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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Arrowhead Region Residents Can Learn “Work Is Possible”**

“Work is Possible” is a free workshop being held on Thursday January 11, 2018 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. The workshop will be at the Ordean Building, Conference Room B/C, 424 W. Superior St., in Duluth. It will give job seekers with disabilities and their families access to resources and supports that can help make employment in the workforce possible.

Participants in “Work is Possible” will learn how work affects Medical Assistance, Social Security, and other benefits for people with disabilities. They will also receive information about recent changes in federal and state policies that can promote brighter futures for those who aspire to work in their communities. These policies include Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan and its Employment First Policy, which are designed to increase the number of Minnesotans with disabilities in competitive jobs, and the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, a federal law also designed to increase employment.

Minnesotans who have found jobs will share their stories about working. A panel of representatives of regional advocacy organizations, public agencies, and service providers will answer questions and will discuss resources available. These resources include the new Minnesota Microgrant Partnership, which provides small grants to support a job seeker’s plan for integrated, competitive employment.

“‘Work is Possible’ is the perfect opportunity for families and individuals considering joining the world of work but who have concerns about their benefits and all the changes happening around them. We are here to help!” said Melinda Shamp, Lead Community Resource Connector for The Arc Minnesota, one of the workshop sponsors.

“For people living with disabilities, the landscape for employment opportunities is changing. New federal and state policies are creating brighter futures for those who want to work in their communities and are providing new opportunities to do so,” said Diane Mikolich, Executive Director for The Arc Minnesota’s Iron Range regional office. “We invite job seekers, their family members, and their allies to come learn how work is possible.”

A Working Life Alliance (AWLA) is a statewide collaboration of 18 partner agencies. It gives job seekers and family supporters up-to-date information and helps them connect to people and resources so they can find and keep the job they want. The Arc Minnesota and The Arc Range are part of AWLA, which also includes the following partner organizations: MN APSE; Autism Society of Minnesota; Dakota County Social Services, Minnesota Employment First Coalition; Rise, Inc.; Minnesota Disability Law Center; Social Security Administration; Minnesota DEED/Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Minnesota Olmstead Implementation Office; and Minnesota Department of Human Services. AWLA is funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

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