

The Arcticulate



The Arc-NEPA's Annual Report 2019 is included in this edition of the newsletter

Celebrating 65 Years

The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania is celebrating 65 years of services to children and adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their families this year and we would love for all of you to be a part of the celebration. There will be many events to choose from and many educational opportunities - please mark your calendars for a year of grassroots moments.

Over the next few editions of the newsletter, we will give you some of the amazing milestones that have helped to build The Arc.

History of The Arc... The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania has a rich

Census 2020
You Count! Be Counted.
The 2020 Census is quickly approaching, and it is important that people with disabilities and their families are ready to be counted!
Every 10 years, everyone in the United States is counted through the census. It is important that everyone is counted because the census data impacts many key things. For example, the census data is used to figure out how much money state and local governments get for Medicaid, housing vouchers, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and education programs. When there isn't enough money, services and programs for people with disabilities can be cut. Census data is also used to determine how many representatives each state gets in the House of Representatives.
Census Day is April 1, 2020 – check out the resources from The Arc to make sure you and your community are ready to be counted!



history of improving the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families. The Arc consists of almost 700 local and state chapters throughout the United States. It has a paid membership of approximately 100,000 representing 300,000 family members who are committed advocates for the rights and interests of approximately 7.2 million citizens with IDD.

The Arc-NEPA is affiliated with The Arc-PA; The Arc-US.; the United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties; the United Way of Greater Lehigh Valley; the BHI DEI Program of Lackawanna and Susquehanna; the Behavioral and Developmental Programs and Early Intervention of Wayne County and the Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services; Northeastern Education Intermediate Unit 19; Colonial Intermediate Unit 20; Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21, North Pocono Parents of Down Syndrome.

The following history represents The Arc's grassroots foundation and many years of accomplishments. This demonstrated commitment has earned The Arc the respected role of leader in supporting individuals with IDD and their families.

1950's... The Arc was formed! Parents of children with IDD formed a group to advocate for education rights. Through their legislative efforts one of the first special education and training classroom was established in the Scranton School District. The Arc was recognized as a pioneer in its efforts for the "trainable" and "educable" child. Other major accomplishments in the 1950's include:

- The acquisition of Robinson Park for Recreation and Summer Camp programs.
- The first Adult Developmental Program



was designed and held at Weston Field. The Arc opened one of the first preschools in the area for disabled children.

1960's... The groundwork was established. Parents, professionals, and advocates in Lackawanna County were beginning to realize the positive impact their efforts were having on the lives of people with IDD. The quality of life for these individuals was being improved due to progressive legislation, program development, and public awareness. During the 1960's Arc affiliates served as advocates in the following ways:

- Arc staff and members served as primary resources and consultants in the creation of Allied Services for the Handicapped.
- The Arc advocated intensely for the passage of the MH/MR Act which created community programs.
- Scouting programs began at The Arc.
- The Battle for the Right to Education intensified.

...More to follow in the upcoming editions



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www.thearcnepa.org
Email: frontdesk@thearcnepa.org

President's Message



Greetings from the President's desk... Happy 65th Anniversary to a wonderful organization! I am so proud to be a part of The Arc and its mission. The dedication and compassion that I witness is second to none and I am truly thankful for many blessings. This is the time of the year for planning for the year ahead and reflecting on the year that just passed. Every person working for The Arc is so very special. The care and

commitment given to the consumers is unsurpassed. Working at The Arc isn't just a job—it is a challenge that is met every day in every way. In addition, the volunteers have done so much throughout the year to not only raise money, but to have a good time while doing it. They are always finding new, creative ways to entertain, have fun and raise money at the same time. With continuing funding issues,

The Arc continues to be efficient and effective in their programs and services. We are grateful for your support.

The membership drive is right around the corner which is kicked off with the start of March. As you know, March is intellectual and developmental disabilities awareness month which is a time to educate our communities on the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and reflect on the progress made toward improving quality of life for them. We're committed to raising awareness in our communities. Please consider becoming a member of The Arc and helping people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have a stronger voice. Thank you so much for any amount that you would consider. Looking forward to the Spring season.

Respectfully,
Ann Hoffman
President

Exec's Corner



Recently our Human Resources Department distributed a survey which was to be completed by all Arc employees willing to take the time to do so. Mary Ann O'Shea has informed me that we have a 32% rate of return on these surveys. That's significantly above the average rate of return for such surveys. Thank you!

Generally, the responses were positive in relation to your understanding and dedication to our mission and the folks we serve. I believe whole-heartedly in the mission of The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Through advocacy and the work that you do every day- we protect the rights of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our vision is clear..... our mission is essential.

The survey results provided reliable and significant information on employee satisfaction. One comment that jumped off the page for me was that communication could stand improvement as "information does not always reach the direct service staff level." Starting now, we will work harder to share the "what's going on" at every level in the organization.

What's going on at The Arc?

Advocacy is always a central focus for us. We are staying atop of the closing of White Haven and Polk State Centers. Governor Wolf recently vetoed a Senate bill to halt the closures. We wait to see if the Senate has enough votes to override the veto.

