerman meets with him or her to assess wants and needs. Based on that information, she assists the consumer in obtaining household or other items if funds are available. Some insurance companies have community transition funds, which allocate a certain dollar amount to the individual to help him or her move.

Regardless of the consumer's financial situation or insurance company, Zimmerman can help him or her find accessible housing and can direct the consumer to other beneficial services available through Ability360 or the community. After the consumer is situated in his or her new environment, Zimmerman follows up to provide any further assistance, ensuring the transition is successful.

“There’s nothing worse than people not being independent because they don’t know there’s an alternative.”

“I think the reintegration program is important because it enables individuals to be self-empowered,” Zimmerman said. “They get to be their own advocates in requesting the transition to happen and in wanting and making it happen. It’s empowering individuals to take control and take back their lives. It does so much for their self-esteem to know that they can live successfully on their own.”

Learn more at www.Ability360.org or call Stacey at (602) 296-0534. Email StaceyZ@ability360.org.

Ability360 is hiring personal caregivers to work with our consumers. Apply if you have a strong work ethic and a desire to help people and make a difference in their lives.

- Free Training
- CPR & First Aid Certification
- Job Placement
- Paid Vacation
- Health Coverage
- Retirement Plan
- Employee Recognition
- Advancement Opportunities

Apply at www.ability360.org or call (602) 296-0502. Si, habla espanol!
OCTOBER
National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America’s workers with disabilities. The theme for this year - which marks 70 years since the first observance - is “My Disability is One Part of Who I Am.” “This year’s theme encapsulates the important message that people with disabilities are just that - people,” said Jennifer Sheehy, acting assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy. “And like all people, we are the sum of many parts, including our work experiences. Disability is an important perspective we bring to the table, but, of course, it’s not the only one.” National Disability Employment Awareness Month is a nationwide campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the contributions of America’s workers with disabilities, past and present. Each spring, the year’s theme is announced to help workplaces, individuals and communities begin planning activities.

For more information about NDEAM, including specific ideas for how different types of organizations can participate, visit www.dol.gov/odep and select “National Disability Employment Awareness Month” from the drop-down menu. To view the “Who I Am” PSA, visit www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org.

Resources to Help Job Seekers
by Amina Donna Kruck
VP of Advocacy, Ability360

While I am glad that National Disability Employment Awareness Month celebrates the contributions that Americans with disabilities can make in the workforce, I am appalled that after 70 years, the unemployment rate is still so high. Tim Stump, Arizona Rehabilitation Services, tells me that there are plenty of jobs out there and employers willing to employ Arizonans with disabilities. Job fairs are happening every month, giving job seekers access to employers. Why aren’t more people employed then? Years of working in the field and my own experience working my way off Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) have illustrated several reasons: fears and lack of confidence; complicated benefit rules; lack of job skills; and lack of job search skills. This is what I have to say about fear: False Evidence Appearing Real. Fear of losing "benefits", Why aren’t more people with disabilities employed?
especially health care. Fear of failure. Fear of not being able to manage work and disability. We need to think of ourselves as employees who have disabilities to manage, rather than as persons with medical conditions.

Ability360 has several programs to help job seekers. We are proud to announce that we have received a renewal of our Work Incentive Information Network contract with AHCCCS and the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council to continue to educate service providers, families and beneficiaries about the SSA Work Incentives and to staff the DB101 website help line. We are also proud to announce that we have received a continuation of our SSA cooperative agreement to continue to provide Work Incentive Planning and Assistance services to help SSI and SSDI beneficiaries understand the work incentives and support their work efforts. Ability360 also has one of the most successful Employment Networks in the country to help SSA beneficiaries seeking to work their way to financial independence find and maintain employment.

This issue of LivAbility provides helpful resources from experts in the employment field to help job seekers, including how to use the American Job Centers - Career One Stops, tips for effective use of job fairs and interview tips. The good news is that many job seekers without disabilities are not much better at job seeking than their non-disabled peers. These articles can give you the advantage!

## Labor Force Participation
People with Disabilities: 19.8%
People without Disabilities: 69.0%

## Unemployment Rate
People with Disabilities: 10.4%
People without Disabilities: 5.4%

*July 2015 from Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy*

Find thousands of resources on benefits, civil rights, community life (including the Independent Living Movement), education, emergency preparedness, employment, health, housing, technology and transportation for people with disabilities, their families, veterans, educators, employers and others.


Learning about the Social Security Administration (SSA) work incentives and using the [www.az.db101.org](http://www.az.db101.org) online calculators can help relieve fears about going to work and demonstrate how work pays.
“How to Work a Job Fair”

by Keith Forte
Business Account Coordinator
Maricopa Workforce Connections

Let’s clear the misconception many job seekers have of a job fair….You are there for a job, right? However, employers do not normally hire at a job fair. Don’t be disappointed, as there are many other reasons you should still attend! A job fair is just one step in the process to obtain employment.

Come prepared with a game plan.
Research the employers scheduled to attend in advance. Learn the employer’s mission, vision, and operating structure. Target your interactions to those employers who are best suited to your knowledge, skills and abilities. Ask questions, have your résumé prepared in advance, and leave it with them if possible.

Networking is critical in your job search.
Meet the recruiters and have a discussion about the research you completed on their company, and impress them with your professional appearance, communication skills, and knowledge. Make connections in person and attempt to turn them into LinkedIn contacts for future networking. Simply ask the recruiter if it would be acceptable to connect, as this puts them in contact with talent (you!).

Dress to impress.
Always dress the same as you would for a job interview. A good rule is to dress a level higher than daily dress requires on the job. If a potential job requires a collared shirt, then add a tie to go beyond the requirement to demonstrate your commitment and professionalism.

You are on a job interview!
Be professional, courteous, and likeable. A good impression could help you land a future interview. The best use of this face time is to prepare a 30-second elevator speech to highlight and sell yourself and your value to an organization.

Come prepared, network, dress to impress and secure an interview to land the job you want!

Eleven Colleges Dedicated to Your Success.

• Quality Instruction in a Supportive Environment
• Small Class Sizes—all at an Affordable Price
• Degree, Certificate, and University Transfer Programs

maricopa.edu
"How to Work a Job Fair"  
by Keith Forte  
Business Account Coordinator  
Maricopa Workforce Connections  

Let's clear the misconception many job seekers have of a job fair….You are there for a job, right? However, employers do not normally hire at a job fair. Don't be disappointed, as there are many other reasons you should still attend! A job fair is just one step in the process to obtain employment.  

Come prepared with a game plan.  
Research the employers scheduled to attend in advance. Learn the employer's mission, vision, and operating structure. Target your interactions to those employers who are best suited to your knowledge, skills and abilities. Ask questions, have your résumé prepared in advance, and leave it with them if possible.  

Networking is critical in your job search. Meet the recruiters and have a discussion about the research you completed on their company, and impress them with your professional appearance, communication skills, and knowledge. Make connections in person and attempt to turn them into LinkedIn contacts for future networking. Simply ask the recruiter if it would be acceptable to connect, as this puts them in contact with talent (you!).

---

**Job Fairs Coming Up!**  
DREAM Job Fairs for people with disabilities

**Tuesday, October 6, 2015**  
11:00 AM to 1:00 PM  
Mohave County Public Library  
1770 McCulloch Blvd., Lake Havasu City  
Contact: Cristy Crow (928) 302-3631 Ext. 200  
Email: mohavemission@goodwillna.org

**Wednesday, October 7, 2015**  
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Hotel Tucson City Center  
475 N. Granada Ave.  
Contact: Patrick McCarthy, Beacon Group: (520) 622-4874

**Thursday, October 8, 2015**  
9:00 AM to 2:00 PM  
Gateway Community College  
Copper Room  
108 N. 40th St., Phoenix

**Tuesday, October 13, 2015**  
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM  
Resume Workshop  
Maricopa County Library District  
21802 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek  
Contact: Yvette Fielder (602) 372-9721

**Wednesday, October 14, 2015**  
2:00 PM to 5:00 PM  
Career Fair  
Communiversity  
21740 S. Ellsworth Rd.  
Queen Creek, AZ 85142  
Contact: Yvette Fielder (602) 372-9721

**Wednesday, October 14, 2015**  
1:00 PM to 6:00 PM  
ConnectFest 2015  
Resource Fair, Job Fair, and Open House  
Maricopa Skills Center  
1245 E. Buckeye Rd., Phoenix  
Contact: Steve Villa (602) 238-4350

---

**$84 per Credit**  
*Maricopa County Residents*
When applying for a job, the decision about when and how to disclose a disability is confusing for many job seekers. This article answers questions frequently asked.

