

Advocacy Matters

A digital newsletter produced by the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

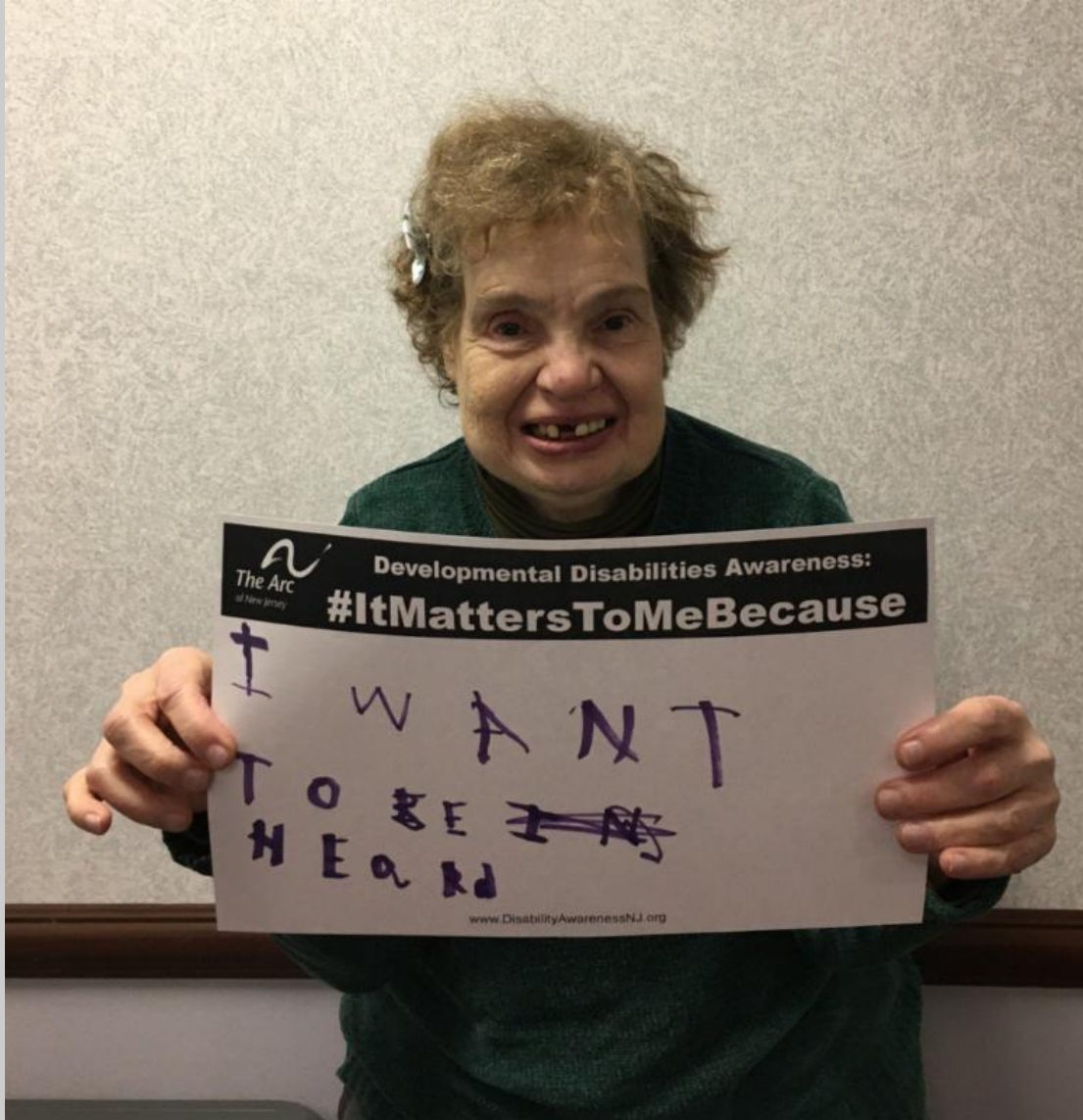
March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Members of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network and the Self-Advocacy Project team celebrated **National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month** all month long!

We hosted an outreach and awareness event at the **State House** in Trenton, spearheaded a **social media** campaign, as well as received a Governor's **Proclamation** and **Ceremonial Resolution** from the General Assembly in honor of **Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month**.