Speaking of the Governor- we are once again igniting the flames of the need for money in the state budget to increase DSP salaries for fiscal year 2020-2021. The Governor's proposed budget DID NOT include any increase. We must be loud and we must be clear. We will be asking you to advocate on this matter over the next few months.

At the federal level- you may have heard that the President's proposed budget includes cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. Again- we must advocate. Stay tuned.

What's going on here, at the local level? We are expanding our service area. I am happy to tell you that our Board of Directors has approved our providing the mission of The Arc in Luzerne County. Our service area will now include Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, and Wayne Counties. We are excited about this opportunity and have developed a strategy to pursue grant funding necessary to bring advocacy services to children and adults and their families who reside in Luzerne County. Currently, we are discussing the provision of community services in Luzerne with county administrators and Support Coordination staff. We will move ahead with the diligence necessary to ensure success.....one step at a time.

Perhaps you know that the Adult Day and Residential Services achieved high grades during the annual licensing inspection through ODP. Hard work----well done! Thank you.

This year The Arc of NEPA celebrates 65 years of service! Today, as I meet young parents who have children diagnosed with a developmental disability and/or autism, I am reminded of the group of parents who, 65 years ago, came together and decided that they needed to be heard so that their loved ones could attend public school. Up until this time, children with developmental disabilities could not go to school. They had to stay at home and watch as their brothers and sisters got on the school bus. The determination and passion embraced by these parents changed the lives of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities forever. They succeeded in obtaining public education as a right for ALL children. The first local special education classroom was opened.

Sixty-five years later, armed with the strength of our grass root beginnings, we must, and we will, continue to work to achieve equal opportunity in education, housing, employment, services, and the healthy well being for those we serve. The mission of The Arc is critical and you are critical to The Arc.

Thank you for being part of the team.

Maryclaire Kretsch
Executive Director

Working with the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

Compliments of: Elizabeth Zygmunt,
Director of Media and Public Relations
Commonwealth School of Medicine

Like most medical students, Ashanti Littlejohn is used to interacting with and examining standardized patients. Such encounters are the norm in all American medical schools. Recently, however, she and every second-year student at GCSOM had the opportunity to work with a patient population that some of her peers at other institutions won't meet until residency. In September, The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania, a nonprofit that provides public education for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, brought 20 of its clients to the school to act as standardized patients.

During the experience, Ashanti opened an exam room door to meet Chris. He loves jewelry and is prone to repetitive movements when he gets excited and he gets excited a lot. Patients with autism also sometimes have difficulty reading social cues. Throughout the exam, performed under that watchful eye of preceptor, James Caggiano,

MD, Ashanti maintained a calm and reassuring manner. She introduced herself and complimented Chris on his many rings. "I see you have some bling there," she said. Chris smiled and flapped his hands. Before she reached for his wrist to take his pulse, Ashanti explained what she was about to do and asked Chris if it was OK. Earlier, Dr. Caggiano had offered Ashanti an additional suggestion, so she placed one hand on Chris's shoulder as she took his pulse. The gesture was warm and encouraging and Chris sat quietly as she counted.

Following the encounter, Ashanti said, "To be completely transparent, Chris's movements can be unnerving. But I'm glad I had a chance to meet with Chris and learn to build rapport with patients like him now, when Dr. Caggiano is there with me, rather than later when I might be a resident going in with no immediate supervision. The experience helped me get over my discomfort and put the patient at ease."

The unease Ashanti initially expressed, if not confronted and addressed,



Thanks to a National Curriculum Initiative in Developmental Medicine (NCIDM) grant and The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania, second-year medical students at GCSOM are learning early how to connect with patients with disabilities. While the students were grateful for the chance to build their skills, the visitors from The Arc were happy to have a chance to be advocates for their community. "I like to teach the students," Chris Pate said. "I liked everyone and was glad they practiced on me." Seen from left, front row are: medical student, Ashanti Littlejohn; Chris Pate, standardized patient; Michael Christ, standardized patient; and Jino Park, medical student. Back row, from left Pat Quinn, director of program operations for The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania; James Caggiano, MD, preceptor; Doug Wells, medical student and "student champion" of the NCIDM grant; Tonoya Sengupta, NCIDM research assistant; Youngjin Cho, PhD is assistant professor of immunology and principal investigator; and F. Dennis Dawgert, MD, preceptor.

can create negative attitudes about people with disabilities, a cause for concern since studies have shown misunderstandings surrounding people with disabilities can have detrimental implications for their care. In fact, the Commonwealth Fund notes, "Americans living with disabilities receive less preventive care, have a higher incidence of chronic conditions and visit the hospital and emergency department more often — leading to much higher healthcare spending than for adults in the general population."

