

# The History of The Arc Fresno

## 2008

The Arc Fresno's website has it's own "extreme makeover". The final product was showcased in early 2008.

In early 2008, The Arc Fresno expanded their already exemplary programming to include training for staff in the areas of positive behavior shaping and relationship building. This training, named the "ACT" training (Active Compassion Transforms) was fashioned after the well researched and proven system put forth by Arc Delaware (under the name of Shift Happens) and combines scientifically proven techniques with effective best practices in service of better serving our consumers.

The Arc Fresno takes over a small day program, formally known as Favor, Inc. effective September, 2008. We transitioned this program of 53 consumers and 22 staff within 60 days of our agreement with the previous owner. We also took on the added responsibility of providing all the necessary transportation for every consumer. We added 11 additional vehicles to our already large fleet. There are 12 consumers who use wheelchairs and many of the vehicles are wheelchair equipped. The facility was given a complete makeover including paint, furniture, curriculum, uniforms, etc.

At the end of this year, the state of California's continued budget deficits are becoming extremely problematic and the Governor is discussing the need for cuts to many health and human service programs, 2009 will be an interesting year.

## 2007

Our Sanger Packaging Facility, which opened in 1987, was closed in 2007. We moved the consumers and staff to the 6,000 square feet

Reedley building we had purchased in early 2006. We also changed it from a work activity program to a daily training activity center. This allowed us to still focus on vocational skills training but also allow for other program opportunities, i.e., computer lab, cooking classes, arts and leisure, home economics, etc. This program was required to become a licensed facility under Community Care Licensing regulations.

Camp Superstuff, a kids day camp we began in 1999, now offered a week long camping opportunity at Bass Lake. There were 24 campers ranging from 8 to 21 years old and most with autism. Camp Superstuff is expected to continue to grow with this nice respite opportunity for families.

The Arc Fresno was awarded their eleventh Three Year Accreditation from CARF. [To learn more, visit CARF.](#)

## 2006

The brand new facility, The Arc Fresno Enrichment Center, to replace Kelso Activity was opened July, 2006. It is a 15,000 sq. ft. activity room layout, with a nice landscaped park. The Arc Fresno's Administrative offices moved into the building in September. We held a grand opening for the public in October. This site will serve 125 individuals. This program became a licensed facility under Community Care Licensing regulations.

Due to continuing problems with supplying work for our Kerman Production Center which was a work activity program The Arc Fresno converted this site to a daily training activity center. This also allowed us to enhance our staff to consumer ratio. This program was also required to become a licensed facility under Community Care Licensing regulations. Program name changed to Kerman Training Center.

## 2005

The Arc Fresno was awarded the NISH contract (we are sub-contractors) to perform shredding work for a federal agency. The contract began March, 2005.

Kerman Packaging Center building (leased) gets a much need face-lift. New paint, carpet removed, new chairs/tables.

The Arc Fresno began the process of purchasing the Reedley Training Center building that we have occupied for 17 years. While in escrow the building experienced a fire. The building was then renovated and the escrow/purchase was finalized 1 year later.

The Arc Fresno secured a 2 year-old building located at 4567 N. Marty to be renovated in order to relocate the Kelso Activity Program. A brand new curriculum was implemented once we take possession. The improvements will take approx. 8 months to complete. The entire building/land with improvements is valued at \$2.2 million.

## 2004

In April we were notified by California Department of Transportation (Cal-Trans) that they would be building the Highway 180 freeway through our property at 404 S. Hughes. The Arc Fresno has owned this property for 45 years. After lengthy discussions and negotiations the State purchased our entire piece of land (7.8 acres) from The Arc Fresno.

For the first time The Arc Fresno adopts and implements a 403(b) retirement plan for employees with matching dollars up to a certain percentage.

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## 2003

The Arc Fresno celebrates its 50th year of service to the community. A variety of 50th anniversary celebrations went on through out the year. There were radio spots done and an advertisement running on cable. 50th anniversary banners were posted at each program and bumper stickers were handed out announcing our 50th anniversary. The tag line is used "Opening Minds and Doors for 50 years". A formal event is held at Fort Washington Country Club for community partners, funding sources, parents, care providers, staff and consumers. The guest speaker was Judge Robert Oliver. Due to potential financial constraints; State Budget expected to cut program day rates. The agency reorganizes its structure, eliminating middle-management positions.

Camp Superstuff is held in July with 24 enrolled. This year Camp Superstuff is opened up for 8-22 year olds based on a request of some Central Valley Regional Center and parents.

The Community Access Program does not receive on-going referrals from funding agency and it is closed.

Community Integration Program moves from First and Dakota due to consistent vandalisim problems. Move to 1477 East Shaw (leased building). Facility is updated with new bright paint colors, new furniture.

