



For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities

Achieve with us.

December 7, 2015

Legislative Update from the State House

With Election Day over, legislators returned to the State House in November and Committee meetings were back in session. On the 16th, The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute and a group of families traveled to the capital and spoke to more than 35 legislators about the challenges associated with caring for a loved one with intellectual and



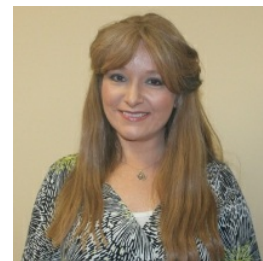
developmental disabilities. The event, a part of our Family Caregivers Awareness Month celebration, gave families an opportunity to speak with elected officials about a number of issues such as the importance of respite, the length of the Waiting List, and the need for housing. In addition, our family representatives were honored and presented with a resolution at the start of the Assembly Human Services Committee by Chairwoman Valerie Huttie and members of her Committee. On the legislative front, The Arc of New Jersey supported a number of bills moving through the legislative process, many of which deal with special education issues and health items. (To continue reading,



Chapter Spotlight

Meet the New Assoc. Executive Director at The Arc of Somerset

This month, The Arc of New Jersey is excited to introduce you to Michelle McMahon who recently started as the new Associate Executive Director at The Arc of Somerset County.



1. Can you tell us a little about yourself and your background?

I have lived and worked in New Jersey for my entire life, and recently moved to Somerset County along with my husband and two children. I have over 20 years of experience as a leader in the fields of mental health and developmental disabilities, and over 10 years of experience as an Adjunct Professor of Psychology. I earned my B.A. in Psychology in 1994 and my M.A. in Psychology in 2002.

ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Outstanding Recipients Honored



(Pictured Above: Spirit of The Arc Award Winner Stephanie Pratico with her family, center, Board President Robert Hage, left, and Executive Director Tom Baffuto, right.)

The extraordinary people and organizations honored at The Arc of New Jersey's 2015 Awards Celebration do not crave recognition or praise; they only wish to better the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in New Jersey. But while they may prefer to go unnoticed, their achievements and accomplishments deserve the spotlight. With that in mind, The Arc of New Jersey bestowed 13 awards at the Imperia in Somerset on Tuesday, November 17, to commend those who include and promote the well-being of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"This year's award recipients believe in the equality of individuals with developmental disabilities and their right to access the same opportunities available to all citizens living in New Jersey," Thomas Baffuto, Executive Director for The Arc of NJ, said. "I applaud this year's honorees for their devotion, but also for the example they set for others. They are committed to the creation of a diverse society that is inclusive to all, and I commend all the work they do to make that goal a reality."

Distinguished Award Recipients included:

2. What do you see as the top challenges and opportunities for The Arc of Somerset under your leadership?

The challenges at The Arc of Somerset are also opportunities! In my new role, I'd like to focus on creative ways to recognize the great work of our employees and enhance their experience with our organization. Additionally, I'd like to explore ways to support the Arc Foundation and the newly launched Capital Campaign for Camp Jotoni. There is an exciting new opportunity for students with developmental disabilities to pursue their dream of furthering their education through our new program: The Achievement Center at Raritan Valley Community College. I look forward to helping to nurture the growth of this program, and watching dreams come true!

3. What's one thing you would like individuals with disabilities, their families and the residents of Somerset County to know about your Chapter?

The Arc of Somerset County has an excellent and strong foundation in its dedicated and passionate staff. We seek to create opportunities where we see need, and create possibilities where we see barriers. One of the most notable qualities of this organization is its innovation - problems and challenges turn quickly into creative solutions. Everything we do is focused on our mission to provide quality services and advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to support development and achievement at every stage of life.

To learn more about the programs and supports offered at The Arc of Somerset, visit their [web site](#).

The Arc of NJ Hosts Upcoming Webinars

Register today for these important information sessions:

Important Update on Applying for SSI and Medicaid

- Spirit of The Arc Award - **Jennifer Velez, Esq.**
- Spirit of The Arc Award - **Stephanie A. Pratico**
- Legislator of the Year - **Senator Paul Sarlo (District-36)**
- Legislator of the Year - **Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly (District-35)**
- Volunteer of the Year - **Geoff McGrane**
- Employer of the Year - **Shred-It**
- Professional of the Year - **Anntoinette Gunther**
- Bill Sackter Award - **Renee Pierce**
- Distinguished Community Service - **Exxon/Mobil**
- Health Care Professional of the Year - **Evan Spivack, DDS**
- Martin Papish Award - **Mary Scott**
- Communicator's Award - **The Arc of Monmouth**
- Community Media Excellence - **The Community Living Education Project**



