

## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Abilities Services, Inc. (ASI) announces appointment of New Executive Director** *From the Board of Directors of Abilities Services, Inc.*

The Board of Directors of Abilities Services, Inc. (ASI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Robert Cook to the position of Executive Director effective March 1, 2009. Steve Gooch informed the Board in 2008 of his desire to retire late in 2009. For 15 years under Mr. Gooch's leadership, ASI has grown and created a variety of new programming and resources for individuals with disabilities and similar disadvantages in Clinton, Montgomery, and Tippecanoe Counties. Mr. Gooch will continue business development and provide support through the transition period.

Mr. Cook has been the Assistant Executive Director/CFO of Abilities Services, Inc. for 19 years, where he has overseen the Accounting, MIS, Marketing, Personnel and Support Services for the Agency. He is also co-chair of the Indiana Association for Rehabilitation Facilities Professional Financial Section. Mr. Cook graduated from Vincennes University in 1976 with an A.S. degree in Engineering and later graduated from Indiana State University in 1981 with a B.S. degree in Accounting. At age 28 Mr. Cook was the Treasure/CFO of a Savings Bank in Delphi, Indiana. Later, he started an investment property business called Cook Properties, LLC and in the 1990's along with his wife, Karen, started two franchise businesses in the Indianapolis area.

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In 2008, Mr. Cook became a practicing Registered Financial Consultant and a member of International Association of Registered Financial Consultants. Bob and Karen live near Crawfordsville and have been married for 32 years. They have four children; Steven, Andrea, Michael, and Tonya and one grandchild; Landon.

Dave Lunsford, President of the Board of Directors, said, “Bob’s leadership effectiveness as demonstrated in his current capacity, along with his knowledge, experience, and outstanding track record of success, make him the clear choice for the current and long-term leadership needs of Abilities Services. He is energetic and intelligent, and has an easy rapport with the consumers, staff, state and business communities. I know I speak for the entire board when I say that we anticipate a great tenure with Bob leading the organization.”

The Board wishes to create a seamless transition for the staff of Abilities Services, Inc. as well as their consumers. Board President, Dave Lunsford stated, “Steve’s leadership and advocacy efforts played a critical role in the organization and the development of innovative programs. Steve’s desire for a continuation of a seamless transition for the consumers led him to give the Board advance notice of his future plans.” A visible and articulate champion for the field of challenged individuals, Steve will continue to serve Abilities Services, as Director of Business Development. In this role, Steve’s focus will be assuring a smooth transition, finalizing the new ASI facility planned for Clinton County in Frankfort, and consolidating ASI’s two service locations in Lafayette to the Howarth Center.

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