## 2002

The Community Access Program opens its doors in January with 19 consumers. The Community Access Program moves in next door to the new Administration offices on Shaw.

The Arc Fresno is awarded a three year \$45,000 grant from the California Wellness Foundation to promote a peer training program on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Direct service staff begins to take an active role in case management for consumers.

In June 2002 The Arc Fresno is awarded the Excellence in Business Award from the Fresno Bee in the Non-Profit/Charitable Category.

## 2001

Unfortunately due to continuous financial losses for the past three years this was the last year for Camp Keola.

Kerman Packaging Center stops producing the Wind chimes after 15 years. No market for continuing this project.

The Arc Fresno awarded Three

Year CARF Accreditation. CARF returns November, 2004.

The Administration offices move out of the Fresno Production Center into offices centrally located on Shaw Ave.

The 3rd Annual Dinner is held with an all time high attendance of 230.

Mayor Alan Autry pays a visit. The Guest Speaker is Loretta Claiborne a Self Advocate.

## 2000

A new modular unit is moved out Kelso Activity Center to accommodate the new referrals for KAC-ADP.

Computer labs were set up @ FPC, Kelso Activity Center, SPC, Reedley Training Center and Community Integration Program.

Blend program for Reedley Training Center/SPC started.

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Received GRANT for Workforce development Board. Job Club started for Emp+ Job Club would bring in consumers in hopes of securing an individual placement. These consumers while at Job Club would be trained on filing out applications, taught how to dress and shown training videos.

## 1998

Executive Director, Sandra Jackson leaves The Arc Fresno June, 1998. New Executive Director, Lori Ramirez, begins August, 1998.

## 1997

Last year the Western Jamboree is held.

The Arc Work beautification program is the first of its kind in the nation, designed to clean and beautify the community, while providing employment to persons with developmental disabilities. Arc Work has partnerships with the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, the City of Fresno and corporate and individual sponsors.

The "Blended Program" is an innovative vocational option for The Arc Fresno with Support from Central Valley Regional Center and DR. The new program "blends" the experience of production center work with those of a community integrated program. It expands the consumer abilities to adjust to different work environments, different types of task and greater peer interaction. Consumers with low productivity were targeted for the first group to participate.

## 1996

New Executive Director, Sandra Jackson, arrives March 1996 from Arc of New Jersey.

Camp Keola enrollment increases to 50 campers. Kelso Activity Center consumers also begin FAX transit training. Enrollment at Kelso Activity Center reached an all time high of 65 consumers in ADP alone. With 30 in DTAC.

Kelso Activity Center bathrooms received a much needed facelift ... paint, new stalls, fixtures, floor and toilets.

## 1995

The main office for Kelso was upgraded; to include new paint, carpet and office furniture. The sensory room and recreation room were also developed. Kelso Activity Center received monies to add a wheelchair lift to a van for community integration.

The Kelso Green House received a much needed facelift, new air circulation system, watering system, tables and roof. Kelso Activity Center was conducting Open Houses for parents, RSP and Central Valley Regional Center to show case managers the changes. Kelso Activity Center enrollment continued to increase every month.

The agency underwent a name change to "The Arc Fresno" to keep in step with name change made at state and national level. The previous name was Association for Retarded Citizens – Fresno or A.R.C.

Fresno. From this point forward our local, state and national units will no longer refer to "association for retarded citizens". This change is the result of many self-advocates who wanted the change.

Due to consistent financial losses experienced at BBF, The Arc Fresno is unfortunately forced to close this 18 year program. There were 32 consumers affected by this closure. Most were assimilated into existing Arc programs.

Executive Director, Laurie Shields, leaves September, 1995. She joins the state office, Arc California.

## 1994

Camp Keola, an overnight away camp held at Huntington Lake was established. There were approx. 34 campers that enjoyed the week long camping experience. The Arc Fresno closes LARC's Bargain Store due to poor sales.

## 1993

Everything is status quo. No new services/programs. Department of Rehabilitation conducts an audit. Arc-Fresno owes \$31,000. Audit takes two years to complete. Kerman stopped offering the ADC/DTAC component and the 10 consumers enrolled were transferred to Kelso Activity Center.

## 1992

Arc-Fresno takes possession of LARCS' bargain store in the Tower District.

Arc-Fresno loses eight key staff positions. These individuals were Adult Ed instructors on loan to Arc-Fresno. In June, 1992, they were all forced to return to the Fresno Unified School District. The State of California was without a budget for 45 days. Arc-Fresno experiences a complete shutdown due to lack of funds. Staff rise to the occasion and sign on to work without pay until the budget is signed.

## 1991

August, 1991, new Executive Director, Laurie Shields, begins. The Arc Fresno develops a new Community Integration Program (CIP).

## 1990

The Children's Center leaves the Arc-Fresno to branch out on their own. Executive Director Ann Haelen leaves. Interim Executive Director put in place while recruiting for a new Executive Director.