Am I required to tell an employer I have a disability?

Generally, no. The exception is if you need the job modified in some way so that you can perform the essential functions of the job. Even then you should stick to what modification needs to be made, not a description of your disability or a medical diagnosis. How to communicate when needing an accommodation would fill an entire issue of LivAbility. But one example is that you might need more frequent breaks during the workday to test your sugar level due to diabetes. You will request the accommodation by saying, “I need three breaks during the day instead of two to accommodate a disability.” You would not say, “I have diabetes and have to check my sugar levels during the day. I need more breaks.”

This might seem to be a difference without distinction, but the first statement is specific in that it asks for three breaks. The second statement might cause your employer to think you are requesting a break every hour, resist the request, and thus causes friction between you. The first statement focuses on the job (number of breaks) and not on a medical diagnosis (diabetes). Focusing on the job tasks keeps the focus on the exact action to be taken without forcing the employer to make assumptions due to your own experience that is not at all related to your specific disability.

But the employer needs to know I have a disability. Isn’t it dishonest not to tell her?

Would you tell her you have trouble paying your bills because your ex-husband ran up a bunch of debts before the divorce? Of course not, because it is a personal matter and not something she can do anything about anyway. In fact, discussing your disability, like any other personal matter, might cause an employer to make assumptions due to her own experience that is not at all related to your specific disability.

But if he asks me if I have a disability and I say no, can’t he fire me later for lying on my application?

No. There are very limited circumstances under which an employer is allowed to ask if you have a disability. Even when it is legitimate for him to ask it is always voluntary as to whether you choose to disclose. You cannot be retaliated against later if you do disclose it, such as when you ask for an accommodation.

I often see the question on applications. I thought it was illegal for them to ask?

Usually it is illegal. But in some cases they are required to ask, and it is to your advantage to say yes. Here are the types of employers who may ask:

Federal Contractors: These are for-profit and non-profit companies that have a contract with the federal government to provide goods and services. These employers represent 22% of the workforce. They have an affirmative action obligation to hire qualified individuals with disabilities in all job categories with a goal toward 7% having a disability. In this case, they must ask you before they offer you the job, after they offer it to you, and again periodically after you work for them. They may only ask if you have a disability, nothing about what it is.

Employers who have a diversity goal to hire qualified candidates from all sorts of groups, including disability: Some employers are committed to hiring minorities and people with disabilities because they believe it enhances their workforce. Such employers may not ask until after a conditional job is offered and only whether it exists, not what it is.

Some tips to remember:

1. It is always voluntary to disclose.
2. You never should be asked more than just the general categories and not specifics about your diagnosis.
3. If you disclose, your disclosure is kept separate from the rest of your application. It is not part of your personnel file. Typically, the information is kept in a human resources or affirmative action office. Your hiring manager will likely never know you disclosed.
4. Although disclosure can give you preference, you still must have the basic qualifications for the job, i.e. knowledge, skills, ability, education and experience.
If I feel like my boss or co-workers are picking on me in some way because of my disability, especially if I do not disclose, what should I do?

In small companies you do not have much recourse other than to tactfully try to work it out. But even then you should only talk about your disability in general terms and how it affects your behavior or performance on the job. In larger companies, there is often a human resources department you can ask for help. As a last resort, however, if you truly are discriminated against and the employer has more than 15 employees, you may file a formal complaint against them by contacting the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). www.eeoc.gov.

What if I need an accommodation, but I do not know what would work?

You can discuss it with the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). You can contact them at www.askjan.org or 800-526-7234 (voice) or 877-781-9403 (TTY).

First impressions are critical.

Fair or not, employers make decisions within seconds of meeting you. Do you smile as you give a firm handshake? Do you make eye contact? Are you dressed at least one level above the position? Are you polite to the receptionist and anyone else you see (employers will ask)?

Second impressions are critical.

Employers have one issue: “Can you help me make money?” Be prepared to share how you have increased sales, decreased costs, or both. You’ve done it before, you have training, you have transferable skills, etc. Practice stories ahead of time: “Yes, I have dealt with difficult customers. In fact…”

Third impressions are critical.

When they ask, “Do you have any questions for me?”, if you say, “No, you’ve covered everything,” you are saying you do not want the job. Learn everything about the company that you can, and be prepared to ask questions. Good questions are about performance: “What are your 30/60/90 day goals? What did the last person do that you liked?”

Fourth impressions are critical.

After the interview, you must send a “Thank You” note as soon as possible (that day) to everyone you met. Email is fine; a card with a stamp is better. Say again why you want the job, bring up something that was said in the interview, and you will leave a positive last impression.
AZ Legislature Encourages Arizona Businesses To Hire People with Disabilities
by Amina Donna Kruck, VP of Advocacy, Ability360

During the 2015 Arizona Legislative session, House Concurrent Resolution (H.C.R) 2029 passed the Legislature and was forwarded to the Arizona Secretary of State.

The purpose of the resolution is to express the Legislature's support for the employment of persons with disabilities by Arizona businesses. H.C.R 2029 was sponsored by House Representative Jay Lawrence, Republican representative for legislative District 23. There was no funding impact to this simple bill; it was just a statement of intent that was music to my ears:

“The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by the United States Congress in 1990 and updated in 2008 in order to prohibit discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for persons with disabilities regarding employment, government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities and transportation services. The ADA defines a disability as a recorded, regarded physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The ADA requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities and prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of a disability.”

H.C.R, 2029:
1) Expresses the Legislature's support for the employment of persons with disabilities; and
2) Encourages businesses in this state to hire persons with disabilities.

I interviewed Lawrence, curious to find out what moved him to sponsor the bill. He responded that once he became a Legislator, he had the opportunity to actually do something more about a belief he had expressed many times before during his career as a radio host. He wants employers to keep in mind,

“It is an individual’s ability that matters,” and he stressed that abilities should be the focus, not assumptions.

“I don’t really like the term disability and never use the term handicapped,” he remarked. Lawrence noted employers don’t need to hire “just to be kind” because they get a capable worker. “Let the disabled person compete on an even playing field (with the non-disabled job candidates). Give individuals with disabilities a chance to compete.” A veteran himself, Lawrence strongly believes that it is an employer’s duty to hire veterans with disabilities over non-veterans when the two are equally capable candidates for a job.

H.R.C. 2029 passed with very strong bi-partisan support: 57 to 3 in the House / 29 to 1 in the Senate.

The good news is now all those Legislators have gone on record encouraging employers to hire people with disabilities.

When asked if it was difficult to get so many “yes” votes for his bill, Lawrence replied that many legislators actually came to him once they heard about the bill. “Of course there was no funding involved with this bill,” he noted. Lawrence offered that he would be willing to sponsor and promote other bills, even if they do have funding requests involved, if he feels the bill would improve employment opportunities for Arizonans with disabilities.

Lawrence ended the interview by stating that being an Arizona legislator is the “best job I ever had… I made more money in my broadcast career, but this is the most rewarding. I love my job. Now I can actually have an effect. I work with people I criticized before. I didn’t know how smart they are. I have learned so many lessons about the legislators I work with.”

A Tip to Advocates:
Lawrence encourages citizens to contact their legislators with personal, individualized emails or letters about issues that matter to them rather than copying someone else’s words. He says if he gets 100 or 200 of the same copy-and-paste emails, he will read the first but not respond to the others, whereas if he gets a personal communication he will respond. He may not change his vote, but he appreciates hearing from constituents. If he isn’t able to respond, his legislative assistant helps him.
WORK TOWARD YOUR DREAMS

DON’T LET FEAR OUTSHINE YOUR ABILITY!

Are You Work-Curious?
Register for group learning sessions on the Social Security Work Incentives

2nd Tuesday of each month from 10:00 am - 12:30 pm
October 13 • November 10 • December 8

REGISTER NOW - 602-443-0720  b2w@ability360.org

Need answers now?
Use our online information website with Work Incentives calculators.
Arizona Disability Benefits 101 - www.az.db101.org

Funded in part by Ability360 and Social Security Administration through SSA cooperative agreement WIP13050312-01-00 ($300,000)
In 2000, my wife, Allison, read an article in the East Valley Tribune about an organization named Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled, which now operates as Arizona Disabled Sports (AzDS). They provided many sports opportunities for athletes with disabilities. My son Stephen, who was born with spina bifida, was six years old at the time and we were looking to get him involved in sports. And just like it has with so many other young people, it changed his life’s trajectory.

