

**Mark Fairbanks**

*Cofounder, Islands of Brilliance*

*Cofounder, Translator*

Mark is cofounder of Islands of Brilliance, a breakthrough learning workshop that matches children and young adults with autism 1 : 1 with a design professional, allowing them to explore their creativity through technology and software. The program was launched as a pilot project with seven students in October of 2012, and this year will have over 100 students participate in Milwaukee, including a pilot of advanced curriculum as a pathway to workforce skills development. His TEDx talk *13 Years on an Island* tells the personal story behind the creation of Islands of Brilliance.

At design firm Translator, Mark has worked extensively with startups, in particular providing guided thinking around business models and product/market feedback for tech accelerator Gener8tor's 12 week boot camp. He also provided oversight and strategic thinking to 5 social entrepreneur startup teams as part of Marquette University's Social Innovation Challenge in 2013. An emerging focus has Mark more and more involved in providing design thinking and strategic direction to a number of social and civic sector initiatives including the White House Summit on Worker Voice, the collective impact initiative focused on economic development and entrepreneurship in Albuquerque, NM, and the ongoing collaboration between Creative Alliance Milwaukee and Innovation in Milwaukee resulting in the Walk The Talk conference.

When not at work, Mark enjoys gardening (painting with a shovel, as he calls it), family dinners, and walking, running, hiking and snowshoeing in the beautiful state of Wisconsin.