## 1989

Gloria Mc. Quistan, Executive Director for the past 17 years, retires. Best By Far opened the BBF Tower Snack Bar at the Fresno Airport. Physician's Who Care campaign begins. New Executive Director, Ann Hulen begins in December, 1989.

## 1987

Sanger Satellite Packaging Division was opened to handle the increased contract work experienced at Fresno Production Center. People First consumer advocate movement began in Fresno.

## 1986

Arc-Fresno begins community integration. This was practiced through the development of the supported employment department. The staff began looking for work opportunities in the community.

## 1983-1985

No new programs. Arc-Fresno did experience financial constraints and began to look closely at the viability of each program offered. They stepped up their fundraising efforts and reorganized the administrative/management team.

## 1982

With stringent economic times upon Arc-Fresno, it consolidated and trimmed its operations in order to keep the quality of programming without additional help from the State of California. It closed the annex, and because of higher enrollment of clients, moved the entire transportation and rehabilitation system to a leased location at 2919 N. Parkway Drive, Fresno. At this location, larger quarters and better equipment for the maintenance of the large transportation system is better served. New client training stations were instituted in the areas of mechanic's helper and maintenance helper.

With the growth of the programs, it became increasingly difficult to manually handle the documentation necessary both fiscal and programmatically. Therefore, through a large donation, Arc-Fresno was able to purchase an IBM system 34 computer and the accompanying software which was necessary to meet referring agency requirements and to efficiently handle the large volume of business generated by Arc-Fresno.

Another large step in investing in the future of Arc-Fresno was the institution of the Grand Champion Tennis Tournament, which was a four-day tournament and is one segment of a nationwide tennis circuit. The success of this fundraising event this first year will insure that generation of funds next year and the involvement of over 400 volunteers.

The plastic recycling program, the increasing success of the Best By Far bakery, the creativity of the staff in exploring new ideas to get work for the clients such as the new wrought iron garbage carts, the new Pac Man chime at the Fresno Production Center, the proposed Value Village Thrift Store to be opened at Kelso West-Kerman, and the bidding on the large governmental contracts by the Off-Site Janitorial and Yard Services, have all worked together to keep Arc-Fresno successful.

Client enrollment is up to 550 clients on a daily basis and Arc-Fresno served over 700 clients during this year.

## 1981

During this year, F.A.R. changed its name to Association for Retarded Citizens – Fresno (ARC-Fresno) In order to cooperate with its State and National organizations in an attempt to make Arc a household word and immediately recognizable to the general public.

Annual enrollment for 1981 was an average daily attendance of 383 with a total of 1015 clients receiving services from Arc-Fresno.

A full-time fundraising staff person was added.

Arc-Fresno started spring and summer camps for the severely involved mentally retarded adult called Camp Spring Meadows, also Camp Snowflake, a winter camp was successful.

Arc-Fresno closed its Chime Shop at Mission Village Shopping Center because of lack of customer traffic and created a strong marketing department to retail and wholesale our products.

We received a grant from the Department of Developmental Services in the sum of \$25,730.00 to provide instruction and counseling to developmentally disabled adults who cannot live independently due to lack of skills.

In November, Arc-Fresno received a Solid Waste Management grant in the sum of \$124,743.00 to recycle plastic which will give work to 15 clients in the Fresno Production Center.

A transitional Annex was opened to give clients an opportunity to cross the bridge from the Activity program to the Vocational programs more easily, and with more chance of success. This Annex houses 30 clients.

## 1980

The F.A.R. is providing training programs to 290 developmentally disabled persons, and to persons with other types of handicaps from its activity programs. Incorporated in the programs are self-help skills, work adjustment, work evaluation, and leisure and recreational skill training. During this year, four more apartments were added to the independent Living Program. F.A.R. served approximately 755 clients during the 1979-1980 year, with an average daily enrollment of 360 persons.

## 1978

F.A.R. expanded its Independent Living Program to six apartments and pursued a grant from the Department of Rehabilitation to expand this program to six more apartments to meet the waiting list of clients for this service. F.A.R. also received a grant from the State Department of Developmental Disabilities to open a transitional 24-

hour residential facility to enable persons coming from the State hospital institutionalized living program to the community. The purpose of Cambridge House, as this program was named, was to help these clients adjust to community living before being transferred to a permanent community placement. Also, incorporated in the 16th Cambridge House was a crisis bed to assist a client living in the community and who developed severe problems, to be helped without having to go back to a State Hospital. F.A.R. expanded its vocational training stations by purchasing a building to which the Off-Site Services were moved. Expanded services are a retail coffee shop, bakery, and boutique, which will be serviced and manned by our clients in realistic work situations. The Janitorial and yard service programs were transferred to the new Best By Far building, located on Clovis Avenue, between Ashland and Shields Avenues.