Thanks to a National Curriculum Initiative in Developmental Medicine (NCIDM) grant and The Arc, GCSOM students are learning early how to connect with patients with disabilities and be sure their care isn't compromised. "The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania applauds the forward-thinking approach of the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine in

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Troubleshooting Your IEP

Presented by

Lisa Lightner,
Special Education Advocate

"A Day in Our Shoes"

Saturday, April 4th

9:30-1:30

Delaware Valley HS Media Center 9/10 Entrance
252 Rt 6 & 209, Milford PA

Participants are encouraged to bring their child's IEP

Lunch will be provided

Spots are limited. RSVP to MColville@thearcnepa.org

Sponsored By



Around The Arc

Arc Update:

The Arc of Northeastern PA is celebrating 65 years of service this year! The first event was fabulous!!! "Celebrating 65 Years of Sweethearts" Valentine's Dance was held on February 14th at Fiorelli's. The evening featured a cocktail hour with hors d'oeuvres, followed by a buffet dinner. The Wanabees graciously provided the entertainment for the evening. We are looking forward to a year full of surprises, fun, and wonderful memories.

The Arc Recreation department sponsored the 19th Annual Friends of The Arc Holiday Party at Fiorelli's on December 7th. It was a fabulous time for everyone who attended. The night was filled with fun, dancing, enjoying good food and wonderful friends. PPODS North welcomed the Christmas season with a holiday party on December 7th as well as, the Carbon holiday party was held on the 8th and the Breakfast with Santa was on December 15th. Santa made his appearance and was excitedly welcomed by all. Great times spent with great people.

Gary Drapek and Frank Kincl from the United Way visited The Arc on January 3rd to thank the staff for their outstanding support of the United Way campaign. The employees have pledged over \$20,000 in support to the United Way. This is a record-breaking amount and we are so proud to report on this level of generosity. The staff was treated to a pizza party.



The Mass for Persons with Developmental Disabilities was held on Sunday, February 23rd at St. Peter's Cathedral. It is a truly beautiful mass and we are grateful to the Diocese of Scranton for having this event. Many of our folks participate in the morning as greeters and we are so happy to see everyone!

Grant Information:

We made application to the Moffat Family Charitable Trust to assist with nutritional advice regarding "The Fatal Four" and we were notified of the award. We have started to get the ball rolling by making a contact with a nutritionist to have each person evaluated.

A notice for a grant award was received by the City of Scranton OECD for a kitchen remodel at one of our homes.

TJX Foundation accepted our grant request and awarded us \$\$\$ which will be earmarked for Advocacy Services.

M&T Bank requested our presence for a luncheon and check presentation

at Allied Services on December 5th. We were very happy to have been notified that once again, we are one of the organizations who were to be recognized on that day.

The Lackawanna County Department of Arts and Culture informed us that we are receiving a grant for the Theater Arts Program for adults with developmental disabilities for the fifth year in a row!!

We are very excited about these opportunities and awards and will be continuing to make requests. A meeting to discuss additional needs and funding opportunities will be scheduled.

Foundation:

The End of the Year Foundation "Ask" appeal was designated to assist with costs associated with Advocacy efforts in our neighboring counties. We are proud to report that we have received a generous amount in donations. The community is very good to us and we are grateful for their support.

Plans for the Golf Tournament for 2020 are underway. The date is set for May 11th and I know everyone will be ready to head to the fairway. Please stay tuned for additional news about the tourney.

The Arc-NEPA is proud to be chosen as one of the non-profits who will be participating in the 2020 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. The

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The Right To Education Local Task Force 19

The Right to Education Local Task Force 19 is parent led and brings together families from schools districts in Lackawanna, Wayne and Susquehanna counties along with school staff, community supports and various agencies. We are support for families that have questions on education and related services. We host a variety of speakers, most recently we had the Early Intervention Director from IU 19 present on the transition process from Early Intervention to

School Age. We welcome all to our meetings, but if you cannot attend you can be added to our email distribution list or check out our Facebook page.

We have the following upcoming meetings:

March 24 6 pm at The Arc of NEPA- Workshop on Presuming Competence: Moving from Theory to Practice in the IEP

April 21st 9:30 am at The Transitional Skills Center 530 Electric

St Scranton PA- overview of their program and tour, along with presentations from OVR and High School Transition Coordinator.

May 5th 9:30 at The Arc of NEPA- Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services Provider panel to cover current services and upcoming changes.

If you have any questions or would like more information please, contact Roseann at: rpolishan@thearcnepa.org

Please Join Us

A new Parent/Guardian/Caregiver group is forming at The Arc of NEPA. The idea for the group came from parent Eileen Williams, with the mission of bringing family and caregivers together to share resources and information and develop a feeling of belonging and support. The group will host presenters on topics of interest, bring groups together to answer questions and share ideas to build a community of support for families within The Arc of NEPA network. The parent/guardian/caregiver group will meet quarterly, with the first meeting taking place on Thursday April 23, 2020 at 9:30 am at The Arc 115 Meadow Ave., Scranton. It will be a meet and greet with an overview of programming at The Arc, and include an opportunity for feedback on future topics of interest. Light refreshments will be served. Please contact rpolishan@thearcnepa.org or erempe@thearcnepa.org to RSVP or if you have any questions.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all the folks and community groups who support The Arc's programs and services.