Stephen got involved in track and field and wheelchair basketball. It was the first time he was able to play sports with other kids who were using chairs. They provided examples of how to do things in a wheelchair; they could joke about their disability and relate to each other in a way Stephen couldn’t with his able-bodied friends. Being part of a team boosted his confidence, and he proudly wore his team gear to school. He made friends on those teams with whom he still remains close today. He also met many adults, both athletes and coaches, who used wheelchairs. They modeled behavior my wife and I felt was important for him to see, such as having a career, a family, and being completely independent.

These positive influences were some of the many unexpected benefits of disabled sports.

Whether your goal is to be a recreational or an elite athlete, improved fitness is valuable for many reasons.

Physical benefits include increased strength and endurance, improved coordination and balance, and a decrease in body weight that can lessen the chance of developing serious secondary conditions. The reduction of physical education programs in schools has only proven to increase the likelihood that a child will develop a sedentary lifestyle; therefore, getting involved in community-based programs is now more important than ever.

The emotional benefits can be even more important. Involvement in sports can improve self-esteem, increase the desire to be independent, help one to develop better social skills, reduce the risk of depression and provide an environment in which to make new friends. Having the opportunity to be around others who also use wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, or prosthetics is not something many kids have the chance to do. These interactions are critical; it demonstrates to them that they are not alone with a disability. If other kids can do it, so can they!

Now that I am the wheelchair track coach for Arizona Disabled Sports, I have seen these physical and emotional benefits first-hand. Many young people come out to Mesa High for our annual Sportsfest and are very hesitant to get in a track chair and try it out. It takes some coaxing and encouragement, but once they overcome their initial fear of trying something and realize they can do it, you can witness the change come over them. The smile starts, slowly at first, and grows quickly. Soon they are talking more and interacting with the other team members. When the time comes to finish their turn, the chair that they were hesitant to get into becomes the chair they are reluctant to leave.

Parents often come back to me and tell me that their child couldn’t stop talking about their cool experience. We tend to participate in activities that interest us. As Ben Scanlan, father of AzDS athlete Gabe, says,
“Starting Gabe in wheelchair sports through AzDS is the best decision we have made. It gave him the opportunity to be competitive at sports despite his birth defect and he has grown tremendously as an individual.” I have heard from parents who have shared that their children's attitudes toward life improve with greater participation in sports activities. It helps them be more confident at school and brings their personality out little by little.

Involvement in sports teaches traits that will last a lifetime, and prepares an athlete for success after athletics. Sports requires athletes to set goals, and work to achieve them. Working with a coach to set long- and short-term goals involves planning and creating timelines. The athlete and coach establish a partnership with both sides accountable for achieving the desired results. The coach can provide the road map through training plans, but the athlete must do the work. As a coach, I am as excited when they achieve their goals as they are!

There is a secret benefit of involvement in sports: it provides parents with leverage. When the possibility of not going to practice can immediately change behavior, you know that the sport has become a very important part of the athlete’s life. ‘You can’t go to practice until your homework is done’ can be one of the best motivators in a parent’s toolbox.

I often wonder how different Stephen’s life would have been had he not become involved in disabled sports fourteen years ago. He has been able to compete all over the United States, as well as France, England, and Puerto Rico. He is now a member of the University of Illinois wheelchair track and road racing team.

We are not alone in our experience. Joe Underwood, a teammate of Stephen’s on the Banner Wheelchair Suns basketball team and one of his best friends, has also been able to continue his athletic endeavors at the college level. Now, he is on scholarship at the University of Missouri as a member of their wheelchair basketball team. Joe has also experienced great success in the pool and is one of the best swimmers in the U.S. in his classification. Joe’s mom, Susan Underwood says, “Without disabled sports, Joe would be a very different person. The opportunities and experiences that disabled sports have opened to him are priceless.”

At Arizona Disabled Sports, we are proud of our athletes that can compete on the national and international stages, but we are just as proud to work with the athletes that come out to improve their fitness, have fun and make friends. Our motto is Let No One Sit on the Sidelines, and we focus on getting everyone involved no matter what their level of ability or personal goals.

I want to stress this to the parents who are reading this: give your child the gift of involvement in sports.

Whether it’s through AzDS or another community-based program, it will be a decision you won’t regret. There are many different sports to choose from, and it doesn’t matter if it’s on the track, the court, in the pool or on the archery range, your child will find something they will enjoy doing, and coaches who devote their time and energy to helping them do it. As Ben says: “If you have a child with a disability, AzDS will help make it an ability.”
Does Arizona Compete?

It was big news when New Jersey's Rutgers University entered the NCAA Big Ten Conference last year. A related story in July didn't receive the same attention. Rutgers announced it was “developing a robust adaptive sports and fitness program for students with disabilities” in response to inquiries by state legislators and the direct advocacy of a local family with an Arizona connection.

New Jersey native, Eric Katz, a full-time wheelchair user, came to the University of Arizona to play wheelchair basketball because he lacked choices at home. “My dad basically did all of the work to get Rutgers to have a program. I believe it was long overdue.” When asked why the Rutgers program was so meaningful that his family advocated even after his graduation, Katz replied, “For someone in my shoes... they can finally start to look at staying near home and with friends before and after school. All of the friends I made in school live on the other side of the country. I don’t see them and lost touch with many.” Katz graduated in 2006. He’s now a practicing prosthetist in New Jersey.

Most college sports are organized and regulated by the National College Athletics Association, the NCAA, a non-profit, private membership organization that generated $989 million in total revenue with more than $80 million of that as surplus revenue in 2014. Their website states: “More than 150,000 college athletes receive $2.7 billion in athletics scholarships each year from NCAA member colleges and universities.”

While some of those athletes may also have disabilities that do not impact their athleticism in typical sports, no adaptive sports are covered by the NCAA and none of their sports scholarships are for adaptive sports.

Without funding from the NCAA, how do adaptive sports score at our state universities?

“The University of Arizona’s adaptive athletics program is the largest university program in the United States,” says Adaptive Athletics Director, David Herr-Cardillo. The UA program includes 6 sports and 50-70 student athletes. Last year, UA made 26 scholarship awards for adapted sports athletes. Herr-Cardillo has been building the adaptive athletics program at UA since 1979. The Wildcats program staffs three head coaches and has trained 27 Paralympians. “I tell my athletes there’s not a professional path at this time for adaptive athletics unless you’re an elite wheelchair racer,” says Herr-Cardillo. “We really emphasize being well-rounded and focus on academics. If any of our students’ grades falls too low, we don’t revoke their athletic scholarship; we work with them to get them back where they belong.”

Some of UA’s success in adaptive athletics is the result of generous funding by Tucson businessman, Jim Click. In 1984, an employee in Click’s auto body shop, Richard Nolen, sustained a C6-7 spinal cord injury playing touch football at a company picnic. Click’s support of Nolen included helping him return to a fully-integrated life after rehab at Craig Hospital, which included adaptive sports. Nolen became a successful wheelchair racer with Herr-Cardillo as his coach and earned his MBA. He now serves as the COO of the Jim Click Automotive Team. Herr-Cardillo said, “Through [Richard’s] experience, Jim saw first-hand how athletics is a tool to rehab and reintegration.” Click founded Tucson’s annual Jim Click Run and Roll, an 8K and 3K Fun Run. The Clicks made a $750,000 donation in 2000 to ensure the ongoing success of adaptive athletics at UA, and The Jim and Vicki Click Adaptive Athletic Center was named in their honor.

The Click Center not only serves as the training center of UA athletes in adaptive sports; it is open for community wellness, with many of the adapted team sports comprised of a mix of UA students and local community members.
Wisconsinite Nate Miller says the wheelchair rugby team at UA was “100% a factor in my decision to come to Arizona.” Miller, a C-7 incomplete quadriplegic as a result of a shallow dive, is finishing his bachelor’s degree in architecture. Six years ago, he was recruited by UA head coach Bryan Barten out of his technical college in Wisconsin. “If not for adaptive athletics, I would not have continued my education.” Miller says that the universal accessibility on campus and the adaptive sports programs bring more people with disabilities out to socialize and interact. He spends much of his free time at the Click Center.

“When you’re surrounded by all the people with all these different abilities, you don’t feel singled out.”

Miller plans to stay in Arizona following graduation and already has an offer of employment through his architecture internship. “People with disabilities who participate in organized sports are more likely to take on other endeavors like employment and starting a family.”

“Preparation for life” is one of the benefits of playing competitive sports listed on the NCAA website. “Increasingly, the business world is focusing on creating a team environment with employees. By competing in college sports, student-athletes learn important skills such as leadership, time management and how to work with others toward a common goal.”