1. In July our Cambridge House was opened to provide a transition training program for persons coming into community living situations from State Hospitals.
2. In November, a new Center, Best By Far, was opened to operate a bakery, boutique, and coffee shop. New bakery helper, retail clerk, and food service skill training were offered.
3. The Board of Directors started a five year capital Fund Raising Campaign. The first year, the donations increased \$30,000 from the previous year.

## 1977

There were still several babies in the Fresno area who were not receiving services because the Lori Ann Infant Stimulation Program was filled and the County School programs were filled, so the F.A.R. again started the Kelso Infant Stimulation Program in cooperation with the Central Valley Regional Center, The Fresno Mennonite Brethren Church, and with the help of a small grant from the City of Fresno. This program was closed because the Central Valley Regional Center

over estimated the number of babies needing services. The F.A.R. has eight apartments being utilized in this programs.

## 1976

The Fresno Association for the Retarded persuaded the Fresno Unified School District to take over the Lori Ann Infant Stimulation Program and operate it. The F.A.R. still provides transportation for the 30 children attending this program.

## 1970-1975

During the next three years, the program provided on the Kelso Activity Center grounds at 404 S. Hughes Avenue, Fresno, multiplied and four new centers were opened:

The Kelso Southeast Satellite (originally situated at Orange Cove and now housed in the Windsor School in Reedley).

The Fresno Production Center (originally situated at 1940 H Street and now housed in an industrial site located at 5575 E. Fountain Way, Fresno).

The Lori Ann Infant Center Stimulation Program (originally started in a church, was moved to Kelso Activity Center, and is now housed in three school rooms at the Lincoln School, 651 B Street, Fresno).

The Kerman Packaging Center was started.

## 1969

The foundation voted to change its name to Fresno Association for the Mentally Retarded. When special education classes and the Association then devoted its efforts to providing an activity program for the adult mentally retarded. In 1972, there were approximately 120 clients enrolled in the F.A.R.'s programs.

With the advent of the Lanterman Mental Retardation Act of 1969, the Fresno Association for the Retarded accepted the responsibility of operating the Central Valley Regional Center. After a year of

operation, the F.A.R. Board of Directors felt the Central Valley Regional Center should be handled by a larger, more experienced corporation and relinquished its operation to the Kings View Corporation, which operated the Central Valley Regional Center until 1982 when Central Valley Regional Center incorporated its own community Board of Directors.

The Lanterman Mental Retardation Act of 1969 enabled the F.A.R. to become vendorized by the Regional Center and with the money provided by the Central Valley Regional Center for tuition, the association was able to enlarge its programs and begin to provide a higher quality of training to its clients.

### 1964

By October, five more classrooms were built for leasing to the Fresno County Schools for TMR classes. Thus, Kelso Village had the unique distinction of housing both public and parent sponsored classes for the TMR on the same campus.

### 1962-1963

As the need for more classrooms continued to grow, construction of a second building was started late in 1961 and was completed by opening of the school year 1962-1963. This building is named Coralyn Pattison Hall.

### 1956-1958

As the Foundation activities progressed, it became increasingly apparent that a permanent central location was a necessity. A memorial fund established for such a center and named in honor of Jack Kelso, a Fresno Marine of the Korean Campaign, who was posthumously awarded the nation's highest honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his valiant services to his country, In June of 1954, a local business man donated an eight – acre tract located on Hughes

Avenue for the establishment of the center. Early in 1956, the first building was underway, but since it was built as funds became available and by volunteer labor, the building was not completed until February 23, 1958. The building was subsequently named Colhouer Hall after the man who donated the land upon which the school is located.

### 1954-1955

A third class was started in January, 1954. And a nursery class. In January, 1955, was added in space provided by the church of the Brethren. It was at this time a request was made to the Fresno Adult School to include a parent cooperative class for retarded children in their nursery program. After many months of consideration, this program was initiated in February, 1956.

### 1953

A parent cooperative day class was started in April, in a makeshift classroom at the Frank H. Ball Playground, loaned to us by the Fresno City and the Recreation Department. In September a second class was started at the Ball Playground. A tuition was established for paying a token salary to the "Mother-teachers" with the cost of supplies shared by parents. With the periodical printing of the "Open Door" and preceding newsletters, the community became aware of the unmet needs of the retarded.

### 1952

An open invitation from the Mental Health Society was extended to all parents of retarded children to meet to discuss mental retardation. These parents, with the aid of the clinical psychologist involved in admission to state homes, banded together to form an organization through which they could work in seeking solutions to their common problems. The Fresno County Foundation for Mentally Retarded, Inc.

was founded in February 1953, and soon incorporated and became a member of the California Council for Retarded Children and the National Association for Retarded Children.