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## **Empowerment Through Employment**

The Arc of Anchorage held its semi-annual fundraising event on October 20, 2014 with the focus on their Supported Employment Program. Four companies—Walgreens, Walmart, North Star Behavior Health, and Alaska Industrial Hardware Inc.—were presented awards for their exemplary service to the program. Walmart and Walgreens have adapted their hiring process to make it easier for adults experiencing developmental disabilities to apply for positions. Alaska Industrial Hardware Inc. has been accommodating to the individuals hired to fit their unique needs. North Star Behavior Health has modified their new hire process. Now job coaches can attend new hire training with individuals to help them through the process.

“I’m very proud of our progress. Thirteen to fourteen years ago, The Arc had 12 individuals and 3 job coaches in its Supported Employment Program,” said Danny Parish, Director of Supported Employment and Facilities. “Now we have 69 individuals, 18 job coaches and 4 additional job coach positions open. Almost 60 individuals have graduated from the program and no longer need job coaching services.”

The Supported Employment Program’s goal is to double the amount of supported employment opportunities over the next four years. Since the dinner, The Arc has received several job offers for adults that participate in the Supported Employment Program.

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