(Pictured Above: Self-Advocate Evelyn Ramundo, left, with Spirit of The Arc Award Winner and former Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez)

Medicaid provides cost-effective coverage for low-income individuals. In New Jersey, Medicaid eligibility is now required in order to receive Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) funded services. This important reform ensures the state's ability to maximize the receipt of federal revenue, and to preserve and enhance community-based supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Individuals who are new to the Division are required to meet the functional criteria and have Medicaid eligibility before they can begin receiving a service. This webinar will inform you of the different ways to initiate the eligibility process, information needed to complete the process, and updates on federal and state regulations. This webinar will be hosted by Planning for Adult Life.

[Wednesday, December 9 at 6 pm](#)

Equal Justice Talks: Risk Assessment Tools for Sex Offenders with Disabilities

Assessing risk when working with individuals with developmental disabilities who act out sexually raises unique challenges for clinicians. Equally important is the need to draft clear and comprehensive risk assessment reports that can be used by support and treatment providers. This hour long webinar, conducted by a seasoned New Jersey practitioner, will review the crucial elements of creating a report and will also address these challenges with practical, useful suggestions. This webinar is hosted by the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program of The Arc of New Jersey and the presenter will be Dr. Jessica Di Marco, a psychologist with Rutgers University, employed at the Department of Corrections Central Reception and Assignment Facility (CRAF) as a mental health clinician.

[Tuesday, December 15 at 1 pm](#)

DDD Webinars in December

Overview and Live Q&A: The Division of Developmental Disabilities

This webinar aims to assist students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their

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e-newsletter, you may also be interested in some of our other electronic publications.



Planning for Adult Life

(PFAL): This program assists young adults with I/DD and their families in charting a life course for adulthood. To learn more about this program and the services they offer, [sign up for The Compass](#), the PFAL newsletter.

The Arc of NJ Family Institute: This program serves as a critical resource for families of individuals with I/DD. The Institute helps families get the answers they need, assists them as they navigate the system and advocates for positive change. [Sign up for The Family Advocate](#) to stay up to date on all the important issues and upcoming service delivery changes.

Mainstreaming Medical Care (MMC): This program promotes quality health care for people with I/DD throughout New Jersey. MMC advocates on behalf of individuals with dual diagnosis, those requiring assistance with NJ Medicaid, and those facing difficulties accessing medical, dental or mental health services from their MCO. [Sign up for the Healthy Times Newsletter](#) and stay up to date on all the health care news related to intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Help Keep The Arc of NJ Strong!

The Arc of New Jersey relies on charitable contributions to continue our strong advocacy. Please help keep our efforts moving forward by making a donation to The Arc of New Jersey.

There are several ways you can help us:

1. Make a donation at www.arcnj.org.
2. If your company has a matching gift program, be sure to register your gift so you can double your contribution.
3. Make your donation count all year long by becoming a monthly Sustainer. All you have to do is note on your online donation that you would like it to be a monthly contribution.
4. Donate a vehicle by calling (877) 272-2270.

families, and school personnel in understanding the DDD system and how to prepare to access needed services after exiting the school system. Covered topics will include information about DDD eligibility, avenues of funding, Support Coordination, services, and the process for connecting with providers. Parents groups, schools, providers, and other stakeholders are encouraged to host events/meetings during the dates of this webinar to assist in sharing the information with their peers and colleagues.

Hosted by Jennifer Joyce, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Director of the Supports Program and Employment Services.

- **December 8, 2015, 6:00 PM**
- **January 19, 2016, 10:00 AM**
- **February 25, 2016, 6:30 PM**

To register, click [here](#).

Series 1: Live Supports Program Q&A Session - Support Coordination Agency and Provider Focused

This regularly scheduled session gives Support Coordination Agencies and service providers an opportunity to ask questions of the Director of the Supports Program and Employment Services, and get the latest news about the Division of Developmental Disabilities' Supports Program launched in July 2015. All stakeholders are welcome to attend these webinars, but information provided will be focused on questions submitted by SCAs and providers.

- **December 18, 2015, 2:00 PM**

To register, click [here](#).

Series 2: Live Supports Program Q&A Session - Individual/Family Focused

This regularly scheduled session gives individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families an opportunity to ask questions of the Director of the Supports Program and Employment Services, and get the latest news about the Division of Developmental Disabilities' Supports Program launched in July 2015. All stakeholders are

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welcome to attend these webinars, but information provided will be focused on questions submitted by individuals and family members.

- **December 29, 2015, 1:00 PM**

To register, click [here](#).

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