Team sports are a “social network you can rely on every day,” says Dr. Jennifer Ruddell, who earned Paralympic Gold in Athens in 2004 and again in Beijing in 2008 as Team USA co-captain. She is the coach of the fledgling wheelchair basketball program at Arizona State University, which operates with a generous grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation and support from Sun Devil Fitness Downtown Director, Chad Ellsworth. The ASU team is the only member of the intercollegiate division of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association in the Western US, with the next closest team in Arlington, Texas. “We’re a co-ed team and we play in the Men’s Division,” says Ruddell. “This year, we won’t play any home games. They’ll all be in the Midwest and Northeast.” The program does not yet offer scholarships.

Tara Grant is Assistant Director of ASU’s Disability Resource Center. She is enthusiastic about the newly-formed NWBA team as well as the Adaptive Fencing, Power Soccer and Adaptive Sailing programs available to Sun Devil students. “There are a number of opportunities through student clubs; we have a newly-formed goalball club and many others.” She suggests that students with disabilities looking to get involved in student athletics contact her office or check OrgSync, which lists all of ASU’s more than 1,000 student organizations. “If you don’t find what you’re interested in, it’s very easy to start a new student club.”

One must wonder why the NCAA is so conspicuously absent in adapted collegiate athletics. Surely, somewhere in their nearly $3 billion in annual athletic scholarships and $80 million surplus revenue in this year alone, there is one athlete in adaptive sports worthy of their notice.
"I wasn’t a sports kid going up“ says Paralympian Jeremy Wagner. During his days as a welder at the Pearl Harbor shipyard he developed an appreciation. “I was a [Department of Defense] contractor at the time. We were encouraged to participate in basketball and volleyball as a way to build a team.” Wagner was also an Army Reserve sergeant at the time.

The 27 year old native of Hawaii sustained an L1 incomplete spinal cord injury in August 2007 due to a motorcycle accident. He now uses a wheelchair fulltime for his mobility. Eighteen months post-injury he was introduced to adaptive canoeing with outrigger canoes.

“Sports brings a different level to recovery. You really focus on strength and balance and range of motion while you’re having fun.”

Wagner’s focus on sports has served him well. In Denver for the 2010 National Veteran’s Wheelchair Games, he was recruited to join the US Paralympic team. He left Hawaii, stayed in Denver to train for 4 years, and competed in his first Paralympics in Sochi in the Biathlon and Cross-country skiing where he earned a Personal Best. He has aspirations to compete in 2018 Winter Games.

It was the pursuit of Paralympic Gold that brought him to Phoenix with reports that there would be an outrigger canoe event. In October, NAU hosts a seated volleyball tournament. Both UA and ASU will be sending teams.

Students at each of our State universities will find a range of athletic opportunities. Each campus has a Disability Resource Center, which serves as the best portal to find those opportunities. Coaches also attend and recruit at regional games.

But staying in-state isn’t the only, nor always the best, choice. Freshman Rachel Kroener was recruited by universities in Wisconsin and Illinois as well as ASU, but chose University of Texas at Arlington for its Women’s NWBA team. “She accepted with UTA the day before the ASU team was officially formed,” says Kroener’s mother, Kristie. “We toured several schools, but UTA is where Rachel felt she fit in.” Eighteen-year old Kroener will study Exercise Science and Kinesiology; she hopes to become a prosthetist. Kroener was offered a small scholarship when she signed with the UTA team. “It was important that they waived out-of-state tuition. Vocational Rehabilitation will pay in-state tuition, and she earned an academic scholarship as well,” says mom, Kristie Kroener.

Born the middle child and only daughter, Kroener, who lives with Cerebral Palsy, has used a wheelchair for mobility since 7th grade. “I originally wanted her close to home,” says Kristie Kroener. “When we met her coach, we were impressed with the family-oriented feel. He [Coach Doug Garner] helped move Rachel into her accessible apartment, helped fix her wheelchair and hosts Thanksgiving for his athletes who don’t go home for the holiday.” Kroener also holds multiple records in track and field and has Paralympic aspirations in shot put, javelin and discus. UTA is supportive of her Paralympic training.

Rachel Kroener, Wheelchair Basketball

Jeremy Wagner

“...you gotta step out of the box, leave your comfort zone and try.”
rowing classification for the 2016 Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro. He came here to train. He was disappointed when the classification did not make the Games. "But by then I'd found the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center. They offer so many activities. I ran into hockey."

Moving to Phoenix brought Wagner back to team sports where he plays hockey and lacrosse. "Team sports let you see how people work under different conditions." He's excited to be part of the very first NWBA (National Wheelchair Basketball Association) team at ASU.

It is team sport that brings the veteran back to school. "To be on the team, you have to be a full-time ASU student. I have a two year degree in exercise and wellness. It's time to get a four year degree." Wagner plans to make adaptive sports and wellness his focus. "It's exciting to have an opportunity to be on the ground level and see the Sun Devil team flourish."

Wagner sees parallels between adjusting to disability and adaptive sports. "Everything is intimidating at first because you've never done it before, but you gotta step out of the box, leave your comfort zone and try."
Ability360 Home Care Services (formerly known as ABIL’s Personal Assistance Services, or PAS) has provided quality in-home care to seniors and people with disabilities for over 25 years. Currently, Ability360 employs over 2,235 personal care attendants throughout Maricopa, Gila/Pinal and Pima Counties. Our exceptional reputation in the community speaks for itself.

Consumer-driven, Home Care provides peace of mind, individualized care by well-trained staff who are caring, honest and reliable while respecting the consumer’s self-determination and degree of independence. Our agency is currently the largest provider of in-home care in Arizona. The Home Care program has been an integral part of our agency since the mid 1980’s and has provided us with a personal and intimate connection to the disability community and the everyday issues that make it possible for our consumers to live in their own homes, remain independent, and participate in community life.

November is National Family Caregivers Month. Ability360 wishes to recognize all of our caregivers, both family and non-family. What better way to celebrate this important month than to spotlight the relationship between our care attendants and the consumers they assist? In this issue and the next, join us as we share stories of inspiration that illustrate the profound effect our personal care attendants and consumers can have on each other.
Maria & James

Maria has cared for James for approximately two years in the home that he shares with his beloved wife of 56 years, Anne. James suffered a stroke over 10 years ago, and as a result, is aphasic. Anne was one of two consumers who wrote letters, nominating Maria for HCS Caregiver of the Month for Maricopa County, a recognition that was bestowed upon Maria for the month of July. Maria was hired specifically to care for James while providing Anne help and respite.

Anne exclaimed, “I marvel at her. She’s a fantastic lady.” Maria cleans the home, cooks, launders, lifts, grocery shops and picks up prescriptions. Anne explains that Maria does what has to be done, anticipating the needs of both James and Anne and always with a smile on her face. Maria sits and visits with Jim, who looks forward to seeing her the three days per week that she is scheduled. Anne states that she feels very comfortable when Maria is present. She can lie down and rest while Maria is visiting and looking after James. Anne considers Maria “a blessing” and knows that she can call her if she or James needs anything, particularly considering that Maria lives close by.

Maria, one of 10 children, considers the services that she provides to be “fun and easy.” Maria’s passion for helping others is evident. As we neared the end of our interview and photo session, Anne’s cornflower blue eyes were brimming with gratitude as she glanced over at Maria, “She’s beyond special,” she exclaimed.

“I love to do it.” She explained that her pay is not in the wage she collects, but in the smiles she receives from her consumers, whom she considers family. Maria is thankful to Ability360 for hiring her.

Monica & Carol

Monica was also a nominee for HCS Caregiver of the Month. Monica was chosen as the recipient for July for Pinal County. Dale, the husband of Monica’s current consumer, Carol, wrote a letter of sincere appreciation for everything that Monica does to assist and support Carol. Neither Carol nor Monica was aware that Dale wrote a letter to our agency. Dale is the pastor of a local church and operates a food bank and school. His schedule is considerably busy with community outreach.

In 1994, Carol survived a plane crash. Her back was broken in three places, her wrists were broken and she suffered 33 fractures to her ribs. In addition, she suffered a traumatic brain injury that has resulted in Carol losing her ability to remember short term and severely affected her ability to remember long term. Since June, Carol has undergone three separate back surgeries, bringing her total to 15.

Monica takes Carol to her medical appointments, bathes, feeds and dresses her. Monica cleans, launders and cooks for Carol. Monica is one of 13 children, raised by a single mother. She states that she never learned to cook, but Carol is teaching her! Carol has a treasure trove of recipes, and the ladies have a cooking session in which Carol will sit with Monica in the kitchen, guiding her through the recipe, providing tips and encouragement along the way. Monica states that she can now cook terrific meals for her own family and they love it!

Dale and Carol have a beloved Maltese, Max. During Carol’s most recent hospital stay, Dale was unable to leave and check in on Max. Monica was more than happy to do so.

