

Partiers Decorate Rooms For Adults With Disabilities

By Bob Seidenberg
City Editor

About 80 people participated recently in a tile painting party at Clay Works, 2928 Central St., that was anything but an academic exercise.

The tiles painted are to be put to very practical use, installed into apartments in a three-flat building on Harrison Street that is to house six adults with disabilities, said Jill Hoffsted, a volunteer with the Center for Independent Futures (CIF).

The Evanston-based group is in

phase one of its effort that will allow adults with disabilities, such as Down syndrome, autism, and brain injuries, to live in an independent setting with support services provided.

Hoffsted and her parents became involved with CIF to help people like her brother, Brian, 31.

"He was born with a disability that has impacted his independence throughout his life," she said. "He has lived with my parents until age 30. He lives on his own but requires assistance to complete daily living tasks such as job searching and placement, money management, going to the grocery store, and getting around town."

CIF, a not-for-profit group, hopes to help such adults live independently in Evanston. Hoffsted said that in the three-flat where the

adults will live, a couple will be on site at the building between 9 p.m. to 7 a.m., and then on call during the day.

She said the group also hopes to raise awareness about the need for funding for support services and affordable housing for adults with disabilities.

"Right now the families are supporting one another," she said. "There just isn't a lot out there."

The Clay Works event was designed as a start. Clay Works pitched in donating tiles, materials to paint the tiles and to fire them, as well as studio time and staff time, Hoffsted said.

People seeking information about CIF can call (847) 328-2044, or visit the CIF Website at www.independentfutures.com