Your dedication and compassion mean the world to us.

Please continue to spread the word about using Amazon Smile; The Arc's Vehicle Donation Program; The Arc's Memorial/Honorarium program.

Intelligent Lives

Proud to Sponsor -

Standing: Stanley Chotkowski - Keystone Community Resources, Eileen Rempe, The Arc-NEPA; Maryann Colbert and Miki Drutchal-Lackawanna-Susquehanna Behavioral Health / Intellectual Disabilities / Early Intervention Program

Seated: Kate Dempsey Jones, Goodwill Industries of Northeastern Pennsylvania and Roseann Polishan, The Arc-NEPA



You never know
what people can do

intelligent lives
a film by dan habib

In honor of Intellectual Disabilities Awareness Month, we invite you to join us in challenging the perception of intelligence and seeing a life of possibilities.

March 19, 2020 | 5:00

The Theater at North 1539 N. Main Ave. Scranton, PA 18508

Light Refreshments, Screening, Q&A

Free to the Public

Tickets: thetheateratnorth.org

SPONSORED BY:



Employee News

Employee Holiday Luncheon

On 12/5/19, employees were treated to a luncheon with some of the favorites-Alfredo's pizza and Nina's wing bites! There was a great representation from all services and a nice way to share some holiday cheer with one other. In addition, employees were surprised with a holiday bonus, as we appreciate their continued care and compassion and extend our gratitude this holiday season.



Wellness Fair

On 12/16/19, The Arc of NEPA hosted an Employee Wellness Education Fair, called The Arc's Home Run to Health. We had four participating vendors in attendance-Geisinger, ConnectCare3, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Chiropractor, and Quest Studios (Nutrition and Fitness). All Arc employees were invited-not just those enrolled in the health plan. Employees were provided with a flyer and once they visited each vendor (base) they were entered into a drawing for a \$50 Walmart Gift Card. Healthy snacks were available, and vendors provided giveaways and educational materials on nutrition, diabetes, tobacco cessation, stress management, etc. There was also a skin analysis machine in which employees were able to look at their skin under a special light and a member of the Geisinger team walked them through the various things they might see. This was perfectly timed, as it was right before the holidays which we know can be a time of over-indulging!

downtown Scranton? (Here's a hint...take a ride down Lackawanna and Wyoming Ave.!) The Arc of NEPA was invited to participate in the Lackawanna County Arts and Culture Inaugural Snow Person Trail. Wooden snow person cutouts were available to decorate and place in an area near downtown Scranton. Our ADP team had a great time helping to bring our snow person to life!



Snow Person Decorating Contest

Have you seen me around



Mike Munchak Community Service Scholarship

The United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties has established the **Mike Munchak Community Service Scholarship** program to assist high school students from Lackawanna and Wayne Counties (PA) who plan to pursue a post-secondary education. The 2020 recipient will receive a onetime award of \$6,300 to commemorate Mike's #63 which he wore throughout this playing days and which was retired by the Houston Oilers in 1996.

To be eligible, candidates must be actively involved in community service activities in programs funded by this United Way, be a full-time resident and/or student of school districts within Lackawanna or Wayne Counties and accepted by an accredited university, college or trade school, in a two or four year degree program track, for the 2020/21 school year.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND HIGHLIGHTS

- The scholarship amount for 2020 is \$6,300.00.
- The scholarship will be awarded for a one (1) year period only.
- Open only to graduating seniors within school districts in Lackawanna or Wayne Counties (PA).
- Demonstrate commitment through community service activities.
- Demonstrate academic achievement

- Applicants must be graduating seniors from a public, private, parochial or charter school within either of the two counties

All completed application packets must be submitted or postmarked no later than March 31, 2020.

Any incomplete packets/submissions will not be considered. <https://www.uwlc.net/mike-munchak-community-service-scholarship>

Send to:
United Way of Lackawanna & Wayne Counties
Attn: Community Service Scholarship Committee
PO Box 526
Scranton, PA 18501-0526

The scholarship winner will be selected by April 30, 2020. The winner and his/her parents or guardian will be invited to the dinner and auction portion of the Mike Munchak Charity Golf Classic scheduled for June 22, 2020 at the Scranton Country Club. The formal presentation of the scholarship will take place at that time when the winner will meet Mike and have photos taken together. Please contact Frank Kinsel at the United Way - 570-343-1267 ext 233 with any questions pertaining to the program outline or the application. United Way staff, board members and their immediate families, the Scholarship Selection Committee and their immediate families are not eligible to apply.

Working with GC-SOM

(Continued from page 3)

advocating for medical school students to gain a greater understanding of working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as they pursue their career paths. The standardized patient experience was of great mutual benefit for the students and the individuals with I/DD who participated," said Patrick T. Quinn, director of program operations, The Arc of NEPA.