“She’s a Godsend. She gives me reason to go on,” Carol matter-of-factly stated. “It’s difficult to find decent, tender-hearted individuals to work with seniors. I feel considerably blessed to have Monica. She’s like a daughter.”
The Independent Living Council is a group of consumers who work with Ability360’s Independent Living staff to provide invaluable input and direction to the Independent Living classes and programs. All Council members are active participants from a cross section of IL programs, providing a direct link between consumers and staff, participating in regular Council meetings, and initiating projects to benefit all consumers, including the Emergency Preparedness kits project.

In addition to being Ability360 consumers, IL Council members are advocates, volunteers and leaders. They are involved in a variety of events, including the AZ Youth Leadership Forum, AzDAC Day at the Capitol, the Ability360 Independent Living Fair, and more.

Valentina Tarango, an Ability360 consumer and IL Council member, expressed how important the IL Council’s role is in providing consumers with information about resources available to them at Ability360 and beyond. The Council was established in 2008, and as Valentina has experienced, its activities have made an impact on people with and without disabilities. People with disabilities are more aware of the resources available to them, while disability awareness has been heightened in the larger community.

Valentina captured the spirit behind the IL Council as she shared, “If you have a disability, as I do, it helps you know more about the community. Before the Council, I wasn’t very involved. Now, I feel more alive.”

Are you an Ability360 IL consumer who would like to provide input and direction to the Independent Living programs? Interested in developing your advocacy and leadership skills? Join us for the IL Council Kickoff on October 27th, from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Ability360 Center in the first-floor conference center. Learn about the IL Council and how you can get involved. RSVP by October 20th by calling Stacey at 602-296-0534.

Learn more about the Ability360 IL Council at www.Ability360.org or call (602) 256-2245
During the past months, Ability360’s Independent Living Council has been busy developing Emergency Preparedness kits for other consumers with disabilities and raising the funds necessary to create the kits. To date, through hamburger and hot dog sales during Friday lunches at the Ability360 Center, the Council has raised $550, allowing the Council to sell the kits for half price at only $5 each.

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT**

**OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR MARKETPLACE HEALTH INSURANCE (OBAMACARE) IS NOVEMBER 1, 2015 – JANUARY 31, 2016**

Keogh Health Connection offers FREE application assistance at many locations valley wide, including the Ability360 Center and all Ability360 sites. This open enrollment is short! If you or your family need help with Marketplace Insurance, AHCCCS, TANF or SNAP (Food Stamps), call 602-266-0397 for information or to make an appointment.

www.keoghhealth.org
Road to Rio 2016

by Loren Worthington, Ability360

Fall is a busy time for adaptive sports. The Paralympics in Rio are less than a year away, and many of the sports are beginning to select which athletes will represent their country. Arizona has numerous athletes with gold medal aspirations. In the coming year, LivAbility will be following them as they get on The Road to Rio.

Kaitlynn Verfuerth (Flagstaff) has been climbing the ranks in women’s wheelchair tennis for the past year. In the Parapan Games she took home a silver in singles and a bronze in doubles. Kaitlyn was off to New York for the US Open in mid September.

Eric Bennett (Surprise) took a very respectable silver medal in the Recurve Bow (Archery) Open Division in the Parapan Games in Toronto in August. The single-arm amputee then surprised the archery world with an upset gold medal victory in the World Archery Para Championships in Germany. His win cements Team USA’s ticket into Rio. Atta boy, Eric!

Allysa Seely (Glendale) is making her move to join Team USA in Rio in the highly competitive new Paralympic sport of Paratriathlon racing. Allysa took home a silver medal last month in Detroit’s World Paratriathlon event, where the amputee women of Team USA swept up all three medals. Expected to take bronze in September in the 2015 ITU Elite Paratriathlon World Championships in Chicago, the Arizonan said “no thank you” and ran past both of her teammates, both former world champions, to take the gold medal and secure Team USA a spot in Rio. Way to go, Allysa!

Eric Hightower (Glendale) is one of Team USA’s top prospects for wheelchair racing. While winning one Parapan silver in the 400-meter race, he was involved in a terrible crash in qualifying that affected the balance of his races in Toronto. He will be heading to the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar, with an eye on securing his invite to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

Kaitlynn Verfuerth (Flagstaff) has been climbing the ranks in women’s wheelchair tennis for the past year. In the Parapan Games she took home a silver in singles and a bronze in doubles. Kaitlyn was off to New York for the US Open in mid September.

Allysa Seely (Glendale) is making her move to join Team USA in Rio in the highly competitive new Paralympic sport of Paratriathlon racing. Allysa took home a silver medal last month in Detroit’s World Paratriathlon event, where the amputee women of Team USA swept up all three medals. Expected to take bronze in September in the 2015 ITU Elite Paratriathlon World Championships in Chicago, the Arizonan said “no thank you” and ran past both of her teammates, both former world champions, to take the gold medal and secure Team USA a spot in Rio. Way to go, Allysa!

Rachel Kroener (Phoenix) who is currently attending the University of Texas at Arlington has been selected to represent the USA at the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar in October competing in shot put and javelin.

Arizona is home to five of the twelve athletes that make up the contingency of Team USA’s Wheelchair Rugby squad. Four of the crew, Chad Cohn (Tucson), Ernie Chun (Phoenix), Joe Delagrave (Chandler) and Josh Wheeler (San Tan Valley) were in Toronto for the Parapan Games. Unquestionably, the toughest ticket to get was for the long-anticipated rematch of Team USA and Team Canada in Wheelchair Rugby. The rivalry goes way back, and at stake was advancement to the Parapan Games in Rio de Janeiro next summer. In a gut-churning double overtime match, Team USA beat the Canadians in the preliminary match. In Friday’s finale in front of well over 10,000 local fans, Team Canada prevailed, and the USA Team had to settle for silver. The boys are off to London for The Rugby World Cup in October and then hope to qualify for Rio in early 2016. 😊
The co-founder of Wheelchair Labs, a nonprofit organization in Phoenix, accomplishes this by providing refurbished and repaired power wheelchairs and scooters to those in need. This service is provided at no cost to the benefactor and is made possible by donations. Those served include disabled veterans and any others in need, allowing them to move freely within their communities, gaining better access to jobs, resources, education and basic needs.

In 2003, Lance’s brother Brent was diagnosed with a rare form of Parkinson’s disease. Seeing his brother lose his mobility brought home to Lance how important the wheelchair was to Brent’s life and how cost prohibitive a wheelchair was for many people. He built his brother a custom, edgy, designed wheelchair, which changed Brent’s life. Instead of seeing his brother as a “wheelchair dependent” person, others saw and treated him differently, talking about the chair instead of his illness. His brother passed away in 2004, but this experience inspired Lance to create Wheelchair Labs, where he continues to honor his brother by helping others become mobile and independent.

Lance Greathouse works as an optical equipment engineer by day to make a living, but his true passion in life is to help people with mobility impairments live life to the fullest.
Wheelchair Labs gifts up to four chairs or scooters per week. This is made possible in part by dedicated volunteers. Among his volunteer crew are neighbors, retired engineers, a biomedical researcher and a software engineer. But this project is also a family affair. Among those getting their hands dirty are Lance’s two sons and his wife and cofounder, Janis. His mother cleans the chairs and his father provides custom paint jobs, transforming the refurbished chairs to like-new condition. This endeavor is truly a labor of love for all involved.

Lance recognizes that the need for power chairs and scooters is so great that he could do this full time and still have a challenge keeping up. His goal is to be able to devote all of his time to his true passion.

“There are many who do not have the resources or insurance to cover the cost of a new chair or for needed repairs. Even veterans sometimes have to wait months or years to get the chair they need.”

His ultimate goal includes operating a mobile service, allowing chair users to receive service in their homes and communities. When someone’s chair breaks down, or when someone doesn’t even have a chair, getting to the shop can be an obstacle. Lance intends to come to them.

When asked how his goal of running Wheelchair Labs full time - including a mobile unit he coined “Frankencart” - could become reality, Lance’s answer is simple: Donations. He has been grateful for the generosity of like-minded donors, including Lincoln Electric and Vern Lewis Welding. Lincoln Electric donated an aluminum welder; Vern Lewis Welding donated gas tanks and welding supplies. Boca Bearings kindly donates bearings for his many projects.

“I have everything I need for my mobile cart. Now I just need batteries.”

Lance estimates that the majority of the funding he seeks is to buy batteries to power the chairs and scooters. If this cost-prohibitive item was not a factor, Wheelchair Labs could serve more people, and Lance could spend more time applying his “mad scientist” skills to building and repairing chairs.