Members of the NJSSAN started a social media campaign that focused on the importance of **awareness**. Members wrote personal messages about why awareness of developmental disabilities is important, then snapped a selfie and posted their messages to Twitter. Please check out some of the snaps below and on the [NJSAP Twitter feed](#).

#ItMattersToMeBecause



#ItMattersToMeBecause
I WANT TO BE HEARD!



#ItMattersToMeBecause

We all have something in common, it starts with being a person first and being kind to others!



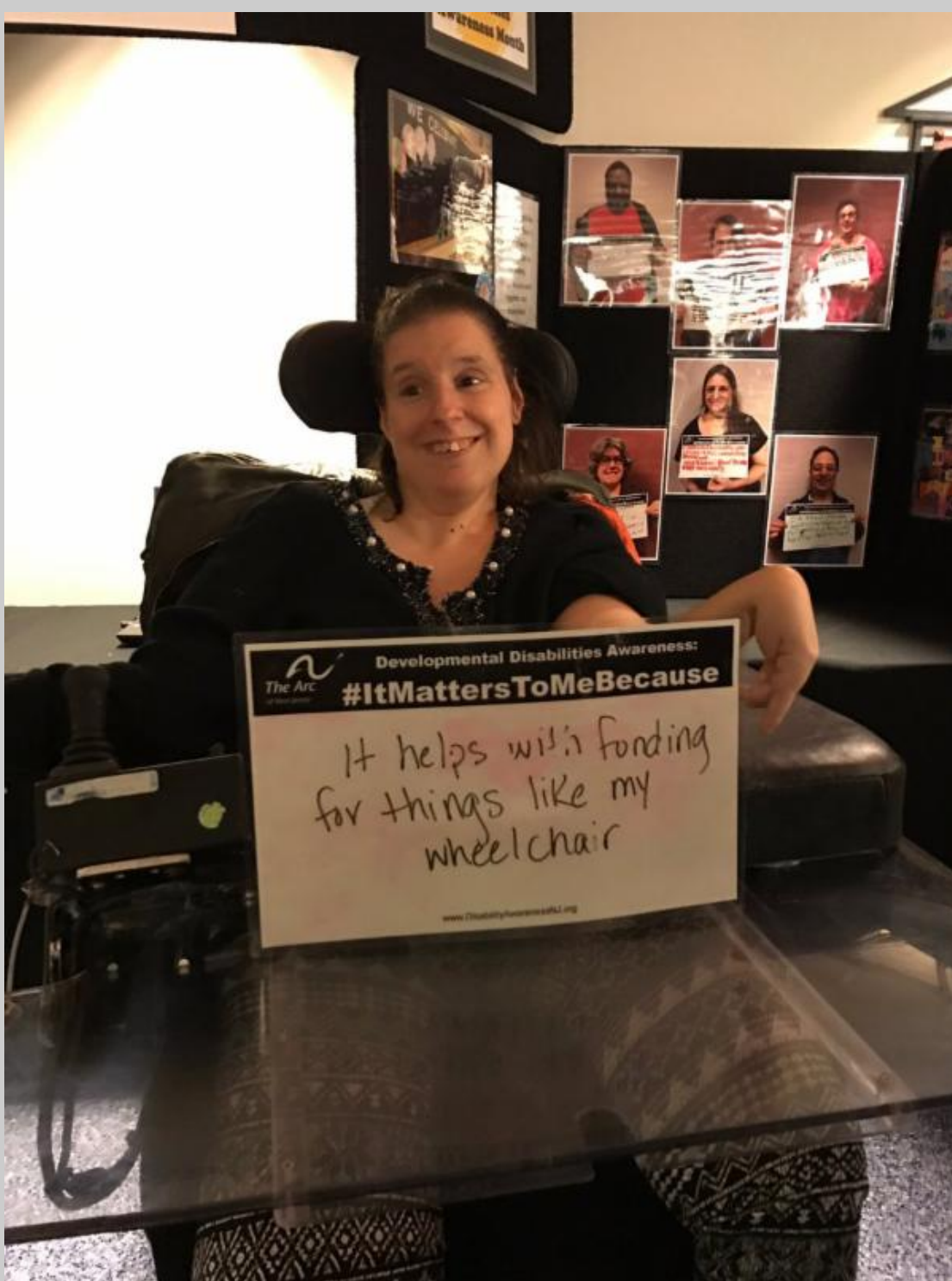
**#ItMattersToMeBecause
EVERYONE HAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT
TO CONTRIBUTE!**

**Thank you, Commissioner Connolly, for
supporting the Statewide Self-Advocacy**

Network and our Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month campaign!