While the students were grateful for the chance to build their skills, the visitors from The Arc were happy to have a chance to be advocates for their community. "I like to teach the students," Chris said. "I liked everyone and was glad they practiced on me."

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (GCSOM) received a \$25,000 grant from the National Curriculum Initiative in Developmental Medicine (NCIDM) to increase inclusion of patients with intellectual disabilities and developmental disorders (IDD) into GCSOM's MD curriculum and to diversify elective choices for medical students. The grant was obtained thanks to the combined efforts of GCSOM faculty and student leaders.

The grant calls for research into student attitudes before and after encounters with Standardized Patients who have a physical or intellectual disability. After the September experience, grant researchers compared data of students who completed both pre- and the post-experience surveys and found significant changes in perceptions and attitudes, indicating that the session was effective in aiding students to feel:

- Ease in recognizing a person with an IDD
- Comfort in speaking with a person with an IDD
- Feeling good about treating a person with an IDD
- Competency to care for a person with an IDD
- Able to recognize unmet health needs in patients with an IDD
- Able to recognize discrimination in the healthcare setting

The Arc Stars Project

We are so grateful to be involved in this wonderful opportunity! Grant funding received from Lackawanna County Arts and Culture plays a huge role in The Arc Stars Project. The Arc Stars - Arc Angels on Stage is a theater program for adults with intellectual disabilities who perform alongside students to bring a unique performance to the stage. There are at least eight rehearsal/instruction sessions that lead to the production at the end of June. Each gathering is captured on video to show the development and progress of each rehearsal session. Acting and dancing are significant parts of this program.

The Friends of The Arc Auxiliary were honored to accept a Lackawanna County Arts & Culture Department grant for their Arc Stars Theater program. Many thank yous to

the Department, Committee, Presenters for making this award possible and to Betty, Nancy, Carol and Bill for representing and receiving this gift. We are truly thankful.



Calendar of Events

March

Nor'easters vs. Scranton Police Basketball Game at Scranton High
March 12th

Intelligent Lives Documentary Film Screening at Theatre at North
March 19th

Buddy Holly @ Scranton Cultural Center
March 22nd

April

The Rat Pack - Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr. at Theater at North
April 4th

Yellow Brick Road - A Tribute to Elton John at Theater at North
April 17th

Please Mark Your Calendars 2020

May

Annual Golf Tournament at Glen Oak CC
May 11th

June

Bowling Banquet
June 3rd

NEPA Gives
June 5th

Highmark Walk at PNC Field
June 6th

Arc Tracks Bus Trip PA Grand Canyon
June 6th

RailRiders Baseball Game
June 10th

Foundation Annual Meeting
Annual Board/General Membership/Recognition

August

Arc-Night

September

United Way Day of Caring
Fall Festival - Waldorf Park
Sept. 13th

PPODS Buddy Walk
Beatles Tribute @ Theater North
Sept 26th

October

PODS Buddy Walk
Neil Diamond @Theater North
Oct 17th

November

Night at the Races

December

Poinsettia Sale
Cookie Walk
Holiday Show at Arc
Holiday Party - Dec. 13th

You are invited to The Arc of NEPA's

World Down Syndrome Day 321 Dance!

Where: Nesquehoning Hose Co., 953 E. Catawissa St., Nesquehoning, PA 18240
When: Saturday, March 21, 2020 **Time:** 6:00pm to 9:00pm
Cost: \$5.00 (per person attending) Snacks and drinks will be provided

We will be honoring Down Syndrome Day with "Rock Your Socks Off"

Wear your favorite wacky silly socks!

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) is marked each year on March 21. The 21st day of March (the 3rd month of the year) was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome. March 21 was declared World Down Syndrome Day by the United Nations General Assembly on December 19, 2011. ... The date is to symbolize the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome. To bring awareness, people across the world will be wearing crazy socks!

Reservations are due by March 16th

Make your reservations today by calling 570-207-0825

The Arc Recreation is NOT intended to provide supervision.

Participants are required to be accompanied by an adult.

United Way's 2019 Campaign Community Celebration Dinner



Sue Halley, Desiree Vojta, Kathy Brennan and Pat Quinn attended the United Way's 2019 Campaign Community Celebration Dinner.

Membership Campaign 2020

Celebrating 65 years of programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Dear Friend of The Arc,

The Arc of the United States has a network of more than 140,000 members and close to 700 affiliated chapters nationwide. By becoming a member, you can be a part of the largest grassroots movement to protect the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As part of this network, you'll be connected to others with and without disabilities who share your beliefs and your challenges. Self-advocates (an individual with I/DD), their family members, experts and professionals in the field and advocates and activists work together through The Arc to ensure that people with I/DD have the resources to meet their needs and live self-determined lives.

We are asking if you would join our worthwhile cause. As a member, you are uniting with an organization who has dedicated its time and energy to children and

adults with I/DD and their families. People who deserve to have the support and services they need, want and enjoy.

