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### The Arc Jacksonville Announces Retirement of President/CEO Jim Whittaker

**Jacksonville, FL, June 30, 2021:** Jim Whittaker, President/CEO of The Arc Jacksonville, has announced his retirement for the end of December 2021. Jim has dedicated his professional life of 46 years to serving individuals with intellectual and developmental differences (IDD). He has served as President/CEO of The Arc Jacksonville since 2000, while simultaneously leading The Arc Putnam where his career began in 1975 and continued through 2018.

“I have seen firsthand how Jim’s ability to effectively bring ideas and opportunities to reality enabled The Arc Jacksonville to become an exceptional organization. His understanding and commitment to innovation, inclusion, service quality and financial accountability have been cornerstones in the development and management of programs and services,” said John Cooksey, 2021 Chairman of The Arc Jacksonville’s board.



Jim began working with the IDD population when he was a teenager. Upon earning his Bachelor’s in Education from University of Florida, he led the newly formed Arc of Putnam. He grew The Arc Jacksonville from a \$3.4M budget to \$10M, serving 500 individuals. Under his visionary and values-based leadership, he created innovative programs and services including: the only advocacy department within Florida, fielding 2,000 calls a year; the On Campus Transition college experience program, in partnership with the University of North Florida; and The Arc Jacksonville Village, a new independent living model. Additionally, Jim leads local and statewide advocacy efforts to increase funding for individuals with IDD and the organizations serving this population.

The Arc Jacksonville’s board is working with a search firm to find the most qualified candidate for the next President/CEO and will share more news this fall.

Jim lives in Fernandina with his wife, Reb. Upon retirement, he plans to serve as a consultant to nonprofits serving individuals with IDD and spend time with his five grandchildren.

#### About The Arc Jacksonville

The Arc Jacksonville serves and advocates for individuals with intellectual and developmental differences to achieve their full potential and to participate in community life. Through incredible partnerships within the Northeast Florida community, The Arc Jacksonville, a local nonprofit, provides a full complement of residential, educational, training, work readiness, employment, mental health, and community inclusion initiatives.

**Editor’s Note:** The Arc Jacksonville is not an acronym and Arc should never be in all capital letters. When referring to the organization, please use The Arc Jacksonville, not The ARC, The ARC Jacksonville and never ARC. The Arc Jacksonville should be considered as a title or phrase. Refer to the individuals as having “differences” and not “disabilities.”