**#ItMattersToMeBecause
I WANT TO SHARE MY THOUGHTS AND
OPINIONS WITH OTHERS.**



Thank you to all of the self-advocates, staff, legislators, students, and teachers who supported our Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month campaign!



NJSSAN BUDGET ADVOCACY: MEMBERS SPEAK OUT ABOUT THE NEED FOR A DSP WAGE INCREASE

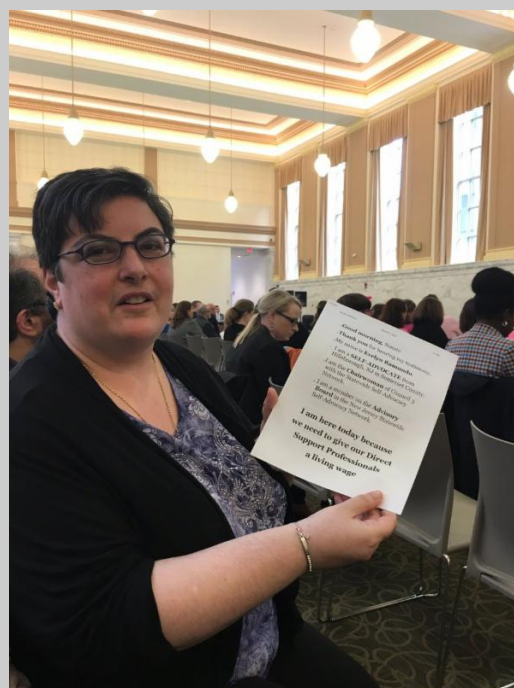
Members of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network attended budget hearings throughout the month to advocate on the FY18 New Jersey State Budget.

Evelyn and Seth worked with the NJSAP team to develop talking points and testimony that focused on the need for a wage increase for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs).

Evelyn Ramundo Chairwoman of Council 3

Evelyn testified at the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee hearing at Rutgers Newark on March 21st. She advocated for a wage increase for DSPs, as well as additional funding for supports and services for people with disabilities in the FY18 budget.

"Direct Support Professionals are a large part of my life, even though I have unsupervised time. They drive me to meetings, social outings, doctor visits, and are there if I ever



need anything in my supported living apartment. They are working around the clock to ensure that my housemates and I live a rich and meaningful life."



Seth Shaffer
Member of
Council 2 of the
NJSSAN and Arc
AEROS

Seth testified at the
Assembly Budget
Committee hearing
at Felician College on
March 29th.



Seth urged members
of the Assembly to increase wages for Direct Support
Professionals: "DSP's work through bad weather and blizzards, through
holidays, and weekends. They deserve to be paid what they are
worth."

2nd Annual Sprout Film Festival

You don't want to miss this!

On Saturday, April 29th, The Arc of New Jersey and
Self-Advocacy Project will host the
2nd Annual Sprout Film Festival!

This year, we are hosting the event at
Middlesex County College
West Hall Parkview Room
2600 Woodbridge Ave, Edison, NJ 08837

Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased at
www.SproutNJ.org

entertaining and memorable films featuring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities



The Arc
of New Jersey

sprout film festival 2017

SATURDAY, APRIL 29th
DOORS OPEN AT 10:30AM
11:00AM - 1:30PM

Middlesex County College
West Hall, Parkview Room
2600 Woodbridge Ave. Edison, NJ

Tickets are \$10 and can be
purchased at www.SproutNJ.org



Thank you to our event host



For more information, please contact
the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

at NJSAP@ArcNJ.org or 732-246-2525, ext. 22

Thank you to our sponsor

New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities



njcdd.org

**Assemblyman Mukherji Presents
Ceremonial Resolution to
Self-Advocates**



On March 30th, self-advocates from The Arc of Hudson County met with Assemblyman Raj Mukherji at his office in Jersey City. Asm. Mukherji presented self-advocates with a Ceremonial Resolution from the General Assembly in honor of Developmental Disabilities Awareness month.

Advocates also joined the Assemblyman in a few rounds of cornhole. What an excellent way to wrap up Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month!