Benefits of Membership

Your membership means building better lives and also entitles you to benefits:

- Newsletters from The Arc-US, The Arc-PA and The Arc-NEPA - with up-to-date information on The Arc and developmental disability information.
- Access to insurance coverage rates through The Arc-US's partner Mercer.
- Up-to-the minute alerts about the latest on Capitol Hill.
- Discounted registration to the annual national events.

We need you in order to continue our services and advocacy, and also to provide a strong voice in Harrisburg and Washington

on behalf of the individuals we serve. The more people who join as members equals more voting privileges on legislative issues affecting people with I/DD. Our members mean the world to us and we are so very thankful for your support.

Please fill out the form on the back of this newsletter and send it back to The Arc, along with your support. If you would include your email address that would be great! Information will be forwarded to you as soon as it becomes available. Thank you for your continued commitment and generosity. We are here because children and adults with I/DD need us to be and rely on us. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Eileen Rempe
Director, Public Relations
and Development

2020 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community



The Arc-NEPA is proud to be chosen as one of the non-profits who will be participating in the 2020 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community.

Welcome to the 2020 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community!

Congratulations! The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania has been selected to participate in the 2020 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community!

The event for Northeastern Pennsylvania will be held on June 6th at PNC Field in Moosic.

The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community is an annual fundraising walk that benefits local health and human service agencies.

Highmark Inc. coordinates and underwrites the cost of the walk so that 100 percent of the money raised by walkers goes to the participating nonprofits.

The primary goal of the Walk is to help participating organizations raise money for their individual missions. The secondary goal of the Walk is to energize community members to have a greater hand in their health by becoming or staying physically active.

The inaugural Walk for a Healthy Community took place in Pittsburgh in 2003 and raised more than \$25,000 for eight nonprofit organizations.

Since then, additional walks have been added in Lehigh Valley, Erie, Harrisburg, Laurel Highlands, Northeastern Pennsylvania (Scranton/Wilkes Barre), and Wilmington, Delaware.

Through 2018, the events have raised more than \$13.6 million for nearly 450 nonprofits across the states. A record \$1.507 million was raised in 2018, supporting 211 organizations.

GCSOM Student Outreach

Courtesy of Maureen Murtha, GCSOM REACH-HEI program director

For Down Syndrome Awareness Month, ARC Board Member, Kristen Haefele, provided 2 presentations to more than 300 students including GCSOM medical students, Scranton High School students, and Hazleton Area Academy of Science Students. The topic of her discussion was "Living With Down Syndrome." In addition to her presentation, students expanded their knowledge by examining stereotypes, using person-first language, and reviewing increased risks for certain health conditions.

With this knowledge, participants decided to create DS Awareness Sessions in their schools. They had presentations, DS color dress days, ribbon days, and campaigns to be more inclusive. Kristen is a leader and she inspired many through her presentation



The ADP Holiday Door Tour

The halls of the Adult Day Program were beautifully decorated for the holidays and the Administration was enthusiastically welcomed for a fun-filled stroll down the creatively, artistic pathway. We were filled with oohs and aahs and the amazing abilities of our consumers and staff made us feel the thrill and magic of the holidays. We laughed, hugged and congratulated everyone on a job very well done! The overall winners of the ADP Door Tour were a combination of the efforts in the program hallway by the rear foyer. Thank you to everyone for making this a very joyful experience!!!



Golden Donates Luxury Power Lift Recliners to The Arc of NEPA

Article compliments of Chris Carroll, Director of Marketing Golden Technologies, Inc.

Golden Technologies is supporting its local community by donating several luxury power lift recliners to The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA) for the enjoyment of consumers participating in their day programs. The Arc is dedicated to advocating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"We are happy to bring comfort and joy to our friends at The Arc of NEPA by providing high-quality seating to improve their quality of life and add to their sense of independence," said Rich Golden, CEO of Golden Technologies. "We recognize the importance of meeting the needs of aging adults and are so honored to contribute to The Arc's warm and friendly atmosphere with our power lift recliners," he added. Golden is the world's leading manufacturer of luxurious power lift and recline chairs and is based in nearby Old Forge, PA.

"The very generous donation of four, plush, power lift/recliner chairs from Golden Technologies provide a superior level of comfort for the individuals served by The Arc of NEPA. Our gratitude to Mr. Richard Golden and his team is overflowing," said Maryclaire Kretsch, executive director of The Arc of NEPA.



Seated: Adult Day Service consumers at The Arc of NEPA, Carl and Chris.
Standing L-R: Pat Quinn, director of Program Operations; Maryclaire Kretsch, executive director; Chris Carroll, director of Marketing, Golden Technologies and Board Member, The Arc of NEPA; and Kelly Peters, senior manager of Licensed Services.