Lance also gets numerous requests for off-road chairs. Lance is completing an offroad chair for a Navajo man he met through the VA Hospital who ran marathons prior to becoming paralyzed. What he really wanted was to participate in pow wows in Flagstaff, but he couldn’t access them with a regular chair. His offroad chair will have big tires that will allow him to maneuver on dirt surfaces. Lance would like to be able to fulfill more requests like this one.

“We started this project in order to gift chairs to deserving people. That’s what we want to continue doing.”

On May 30th, 2015, Lance was invited as a guest to the Annual Conference of the Department of Arizona – Military Order of the Purple Heart, where he was presented with a Special Recognition Award. In July 2015, Lance was recognized with the Trailblazer Award at the ADA 25th Anniversary Gala held in Tempe, recognizing his innovations and advancements on behalf of people with disabilities.

Appearances, articles and interviews of his innovations, inventions and wheelchair works include appearances on ABC TV’s Shark Tank, PBS Horizon, National Geographic’s Mad Scientists, Discovery Channel, History Channel’s Invention USA, Science Channel’s Underground Science, and more. He is also included in a number of articles for publications including Popular Science, Popular Mechanics, Wired, Wall Street Journal and Forbes.

Beloved family pet, Josie, keeping a close eye on the property.
Everyone has a mission in life. I know what mine is.

Help Lance Make It Happen!

Vote for Lance’s Tailgating Chair for People with Disabilities in the Boca Bearings 2015 Innovation Competition!

Supporters can vote each month. As Lance stated, “The top prize of $5,000 could buy a lot of batteries for chairs and scooters!”

VOTE FOR LANCE GREATHOUSE
http://tinyurl.com/LanceGreathouse
Top 10

Things to Learn About the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center
by Brielle Carter, Program Coordinator

1. **Equipment Orientations**
   Once you have signed up for a membership at Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center, you are eligible for a complimentary fitness equipment orientation, where you will learn how to use the equipment properly and workout safely. Even if you have worked out before, we recommend this for any new member. If you are currently a member, but haven’t received an equipment orientation, please contact us to schedule today!

2. **Recreation Equipment**
   Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center has various sports and recreation equipment that you can use while you are here, such as basketballs, soccer balls, scooters, parachutes, games, crafts and much more. Stop by the front desk to check out any recreation equipment at no charge.

3. **Personal Training Inquiries**
   Every member can schedule a complimentary one-on-one 30-minute inquiry with a national certified personal trainer. A trainer will evaluate your risk stratification, health history, health behavior modification goals, exercise prescription, and if you desire, set up a fee-based personal training session.

4. **Private Swim Lessons**
   Available for everyone! Our pools are open March through the end of November. We have member and non-member rates for swim lessons. Brush up on your swim skills or learn to swim for the first time. Everyone is eligible for an assessment prior to your first fee-based swim lesson.
5. **Wheelchairs for Use**
   Ability360 received a grant from Thunderbird Charities and Fiesta Bowl Charities to purchase sport wheelchairs of all sizes. Chairs are available for use during classes and programs such as wheelchair tennis and wheelchair lacrosse, and to train in the fitness center at no additional cost. We also received a donation from UnitedHealthcare Community Plan for ten every-day chairs of all sizes.

6. **Recreation Therapy Sessions**
   At Ability360, we provide an opportunity to enhance the quality of life of individuals with disabilities through participation in creative arts, sensory play, adaptive sports, social recreation, fitness, rock climbing and aquatic programs. We aim not only to increase recreation participation, but also range of motion, communication, self-confidence, coping skills, leisure awareness, health and wellness. A Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) will facilitate or shadow the session. Recreation Therapy services are for participants of all ages and is fee based.

7. **Adaptive Golf**
   Be adventurous and stand up and play with Ability360’s paramobiles. Please inquire at the front desk to rent a paramobile for your next tee time!

8. **Ability360 to Go**
   We recognize that groups and organizations cannot always come to us; with Ability360 to Go, we will come to you! We can speak to your group about all the activities and programs we offer, provide a fitness sample class and have an athlete share his or her story.

9. **Silver Level Paralympic Sport Club**
   Ability360 is designated as a Silver Level Paralympic Sport Club (PSC) by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). Paralympic Sport Clubs are community-based programs that engage youth and adults with physical and visual disabilities in sports and physical activity regardless of skill level. We advanced to the Silver Level by expanding Paralympic Sports programs and events, participating in a Paralympic Talent Identification Day and obtaining Paralympic Sport Coaching certifications, among other benchmarks.

10. **Team360**
    Team360 is an opportunity for our staff, members and volunteers to participate in community fundraisers and events in order to support the disability community, while promoting Ability360 and the sponsored organization. For example, The Rookie Team360 membership costs $15; Ability360 will pay for $30 worth of registration fees for Ability360-approved community fundraisers and events such as 5Ks, marathons, triathlons and more. With this package, the Rookie receives a Team360 shirt to be worn at these events. This package may only be purchased by Ability360 Sports & Fitness members and used by that individual.
This past July, Ability360 staff and board members attended the National Council on Independent Living Conference in Washington, D.C. The annual NCIL conference focuses on issues critical to persons with disabilities to continue to live independently in the community, such as employment, social security reform, transportation and housing. Many more young adults attended the conference than in the past and led several sessions focusing on youth issues. In addition, a large contingent of Japanese with disabilities came to learn about our Independent Living movement and share their experiences living with a disability in Japan. The highlight, of course, was celebrating the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. NCIL held a gala, and the following day, over 2,000 persons with disabilities exercised their First Amendment Rights and marched down Pennsylvania Avenue to the United States Capitol to commemorate the ADA and meet with their congressional delegation on important issues facing the disability community. Exercising one’s constitutional rights is the best way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ADA!
experiences living with a disability in Japan. The highlight, of course, was celebrating the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. NCIL held a gala, and the following day, over 2,000 persons with disabilities exercised their First Amendment Rights and marched down Pennsylvania Avenue to the United States Capitol to commemorate the ADA and meet with their congressional delegation on important issues facing the disability community. Exercising one’s constitutional rights is the best way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ADA!

WHAT IS NCIL?

Founded in 1982, The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) is a grassroots organization that exemplifies the values of disability culture and independent living. Run by and for individuals with disabilities, NCIL accentuates that those with disabilities have incomparable perspective to contribute to society, and deserve an equal opportunity in determining how to live, and be a part of, and take part in their communities. As a membership organization, NCIL is committed to advancing the Disability Rights Movement. A multitude of organizations and people, such as Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs), individuals with disabilities, and other organizations advocating for the human and civil rights of people with disabilities in the United States are represented and assisted by NCIL.

Learn more about Ability360’s Advocacy Services at www.Ability360.org or call (602) 443-0723
Saturday, October 17
9am - 1pm

**Arizona Disabled Sports** is partnering up with Rio Salado Rowing Club and invites you to cruise the lake and pathways with some outdoor fun in adaptive cycling, kayaking and rowing for people with physical disabilities. Wrap up the day with a little family-friendly BBQ picnic.

SRP Tempe Town Lake Marina
Cycling, Kayaking, & Rowing

**Registration Deadline:**
Monday, October 5th, 2015

Please direct questions to Nina Bernardo, nina@arizonadisabledsports.com

---

**Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center** is partnering with Wheelchair Tennis Arizona to bring you the Desert Tennis Open. This is the first year of the tournament. You can still sign up to play and everyone is welcome to watch.
Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center is partnering with Wheelchair Tennis Arizona to bring you the Desert Tennis Open. This is the first year of the tournament. You can still sign up to play and everyone is welcome to watch.

Arizona Disabled Sports is partnering up with Rio Salado Rowing Club and invites you to cruise the lake and pathways with some outdoor fun in adaptive cycling, kayaking and rowing for people with physical disabilities. Wrap up the day with a little family-friendly BBQ picnic.

SRP Tempe Town Lake Marina
Cycling, Kayaking, & Rowing
Registration Deadline: Monday, October 5th, 2015
Please direct questions to Nina Bernardo, nina@arizonadisabledsports.com

Saturday, October 17
9am - 1pm
3rd Annual Duel in the Desert
October 23rd & 24th
Adaptive Sports | Car Show | Food & Music
Magazine Back Cover for Details

BONDURANT’S
DRIVING TO EXCEL
Friday, December 4th
3:00PM - 6:30PM

Have a need for speed? Come out to the track for a great day of fast cars with adaptive driving controls for everyone. For more information call 602-406-6280.
CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

Allysa Seely
Competitive tri-athlete and 2016 Paralympic hopeful

"Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center is more than just a gym. It is a welcoming and accepting environment to individuals of all abilities. It is a place where the impossible becomes reality every day. It is a place where I can go to get my workouts done and where I can take newly disabled individuals and introduce them to all that is possible."

