



## GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UPDATE

### *The Arc Testifies at Legislative & Budget Hearings*

The Arc of New Jersey, in our second year as Chair of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage, advocated for increased wages in the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget for the state's Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) at the Department of Human Services Budget Listening Session on December 1. The Coalition is continuing year two of its five-year campaign to increase salaries by \$1.25 an hour for the hardworking staff who support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the workforce. If you have not done so already, please be sure to follow the Coalition for news and updates on both [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). To continue reading, [click here](#).



### *Advocacy Against Tax Cuts & Jobs Act Continues*

The Arc of New Jersey, in collaboration with The Arc US, continues to push back against the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act which poses significant threats to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are in frequent contact with New Jersey's congressional delegation about our concerns with the legislation. The bill will reduce federal revenue so much, that Congress is all but certain to cut funding for critical programs like Medicaid in response to the rising deficit. Executive Director Tom Baffuto outlines the dangers of the bill in a recent letter to the editor that you can read [here](#). In addition, please be sure to participate and share the action alert by [clicking here](#).



### *The Arc Heads West for National Convention*



Representatives from The Arc of New Jersey and the local County Chapters headed west last month to attend The Arc US National Convention in San Diego, California. The Convention was an important chance to learn more about what's happening in Washington, DC and served as an opportunity to network and collaborate with Chapters of The Arc throughout the county. In addition, Ashley Ritchey, Director of the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project, delivered a presentation entitled: Promoting Our Mission Through Engaging and Creative Community-Based Events, to help conference attendees develop fun

and educational events that will effectively engage people to support equity, community inclusion and person-first thinking.

## Making a Gift to The Arc of NJ is Easy and Be Sure to Support Us at No Cost with Amazon Smile!

If you are 70 ½ and have an IRA, you can make a gift of your annual Required Minimum Distribution to The Arc in three easy steps,

1. Before December 31, 2017, advise your broker/ financial institution to gift your IRA required minimum distribution to The Arc.
2. Your broker or financial institution contacts The Arc.
3. You receive a heartfelt THANK YOU.

**It's that simple!** For more information, contact 732-733-6013 or [cfortin@arcnj.org](mailto:cfortin@arcnj.org).

### Support us when you shop this holiday season

Buy your gifts and holiday essentials at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). You shop. Amazon donates.

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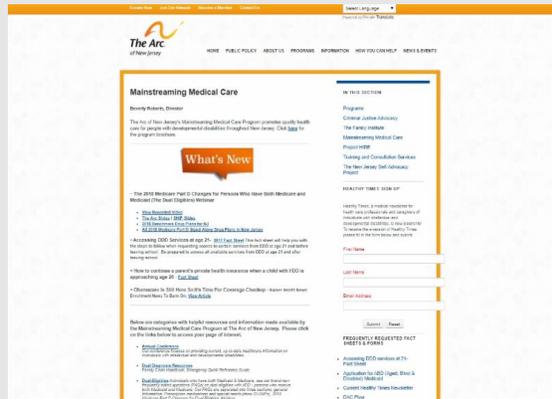


Doing your holiday shopping on Amazon? Use this [Amazon Smile link](#) and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to The Arc of New Jersey at no cost to you!

## Self-Advocates Learn About Fitness, Hike at November Turkey Trot

Following the Thanksgiving festivities, Self-Advocates traveled to the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside, New Jersey for a post-holiday walk through the Watchung Reservation. Armed with scarves and hats, Self-Advocates enjoyed the crisp autumn weather while also learning more about exercise, fitness and healthy eating. They also practiced stretching before hitting the trail. This event

was part of the **Project Lifelines** project, a program of The Arc of New Jersey that receives funding through a grant awarded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.



## Mainstreaming Medical Care Website Redesign is Now Live!

Are you looking for information about quality health care for people with developmental disabilities living in New Jersey? Then make sure you stop by our recently redesigned [Mainstreaming Medical Care Program web site!](#) There you will find all the latest webinars, fact sheets and news. Still need more help? Email [JLynch@arcnj.org](mailto:JLynch@arcnj.org) with additional questions.

## Check Out These Upcoming Webinars & Events

### Webinar: Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 (ABLE Act)

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

ABLE Accounts are tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. Millions of individuals with disabilities depend on a wide variety of public benefits for income, health care, food and housing assistance. Eligibility for these public benefits (SSI, SNAP, Medicaid) require reporting no more than \$2,000 in cash savings, retirement funds and other items of significant value. Hosted by The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute and presented by Robin Shaffert, Senior Executive of Individual and Family Supports at The Arc of the U.S., attendees will learn eligibility requirements and how ABLE Accounts can help when planning for the future.



### Webinar: The Dual Eligibles: Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Who Have Both Medicaid and Medicare

[Tuesday, December 12 at 12 pm](#)

This webinar will provide information to help families and staff understand why so many persons with I/DD are dually eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare. The webinar will explain the ways that dual eligibles can access health care services, including prescription drugs. Some individuals with I/DD have private health insurance in addition to Medicaid and Medicare, and the webinar will also address this issue.

### Webinar Wednesday: New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center

[Wednesday, December 20 at 6 pm](#)

The New Jersey State Library Talking Book & Braille Center (TBBC) serves NJ residents of all ages who have difficulty reading standard print or who cannot hold a book or turn the pages of a book due to a physical impairment, a reading disability or a vision challenge. In addition, we serve all Places in NJ that serve eligible residents and we serve New Jersey Libraries.

### Webinar: Equal Justice Talks: How Parents and Caregivers Can Help Keep an Individual with I/DD Safe While Accessing the Internet

[Wednesday, December 20 at 1 pm](#)

The Internet has dramatically changed the way we interact with the world. It has become a global means of communication in our everyday life. However the internet can also put people at risk for cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate material, online predators and the possibility of revealing too much personal

information. Ashley Ritchey, MSW, LSW, Director, New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project will discuss strategies and suggestions for helping adults with IDD learn to effectively use the internet and social media. The workshop will highlight how parents, caregivers, and staff members can help adults with IDD understand and avoid the potential dangers that internet use can present.

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## Support the World's Largest Workplace Giving Campaign

Military and Federal employees are eligible to participate in the [2017 Combined Federal Campaign](#). This federal workplace giving tradition has raised more than \$8 billion since its beginning in 1961, making it the world's largest workplace giving campaign. The campaign runs through January 12. To pledge your workplace giving to The Arc of New Jersey, select The Arc of New Jersey (CFC #92741) from the charity list.

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## 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](#)

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