Come and Join Us for a Basketball Game

The Arc Nor'easters
vs
The Scranton Police Department

Thursday, March 12th

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Pride Squad at 6:00 p.m.
Game begins at 6:30 p.m.
(Foul Shooting Contest at Half-Time 3 Shots for \$1.00)

Scranton High School
63 Munchak Way, Scranton, PA 18508

Admission: Adults \$5.00
Students \$3.00
Children under 5 - FREE

For more information,
please call The Arc @ 570-346-4010
There will be food, baked goods and raffles.
Proceeds benefit The Arc Responds

Save The Date

The Arc of NEPA 20th Annual Golf Tournament

Monday, May 11, 2020
Glen Oak Country Club

*Please mark your calendars -
the date has been set!*

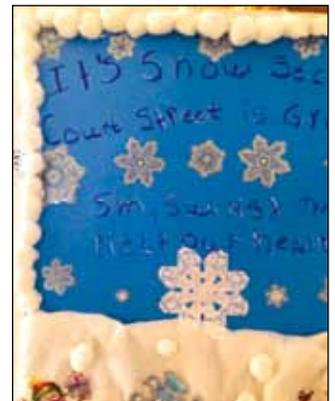
If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call Eileen at The Arc - 346-4010.

Spirit of the Season

*Jingle bells, jingle bells
 Jingle all the way
 Oh, what fun it is to ride
 In a one horse open sleigh
 Jingle bells, jingle bells
 Jingle all the way
 Oh, what fun it is to ride
 In a one horse open sleigh
 Dashing through the streets
 In a big green rudolph van
 O'er the potholes we go
 Bouncing all the way
 Bells on tophats jingle
 Soaring our spirits so high and bright
 What fun it is to be together
 Making the season feel so
 spectacularly right...*

What a ball had by all!!! During our annual holiday CLA tour, we saw so many gorgeous decorations and we were in awe of their originality and cleverness. Everyone really outdid themselves with their warm welcomes and precious smiles. We all felt

that each home was a winner in our seasonal visit. However, we did have an objective which was to have a first, second and third place and by the way, the results were close...: Court, Sanders and Theodore. Congratulations for celebrating the Spirit of the Season!



The Arc's Holiday Party!

Submitted by: Mari Pizur

As Bob Hope once said "When we recall Christmas past, we usually find that the simplest things, not the great occasion—give off the greatest glow!

In the year 2020, The Arc will be celebrating its 65th Anniversary of serving people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Whenever you reach milestones in your life you can't help but to reflect on the past!

We celebrated our "Holiday Party" at Fiorellis this past December! Our theme was the "Return of the Gingerbread Men"! The props and costumes from Christmas past might appear to look the same but behind the scenes there was an all new cast of characters and I mean characters! Thank you Matt, Allisson, Des, Sue, Carrie, Paige, Holly, Kevin, Alea, Tyler and Matt R. for enhancing our party with your fun loving personalities!

As I started to reflect on this past year many thoughts came to mind. I reflected on my job in

the Recreation Department and our participants. I am fortunate to have shared many laughs, have great conversations, and made new friends and simple just had fun with each other.

Christmas is about giving, family and friends. It is about remembering all the tenderness of the past; the warmth of the present and hope for a great future. It is not about the decorations or the presents under the tree it is about the inner glow that touches the heart. The most precious gift I have ever received is the natural gift of unconditional love from our recreation participants.

The irony is my job to add meaning



and enrichment to our participants' lives, but I know that each program has filled my life with warmth, added meaning and has enriched my life. Now that is a Christmas present.



Carbon County's Holiday Party

Submitted by: Sheila Hardranft

This year our Christmas Party was a little extra special. I had the privilege of presenting a plaque honoring Dolores "Becky" Johnson who worked at American Legion Post 314 in Lehighton where we hold our annual Christmas Party. Earlier in 2019 Becky gained her Angel wings unexpectedly and we were deeply saddened to hear the news. I presented a plaque to her Grandson Clayton, which will be displayed at Legion Post 314. Becky worked tirelessly to ensure our holiday festivities was our gala event of the year! Every year Becky and her staff enjoyed spending time on the dance floor with everyone laughing and dancing. We wished her a Merry Christmas

in Heaven with a lot of tears. It was indeed my honor that we dedicate the day to our dear friend. Becky now watches over us as our own Guardian Angel and we will miss her.

After the presentation we enjoyed



dinner and dancing along with some much needed chatter among all of us. Thanks to our entertainment "Party Time" for getting the dance floor rocking and a visit from Santa to bring smiles to everyone's faces.



The North PPODS Holiday Party

The group photo is the ESU Council for Exceptional Children Board with their advisor Michelle LaBadie and Mandy Colville - Arc Advocate.

Pat Quinn with Mandy's daughter, Gracie. Santa visited with some of the kiddos who came and had a ball.

On December 7th, North PPODS held their annual holiday party at Stony Acres, hosted by the ESU CEC. We were treated to games, crafts, lunch and a visit from Santa. We had 60 people in attendance.



GCSOM Student Outreach

Courtesy of Maureen Murtha, GCSOM REACH-HEI program director

As a result of Kristen's presentations, students in Hazleton Area Academy of Science and Scranton High School had Down Syndrome Awareness Outreach Days and reached out to more than 1400 students with signatures to be more inclusive.