Roseanne Terrill
Grandparent of the youth member

"In the two short months that my family has been there, the Fitness Center has opened a whole new world for Morgan. Being from Vermont, she is house bound a good portion of the year. What makes the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center even more wonderful is that her brother, Jackson, who is four, can participate right along with her and share the experience. As he gets older, these experiences will help him appreciate, on a small scale, some of the challenges his sister faces every day."

Hugh Smith
Director of the Pacific Region for First Tee and former Executive Director of The First Tee of Phoenix

"My organization recently held a holiday event at the Fitness Center for over 700 people. It was an extremely successful event and everyone who attended commented on how great the facilities were. The Staff was professional, competent and responsive to our needs. We look forward to holding our event there for years to come."

We’d love to add you to our list of supporters!
Please contact our Director of Development, Meghan Fable, at meghanf@ability360.org for more details.
Volunteer to prepare tax returns for low-to-moderate income individuals and families for free.

CITY OF PHOENIX
Earned Income Tax Campaign
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

FREE TRAINING
• Locations throughout the city
• Various dates and times of operation
• Variety of volunteer opportunities
• Satisfaction of helping others

For more information or to volunteer, contact Briselda Rodriguez at 602-534-0543 or go to www.volunteer.phoenix.gov and search VITA

Living Well with a Disability
Free Ongoing Course, Starting Soon

Develop meaningful goals and achieve them. Living Well with a Disability is a FREE 10-week wellness course designed specifically to help adults with physical disabilities and medical chronic conditions.

APPLY NOW!
LWD@ability360.org
602-258-2245
The old Mesa High School “Jack Rabbit Gymnasium”, built in 1961, has been the home to Arizona Disabled Sports since 2003. The facility is now owned by the City of Mesa Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities and leased by the non-profit organization to host adaptive sports, City programs and community rentals. The gymnasium received significant water damage due to the 1,000-year floods that hit Arizona in September of 2014. After months of closures and construction, the facility is now complete, with a brand new sub-floor Retro-flex maple floor system, automatic bleachers, light fixtures and a fresh coat of paint.

Arizona Disabled Sports hosted the Grand Re-opening on Wednesday, July 29th, to celebrate the completion of the project as well as to show off the new look of the facility. Over 80 individuals attended the re-opening, which included breakfast, facility tours and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Special guests including Mesa Vice-Mayor, Dennis Kavanaugh, Parks Director, Marc Heirshberg, and AzDS Board President, Barbara Peacock spoke about the impact of this facility on the Mesa community as well as the community of individuals with disabilities. All of the attendees were impressed with the transformation of the venue, which has been a staple in the Mesa community for so many years.

Additional upgrades to the facility include six new basketball rims, wall padding and a new parking lot. The Broadway Recreation Center is the home to Arizona Disabled Sports weekly programs including junior wheelchair basketball, power soccer, indoor archery, floor hockey, basketball and cheerleading. The adaptive programs of Arizona Disabled Sports are excited to have their home court back and can’t wait to get the season started! 😊

Learn more about the center at www.BroadwayRecreationCenter.com or call the AzDS Office - (480) 835-6273
The ABCs of Special Needs Planning
Made Easy

Guardianship - What Happens at 18?
This workshop is designed for parents, professionals and caregivers. Relevant for all ages and types of developmental disabilities.

Saturdays
October 24th • November 21st • December 19th
10:00 – 11:30 am

Ability360 Center
Second floor, Classroom A or B
5025 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034

Please RSVP (480) 409-2738 or info@specialneedsproject.org

“When I began losing my sight I felt helpless. Today I climb canyons!”
#SEEMECONQUER

Foundation for Blind Children

Donate  Volunteer  Tax Credits  Corporate Giving

SEEITOURWAY.ORG
A Daring Adventure
Maria Smiles

“The hardest part of the trip was that it came to an end,” Maria shared, “but everything has a beginning and end.” For her, the most memorable part of the trip was all the care that she received and the way everyone came together. Maria had these words of advice for anyone else who was nervous about being able to do a trip: “Just go for it. Now I know there are no limitations!”
A massive blue sky, clustered with mashed potato clouds that look so close you could reach your spoon out and take a bite. The smell of fresh air and pine trees permeating with every deep breath. Steady breezes pass through the needles and leaves, bringing peaceful thoughts. And of course, a crackling fire warms familiar faces to an almost demonic orange glow.

These are experiences that anyone fortunate enough to explore Northern Arizona's backcountry can relate to fondly, and most would agree everyone has the right to enjoy. For some people, there are just a few more challenges to overcome to get there.

Maria Favela came to Daring Adventures this July with the urge to explore that all adventurers share. She came across a flier for a backpacking trip to the Mogollon Rim during one of her workout days at the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center. For her, this was an opportunity of a lifetime; at 35 years old, Maria had never gone camping or even experienced a campfire. Her diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy required her to use a wheelchair for most of her getting-around needs. Thanks to the Safari Chair, a modified wheelchair capable of traversing the rugged terrain on a backwoods trail, Daring Adventures was able to provide this experience for Maria.

Even with the benefits of the Safari Chair and essential equipment provided by Daring Adventures, Maria was still understandably nervous as the trip date approached. “I didn’t really know what to expect” she related afterward. “I had never done something like this before and didn’t want something bad to happen.” After the orientation, she started feeling a little better as she was able to meet the staff, volunteers and participants attending the three-day excursion. Her thoughts turned more to “what type of food do I want to bring?” and “who are these crazy people who are willing to pull me through the forest?”

The day finally came for the trip, and Maria was the first one to arrive. She had everything she needed: a packed bag; lots of food and water; and an unforgettable smile. A few hours later as we turned onto the forest road and reached the trailhead, Maria thought to herself, “I can’t believe I am doing this!” The fear was gone; the only thing left was the beautiful sights, sounds and smells of the Mogollon Rim. Maria spent the next three days enjoying everything as much as possible, always with her trademark smile.

Upcoming Daring Adventures

October 10th – 12th
Superstitions Backpacking Treasure Hunt

October 22nd – 26th
Wounded Warrior Backpacking Trip to Havasupai

October 17th, 24th, 31st, and November 7th
Kayaking Phoenix area Lakes and the Salt River

November 14th
Phoenix Summit Challenge and UROCK Festival

Sundays November – December
Long Ride Cycling

December 19th
Wounded Warrior Winter Conditioning

January 9th – 10th
Cross Country Skiing in Flagstaff

To register for programs, send an email to info@daring-adventures.org or call (585) 474-2793.

For more information, visit our website at www.daring-adventures.org
The Arizona Science Center in downtown Phoenix opened in 1997. I remember that grand opening and the excitement that I felt as I waited in line to enter the brand new “museum.” I wasn’t disappointed; the Science Center was fun, innovative and informative, with hands-on exhibits clearly designed for youngsters, or those of us young-at-heart.

Despite that enjoyable first experience, I hadn’t been back to the Center in well over ten years, so I decided upon a return visit to see if it still held the same magic I remembered from earlier days. In short, the answer was both “yes” and “no.”

The Arizona Science Center is located in Heritage Square, 600 E. Washington Street, Phoenix, a short walk from the light rail stop at 3rd Street and Washington. If you prefer driving, there are pay parking structures nearby. The Heritage Square parking structure, just north of the Science Center, offers discounted parking with a validated ticket from the Center.

As a wheelchair user, I remember, in the past, entering the Arizona Science Center via a long, outdoor, switchback ramp that was not exactly a great first impression maker. That has changed. Today, the Center is accessed via the north side (power door opener available) and a wide, indoor ramp guides visitors to the lower level in air-conditioned comfort—a big improvement from the past.

The general admission fee is a bit steep, in my opinion: $16.95 adults; $11.95 kids (ages 3-17); and $14.95 seniors (62+); or free for Members of the Science Center (membership is $75 per year for an individual, or $95 for a couple, and includes numerous perks). There is an additional fee to view the “featured exhibitions” - in this case, an additional $5 to tour the feature “Grossology: The Impolite Science of the Human Body”. Finally, I plunked down another $9 to view the IMAX film entitled “D-Day 3D: Normandy 1944”, a 45-minute documentary about D-Day, narrated by Tom Brokaw. Total cost of my Arizona Science Center visit: $29.95.

