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## ARC Broward Receives \$250,000 Grant from the Able Trust

BY BEVERLY PERKINS

**I**t was a very exciting day at ARC Broward as they were one of the chosen two in the state to receive an extremely important \$250,000 grant from the Able Trust. Able Trust CEO, Susanne Homant and Executive Director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Jesse Panuccio, traveled from Tallahassee, Florida to present this generous grant.

ARC Broward, a not-for-profit human services organization, is dedicated to transforming the community by providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities and other life challenges by helping them reach their full potential through their various programs offered. This grant will help extend services in their Center for Financial Stability.

The Center for Financial Stability aid clients with disabilities enter the job marketplace. In order to reach this goal, they help these individuals obtain and maintain employment, complete post-secondary education or occupational skills training as well as increase their knowledge of financial stability concepts and behaviors. This long-term educational commitment allows these participants to earn, keep and grow assets while remaining employed and out of poverty and ultimately becoming self-sufficient.

- There are over 341,000 students in Florida who have a disability.
- 77 percent will graduate or age out [of school] without a standard diploma.



- 79 percent will not qualify for further educational opportunities.
- Only 8 percent of companies in the U.S. report hiring people with disabilities.
- 90 percent of individuals with autism are unemployed.

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation which provides Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. The funds which have been granted will be used to support the gap in funding for ARC Broward's clients after they have turned 22 years old. This longer term of support

will enable the participants to have a more successful outcome.

"The Able Trust is very proud of what ARC Broward has accomplished in the past, and we are pleased to help support the growth of their Center for Financial Stability," Able Trust President & CEO Dr. Susanne Homant said. "The services provided by this program are designed to equip job seekers with disabilities to achieve better and major employment outcomes. ARC Broward has been a great advocate for people with disabilities, consistently exceeding expectations in their programs and helping to develop skilled workers for Florida's economy."

"We are honored that The Able Trust has expressed such confidence in our work by granting ARC Broward this incredible gift," said ARC Broward President/CEO Dennis Haas. "This funding will help us to continue our work to better ensure a more independent life and future for individuals with disabilities in our community."