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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 19, 2011

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McDonogh's Engineering Class Helps Build Better Lives

[Aberdeen] -McDonogh's engineering class presented Ray Popik with the assistive vocational device they have been working on all year, a rewarding community project for high school seniors, Cameron Di Leo, Rick Kimbers and junior, Kyle Vaughan.

The device is a chair that Ray can transition into that will enable him to fit behind the counter to operate the cash register at the Target in Abingdon, his place of employment, thus enabling him to possibly work additional hours and feel more rewarded in his job and allow him the flexibility that he needs to negotiate his workspace.

Jennifer Singer, Upper School Science and Engineering Teacher at McDonogh in Owings Mills, reached out to The Arc and identified a need that her engineering students would be challenged to accomplish while serving the community. Utilizing a walker, bike pegs, and comfortable cushion, a vocational device was designed and constructed that served as a "real world" project for the engineering student and served as an innovative approach for assistive vocational devices for people with developmental disabilities.

The Arc Employment Services currently offers long-term community based employment supports to over 140 adults with developmental disabilities. The Target in Abingdon is one of 65 Harford County businesses and local and state agencies that offer integrated settings and include individual placements and industrial, clerical and janitorial enclaves. Individuals are supported in seeking and maintaining employment through job development, job coaching with follow-along supports, case management and transportation.



*Picture: From L to R:
Rick Kimbers (McDonogh); Cameron Di Leo (McDonogh); Ray Popik;
Kyle Vaughan (McDonogh); Abbott Ottinger (McDonogh-not pictured)*



Team member, Ray Popik joins (from left to right) Store team leader: Jean Caufriez; Team member: Keiara Huff; Executive Team leader: Alex Yufest at Target

The Arc offers a wide variety of services to individuals with developmental disabilities in Harford, Cecil, and Kent counties, both children and adults, to make informed choices with their lifestyles, vocations, education and recreational pursuits, and to assure stable and nurturing lives among their families and friends.