First, let me say that if you don’t like children, you won’t enjoy the Science Center—they’re everywhere, and they’re having fun (i.e. out of control). This museum is designed for youngsters, so expect bright, cartoonish colors, stimulating signage and engaging exhibits in seemingly every direction. The Center is divided into learning areas entitled such things as “All About Me”, “Solarville”, and “My Digital World”. Each area is broken into numerous learning stations and each station is designed to teach children a scientific principle - how the heart works, or what magnets do - through fun activities. Some of these activities are truly ingenious, while others are a bit humdrum. If you’re looking for the most fun activities, just follow the children - they seem to know immediately.

The activities seem to be set up for maximum inclusivity. I was able to experience most of the museum using my wheelchair. One of my favorite exhibits allowed children to experience sitting in side-by-side manual wheelchairs and “racing” each other by propelling the chairs in a video game.

The Featured Exhibit, “Grossology”, was definitely worth the extra $5 admission. I won’t go into detail here, but suffice it to say that this exhibit explains in scientific...
terms every gross function, fluid or flatulence, that the human body creates. In other words, kids and those of us with an immature streak love it. The faint-of-heart should avoid "Grossology" (you're in luck: it ends on Labor Day).

The best part of my Arizona Science Center fieldtrip was the IMAX Theater film about D-Day. This well-made documentary featured amazing aerial footage, eye-popping animation and an excellent narrative that explained the events of June 6th, 1944 - WWII's "longest day" - in crisp, clear terms. It was an engaging film; I only wish it had been longer than 45 minutes.

I made a point to check the restrooms for accessibility: they get a thumbs-up from me. The electric door-opener to the cafeteria, "The Lab Café", was not functioning, so I pointed this out to the staff. The snacks in the cafeteria seemed to be excessively priced, but the staff was friendly and helpful. I didn’t have time to check out Awesome Atom’s, the Center's gift shop. I might have to go back for that.

If you have children, the Arizona Science Center is a surefire winner, albeit an expensive one. As an adult, I found enough to keep me interested, but I don't feel a burning need to return again for a few more years. If you've never been, indulge your inner-child's curiosity and give the Arizona Science Center a try. One last recommendation: be sure to make use of the numerous Purell dispensers scattered about inside; after viewing "Grossology", I know what those children are spreading around!

The Featured Exhibit, Grossology, was definitely worth the extra $5 admission. I won’t go into detail here, but suffice it to say this exhibit explains, in scientific terms, every gross function, fluid or flatulence that the human body creates.
When the community works together, the community works

A vibrant community depends on the participation of its members. The more diverse their backgrounds, experience and skills, the more unique their contributions to the community can be.

Bank of America recognizes Duel in the Desert for celebrating individuality while supporting the common goals that bring progress to everyone.

Visit us at bankofamerica.com/arizona

Life’s better when we’re connected®
The Improbable Theatre Company's (ITC) 2014-15 season was filled with opportunity, advocacy, and commemoration, beginning with “Let’s Stand Together,” an original work in celebration of the 24th Americans with Disabilities Act anniversary. This production combined music, sign, dance, and a rousing title song in reggae beat, voicing support of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

ITC was honored to perform at Arizona’s 14th Annual Transition Conference, which featured two original songs, “Transition Mission” and “Afraid of Changes,” written by Artistic Director, Melissa Ann Santora. In addition, the crowd was wowed by a high energy performance of the Katy Perry song “Roar” in American Sign Language.

October found ITC performing “I Have A Disability, But It Doesn’t Have Me!” at Disability Week for Estrella Mountain Community College. Each of the performers wrote and performed a scene about his/her life experience as a person who has a disability. An open talk session following the performance revealed that audience members were engaged, informed, and reflective about disability in their own lives, as well as in the lives of family and friends.

In December, ITC produced “A Very Merry Variety Show,” in which 14 festive songs were sung in celebration of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and New Year. The cast agreed that the song “Kwanzaa Man” made a lasting impression, and cast members are often heard greeting one another, “Jambo!” which is Swahili.

In 2015, the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provided ITC with an opportunity to mark the occasion with a multimedia production “To Boldly Go Where Everyone Else Has Gone Before,” at Herberger’s Lunch Time Theater. The 13 performers paid homage to the Law and to those who worked to enact it, through song and dance numbers designed to entertain and educate.

ITC produced “The Chronicles of Deadcow Arizona, Chapter One: The Dastardly Deeds Behind the Scenes of the Vaudeville Show at the Watch Yer Step Saloon,” by Mark Tenniswood with Henry Sutton, at Herberger’s Lunch Time Theater in September. This kick in yer pants cast provided some o’ the best daggum entertainment this side o’ Hogtie!

“I Do Disability, Do You?!” in October 2015, will be the final production for the ITC season, and for ITC altogether, as Improbable Theatre Company proudly announces its new name: Theatre360!

An open talk session following the performance revealed that audience members were engaged, informed, and reflective about disability in their own lives, as well as in the lives of family and friends.

In 2015, Theatre360, by Melissa Ann Santora

Learn more about Theatre360 at www.Ability360.org or call (480) 584-1931
NEW TO THE COURT
Ability360 Adds New Adaptive Sports

by Anna Werner

Amputee Basketball Tournaments

Players from all over the country played in the first annual Stand-Up Amputee 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament on June 20th at the Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center.

One of two teams fielded by AMP1, an amputee basketball team that plays against high school teams to raise awareness, took first place in the single-elimination tournament. The Rush Rebels took second and a local Phoenix team captained by David Banks, founder of the National Amputee Sports Foundation (NASF), captured third place.

Players from New York, Utah, Oregon, Texas, California and Arizona arrived at the center Saturday morning for the first three rounds of games. A DJ played music and lunch was provided for the players. According to Gus LaZear, Vice President & General Manager of Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center, “The play was competitive, and the tournament was on.”

Banks and LaZear organized a stand-up amputee basketball program last September with the help of a local sponsor. The first night of the program, over 13 individuals with various prosthetics came to play.

“I had to take a step back and just listen to what the players were saying,” LaZear said. “One player stated that this was the first time he had been in the same room with so many other amputees. Hearing this remark, I knew this was the start of something special.”

In January, Banks and LaZear started planning the first-ever stand-up amputee 3-on-3 basketball tournament to take the program to the next level.

Swift Charities, among others, sponsored the event, and teams registered to fill the tournament roster.

According to LaZear, the players are looking forward to another tournament next June. Stand-up amputee basketball will return to Ability360 in late October as the newest sport added to the third annual Duel in the Desert Adaptive Sports Tournament. ☺
Wheelchair Lacrosse Clinic

On June 25th, participants attended the first Wheelchair Lacrosse Clinic held at Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center, an event that sparked the addition of another team sport to the list of adaptive sports for people with disabilities to play at the facility.

Bill Lundstrom and Ryan Baker, founders of Wheelchair Lacrosse USA (WLUSA), led the two-day clinic in which participants learned general lacrosse instruction, rules, situational drills and game play. Participants tested their new skills and scrimmaged against each other on the final day. WLUSA donated approximately $5,000 of equipment to the Sports & Fitness Center to help begin a team in Phoenix.

“IT went phenomenally,” said Matthew Slansky, Ability360 fitness specialist. “The participants were excited, dedicated and motivated. The skill level that came out of it and the camaraderie and sportsmanship... it was awesome.”

Wheelchair lacrosse is an eight-on-eight game that consists of four, 15-minute quarters. Players use a manual sports wheelchair, which is also used for sports such as basketball.

“It offers another option for people who are really athletic individuals who don’t normally like basketball or hand cycling or tennis,” Ryan Penney, a participant from Phoenix who competes internationally in competitive hand cycling, said. “It’s a little more physical, but it also requires a lot of agility.”

Baker and Lundstrom started wheelchair lacrosse and developed a rulebook in 2009. They held their first instructional clinic in 2010 in San Jose, California, and have since developed 17 programs across the country and plan to develop teams all over the world.

“Ultimately the goal would be to have wheelchair lacrosse be considered for the Paralympics,” Baker said.

At the end of the year, Baker said WLUSA hopes to host a national championship and develop a national team that will eventually play in a world championship.

“We want to keep growing and building the sport and exposing more people to it, so the programs can grow and have competitive rosters,” Baker said. “At the end of the day, everyone wants to compete; that’s all they want to do.”

The Ability360 Wheelchair Lacrosse team practices twice a week and is planning on playing in San Diego this fall. For more information and to get involved, call Ability360 at 602-386-4566.
FREE EVENT

Bank of America presents

3rd annual
DUEL in the DESERT

October 23rd 12pm - 9pm
October 24th 10am - 6pm

Food Trucks § Live Music § Dee Jays § Adaptive Car Show § Kids Events § Prizes

ABILITY360

Ability360 owns and operates the Ability360 Center and Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center

Thank you for not wearing or using scented products like cologne, perfume or lotions when you visit Ability360 locations.