



GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

The Arc of NJ Continues FY18 Budget Advocacy

During the month of April, The Arc of New Jersey continued advocacy for a \$1.25 an hour wage increase for Direct Support Professionals in the FY18 Budget. As Chair of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage, The Arc testified at the Senate Budget Committee and held one-on-one meetings with members of both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees. Also last month, The Arc of New Jersey participated in a roundtable discussion with US Senator Bob Menendez at his office in Newark. To continue reading, [click here](#).



Second Annual Sprout Film Festival Celebrates People with Disabilities



More than 200 people experienced a diverse storytelling event at The Arc of New Jersey's second annual Sprout Film Festival this past Saturday, April 29th. The screening, which was held this year at Middlesex County College, included a variety of films that celebrate the lives and creativity of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). In addition, Anthony Di Salvo, Founder and Executive Director of Sprout, introduced the films and held a Q&A after the showing.

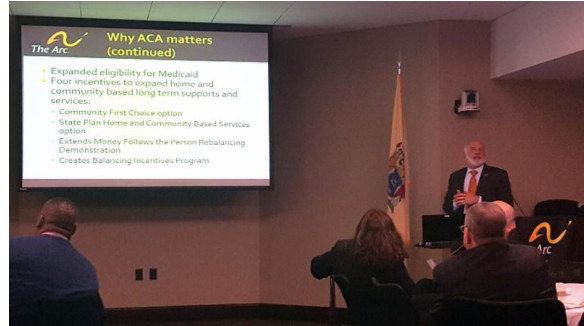
The Arc's CEO Peter Berns Updates NJ on Federal Issues

Peter Berns, CEO for The Arc US, attended The Arc of New Jersey's Annual Meeting on April 6th and provided an update about the ongoing threats to entitlement programs and other issues of importance to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition to his presentation, Peter also swore in new officers to The Arc of New Jersey's Board of Directors. Those new officers, including incoming Board President Joanne Bergin, will begin their tenure on July 1, 2017. Also at the Annual Meeting, Executive Director Tom Baffuto updated everyone about the ongoing work at The Arc of New Jersey and highlighted a number of accomplishments from this past year.



To view a copy of our annual report, [click here](#).

To learn more about the work of The Arc US, check out their blog by [clicking here](#).



Self-Advocates Spring into Action at 12th Annual Luncheon & Educate Future Special Ed Teachers



More than 300 Self-Advocates from across the State attended the Spring Into Action Luncheon on Saturday, April 8th. The event, held at the Imperia in Somerset, included awards, lunch and dancing. In addition, on April 19, members of the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Program participated in a speakers panel at Montclair State University - an event they attend annually. A panel of eight advocates spoke to a graduate class of special education teachers in training. The students had many thoughtful questions prepared, including questions about employment, residential supports, and techniques for teaching young students about self-advocacy.



Chapters of The Arc Kick Off "Step Up For The Arc 2017"

Step Up For The Arc is an annual statewide initiative of The Arc of New Jersey, with walkathons held locally by every county chapter. It's a fun, healthy and easy way to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

- [The Arc of Gloucester - May 13](#)



- [The Arc of Middlesex - May 13](#)
- [The Arc of Mercer - May 20](#)
- [The Arc of Ocean - May 20](#)
- [The Arc of Cumberland - May 21](#)
- [The Arc of Burlington - May 21](#)
- [The Arc of Camden - May 21](#)
- [SCARC - May 21](#)

[Check this web site](#) often to find the event happening in your county.

The Arc Family Institute Receives Grant

The Arc of New Jersey would like to thank Investors Bank who stopped by last month and awarded our organization with a generous grant for The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute.

Pictured from left to right is Tom Baffuto, Executive Director of The Arc of NJ, Asma Zafar, Assistant Branch Manager, Lisa Ford, Director of The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute and Syed Khalid Jafri, Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager.