The entire student body dressed in blue and yellow at HAAS and made posters and handouts. They presented information on inclusion and got over 700 signatures from peers to become more inclusive.

Scranton High School also reached out to more than 700 students. They made blue and yellow ribbons and presented on the impact of eliminating hurtful words. Students pledged to eliminate the "R" word from vocabulary.



Personalized posters were hung throughout the schools during DSA Month



My Brother's Keeper



Aktion club recently took part in helping out a local group called My Brothers Keeper. My brothers keeper is a local group of women who make sleeping bags for the homeless from recycled fabrics. The ladies and gentlemen from Aktion club collected hats, scarfs, gloves, and made 3 blankets for the group. Our ladies and gentlemen enjoyed making the blankets for them.

Nor'easters vs. Scranton Police

The game is on for the Nor'easters vs. Scranton Police. The event will be held on Thursday, March 12th at Scranton High School! We are looking forward to an evening of excitement and fun!!! See you there.



Sitting: Amanda Mendez; Kenny Allen; Mari Pizur. Standing: Scranton Police Chief Carl Graziano; Maryclaire Kretsch; Carl Hallock; LeSeana Colvin; Lieutenant Leonard Namiotka; Allison Hull; Desiree Vojta; Eileen Rempe

Around The Arc

(Continued from page 4)

event for Northeastern Pennsylvania will be held on June 6th at PNC Field in Moosic. The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community is an annual fund raising walk that benefits local health and human service agencies. Highmark, Inc. coordinates and underwrites the cost of the walk so that 100 percent of the money raised by walkers goes to the participating nonprofits. The primary goal of the Walk is to help participating organizations raise money for their individual missions. The secondary goal of the Walk is to energize community members to have a greater hand in their health by becoming or staying physically active.

Auxiliary:

The membership mailing is scheduled for the end of January. Many members participate in events and help with volunteer and fund raising needs. We continue to have interest in the group and we feel very proud of all the work that is being done.

NEPA Gives is scheduled for the first Friday in June, June 5th. We are looking forward to working with the Scranton Area Community Foundation who has teamed up with friends at The Luzerne Foundation, Greater Pike Community Foundation, Wayne County Community Foundation, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC), and other community sponsors to

host NEPA Gives— which is a one-day giving extravaganza. For 24 hours—from 12:00 a.m. to 11:59:59 p.m.—on Friday, June 5, 2020, donors may make secure donations to their favorite local nonprofit organizations through the NEPA Gives online platform. The Arc is truly excited to be a part of this event!

Recreation:

Arc Tracks is starting the year with lots of choices for everyone. On March 22nd, we will go to see Buddy Holly at the Scranton Cultural Center; followed by The Rat Pack at the Theater at North on April 4th, Yellow Brick Road - A Tribute to Elton John at the Theater at North on April 17th and a bus trip to the PA Grand Canyon on June 6th followed by so much more – Please refer to the calendar of events and mark your schedules - you don't want to miss out on all the fun opportunities...

The Arc Responds and the Employee Driven Group:

The Arc Responds "Snowflake Tree" Holiday Project 2019 was a great success. Even when times are so tough, people are very generous and give what they can to help another have a better holiday. We are extremely proud of this project and are very grateful for your continued support of all the fund raising activities. Over 20 people benefitted from your benevolence - thank you so much!!

The poinsettias were here and gone!!! They were very popular and we sold almost 600 flowers which is an extraordinary amount of community support. The Adult Day Program oversaw



Our folks spreading holiday joy by delivering flowers to many area establishments.



the posies and Arc Responds was the beneficiary of the proceeds.

The game is on for the Nor'easters vs. Scranton Police. The event will be held on Thursday, March 12th! We are looking forward to an evening of excitement and fun!!! More information listed on the flyer in this edition.

The RailRiders Baseball Game is scheduled for June 10th. Additional information will be sent out sooner to the event.



Northeastern Pennsylvania

115 Meadow Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505

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Our Vision

"People with intellectual and developmental disabilities are entitled to live full, self-determined and respected lives."

VISIT US AT:
www.thearcnepa.org
Like us on Facebook

Affiliated with the , The Arc of PA and The Arc of US.

DESIGNED BY: BILL PILLING GRAPHICS

Sign Up!

Membership is the key...

You can help. Become a member of The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania today. Benefits include:

- National, state, and local newsletters with current information on intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The opportunity to participate in The Arc affairs at a local, state, and national level.
- Attend conferences, conventions, and seminars at a reduced cost.
- Discount prices on publications.
- Insurances services, credit card program, and free one year subscription to ABILITY digital magazine.

Stay Informed!

Membership Registration

New Member

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Type of Membership

___ \$25.00 - \$49.99 Friend

___ \$50.00 - \$99.99 Sponsor

___ \$100.00 - \$499.99 Supporter

___ \$500.00 - \$999.99 Benefactor

___ \$1,000.00 + Partner

Please remit to:



Northeastern Pennsylvania

115 Meadow Avenue
Scranton, PA 18505