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The Arc 2012 Gala: *Make This a Good Life*
Featuring jazz artists Pippi Ardennia, Arne Fogel & Maud Hixson

ST. PAUL, Minn., (January 19, 2012) - *Make This a Good Life* is the theme for The Arc Greater Twin Cities' fifth annual Arc Gala on Saturday, February 11, 2012 at the Minneapolis Hyatt Regency, 1300 Nicollet Mall. The benefit starts at 5:30 pm. Tickets are \$150 per person. To purchase tickets or get more information, call Arc at (952) 920-0855 or visit www.arcgreatertwincities.org.

The theme was selected because of this year's fundraising focus on advocacy, the heart of The Arc's mission. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families face many challenges, including isolation, economic hardships, risk for abuse, discrimination and lack of employment and housing options. Systems are complex, fragmented and difficult to access. Advocacy helps people through tough situations and gives them the tools and training to overcome other challenges in the future.

Steve Hayes and Maureen Laird-Hayes are the volunteer co-chairs for The Arc Gala and the parents of a son with a significant and rare developmental disability.

"Your child's disability isn't going to go away," Steve says. "If coming to an organization like Arc and receiving their advocacy gives you the kind of results you want and the kind of support you need for your child, then that's what you should do for your child."

"I liken The Arc as a bridge in our community and it supports families all across the metro," added Maureen Laird-Hayes. "Arc is there every step of the way to help."

"The Arc Greater Twin Cities stands out as an organization that provides this type of intensive individual advocacy," Steve Hayes, who serves on The Arc Greater Twin Cities, added. "Others also provide basic information and referral, but when situations are complicated and require deeper knowledge, The Arc is there."

Chicago born jazz and blues singer Pippi Ardennia will perform a song "Make this a good life" composed especially for The Arc Gala. Ardennia is the featured artist for PipJazz

Sundays at the Landmark Center. Twin Cities jazz legends Arne Fogel and Maud Hixson will also be featured. Cathy Wurzer, host of Morning Edition on Minnesota Public Radio and co-host of Almanac on Twin Cities Public Television, will emcee.

Gala sponsors include:

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ABOUT THE ARC GREATER TWIN CITIES

The Arc Greater Twin Cities is a nonprofit agency serving the many needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Established in 1946, Arc has been changing attitudes, changing policies and changing lives for 65 years. Arc helps individuals and families address issues that span the lifetime, including early intervention, education, transition to adulthood, health care, housing, employment, guardianship and more. For more information and volunteer opportunities, call Arc at (952) 920-0855 or visit www.arcgreatertwincities.org.