COLORADO SPRINGS – Colo. – The Independence Center hosted its first Artists with Disabilities Showcase with great success last Friday at The Warehouse in downtown Colorado Springs. The fundraising event showcased various works of art by artists in the community that have a disability, with all proceeds from the showcase benefiting the center’s assistive technology program.

"For our first event of hopefully many, I was amazed by the generosity of the crowd and the interest in supporting our Assistive Technology program,” said Teri Ulrich, The Independence Center’s director of development.

With 103 works of art and 31 artists participating, the three-hour event brought the community together for a good cause. Paul Spotts, The Independence Center’s assistive technology specialist, spoke at the event about the hundreds of individuals he has helped by providing assistive technology, and the many he hoped to help with the generosity of the patrons attending the event.

“The Art Fundraiser was such an amazing community event,” said Liz Hunter-Ball, community developer for The Independence Center. “We had the opportunity to speak directly with artists and learn more about each of them and their work. The sponsors that came forward and actively participated in the night’s event made such a beautiful difference. The talent and support was overwhelming, and the Art Fundraiser was a shining example of our passionate community.”

Many of the artists were in attendance, some elated to have the opportunity to sell their work for the first time. The works of art ranged from acrylic painting to stained glass pieces, and showed a large variety of talent across board. The artists participating in the event all identified themselves as someone with a disability and the types of disabilities represented ranged as well.

“As an artist I was impressed with the layout of the art work,” said Wendy Carter, participating artist and peer mentor specialists for The Independence Center. “The room was warm, friendly, and the artwork was accessible to be viewed. The range of styles of art was diverse, interesting, and unique from abstracts, to fine detail pen and ink drawings, to beautiful photographs. I was impressed with the integrity of the artists, whether they were brand new to the art show scene or were veterans. The artists were celebrated and honored. That made it feel very special.”

The event was made possible thanks to the collaboration of jury members, sponsors, artists, community members and IC staff.

For more information about The Independence Center or assistive technology, visit our website at [www.theindependencecenter.org](http://www.theindependencecenter.org) or call (719) 471-8181.

**About the Independence Center:**

The IC was founded to assist people with disabilities to make changes in their lives that lead to independence in our community. We empower people with disabilities to live independently in the community through services such as home health, peer support, benefits counseling and access to assistive technology. We are a vigorous participant in local efforts to remove barriers for people with disabilities because we believe that people with disabilities should have the same civil rights, options and control over choices in their lives as people without disabilities. We provide skills training to empower people with disabilities to be well informed advocates and active citizens; to change laws, legislation, systems and attitudes that affect their independence.