The Arc Mercer Health Clinic Open House Draws a Full House

The Arc Mercer and Medina Community Clinic held an Open House on March 29 that drew an overflow crowd to its new health clinic. The event officially unveiled the new facility and launched a collaborative initiative between the two non-profit organizations. Guests, including The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto and Mainstreaming Medical Care Director Bev Roberts toured the facility, which The Arc Mercer is now sharing with the Medina Clinic, and learned about how this joint effort will improve access to care for patients with special needs. To read more, [click here](#).

The Arc of NJ Educates Families About Medicaid and SSI

Mainstreaming Medical Care Director Bev Roberts and The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute Coordinator Cheryl Crick presented about SSI & Medicaid at The Arc of Middlesex on April 25. The presentation topics included:

- What happens to SSI and Medicaid when the parent of an individual with I/DD retires, or if they become disabled, or pass away?
- What are the exceptions to DDD's requirement on having Medicaid?
- What are PPP services and what is the



Check Out These Upcoming Events, Webinars

- **Webinar: Understanding Sexuality in Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

Tuesday, May 16 at 12 pm

Sexual education encompasses many aspects of life, such as anatomy, health, personal hygiene, reproduction, relationships, and the expression of love. Sex education is needed by all human beings including youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Excluding youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities from this important conversation can leave this population vulnerable to abuse. This webinar will discuss why educating youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities is so important, barriers families face in discussing sexuality, and solutions to those barriers.



- **Webinar: Supported Decision-Making: Planning for Medical Decision-Making**

Wednesday, May 17 at 2 pm

Because medical decisions often need to be made in stressful situations, involve complex information, and require weighing of significant risk, planning is important. There are many ways that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can receive support to make decisions about the health care they want to receive. In this webinar, Clarissa Kripke, MD, will discuss how doctors and other medical professionals can create an environment that empowers people with I/DD to make health care decisions using supported decision-making tools.

- **Free Conference: Parent Forum and Opportunity Expo - Passaic County**

Saturday, May 20 from 8:30 am to 1 pm

These events are held throughout the state and consist of a Parent Forum that includes workshops on specific topics including support coordination, the continuum of community services, financial planning, eligibility requirements, and where to find help. The Opportunity Expo features a variety of exhibitors including: state and county government entities, community service providers, service coordinators, local health care support and recreation providers, additional information and referral services. Families will be exposed to resources in their area and will have the chance to interview potential service providers to hire.

- **Free IEP Review with the Attorneys of Hinkle, Fingles, Prior & Fischer, Attorneys at Law - Ocean County**

Wednesday, May 24 at 6 pm

Are You Looking For Professional Guidance With Your Child's IEP? We are offering FREE regional IEP reviews for families who may have questions or concerns about their child's plan. Families will have an opportunity to sit down with an attorney from Hinkle, Fingles, Prior, & Fischer to review their child's IEP, ask questions and discuss any concerns they may have about their school district. **Space is limited and registration is REQUIRED to attend. Families will receive a free 30 minute IEP review. Contact Kristina Tosti at (609) 896-4200 to reserve your time slot.**

- **The 28th Annual Conference on Medical Care for Persons with Developmental Disabilities**

Friday, June 2 at the Westin, Princeton

To view a copy of the event brochure [click here](#). The final day to register is Friday, May 19. If you have additional questions, contact Jennifer Lynch at 732-784-6397.



**DON'T CUT OUR
LIFELINE**

These "lifeline" programs are critical to supporting millions of Americans with disabilities to access healthcare, support services and community living.

Lifeline programs are under attack!

Every voice must be heard to educate the public and elected officials about the importance of preserving these vital programs.

**We need your help to "Protect the Lifeline"!
Go to bit.ly/protectthelifeline now!**

Need help or more information? Want to become active in our advocacy network?

Visit our website to access lots of great information that can help you navigate service systems, find resources and keep you informed as to the important issues facing children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Join our advocacy network to add your voice to the thousands who are working hard to promote and protect the quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Visit our website

Join an Advocacy Network

The Arc of New Jersey | 732.246.2525 | info@arcnj.org | www.arcnj.org

STAY CONNECTED

