



August 2016

UPDATE FROM THE STATE HOUSE

Advocating on DSP Salaries, Department Proposals, Plans



Executive Director Tom Baffuto speaks about the importance of Direct Support Professionals for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the need to increase their wages.

The need to increase wages for our hard-working Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) continues to be a top advocacy item for The Arc of New Jersey, and this past month Executive Director Tom Baffuto pushed for higher earnings for DSPs at a State House press conference. Senate President Sweeney hosted the event to highlight human services industries in need of increased funding. The press conference was a chance to bring attention to the staffers who provide critically-important one-on-one care to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), but who nevertheless earn a

very low wage. The Arc of New Jersey conveyed, on behalf of providers across the State, why the DSP crisis matters and why the State must take action to address it. Tom stressed to attendees that while the FY17 Budget includes service dollars, the supports can't be delivered without a strong network of workers. [To continue reading, click here.](#)

Criminal Justice Dir. presents at Summer Leadership Institute



CJAP Director Jessica Oppenheim with fellow presenters Leigh Ann Davis and Ashley Brompton.

In July, The Arc of New Jersey's Criminal Justice Advocacy Program Director Jessica Oppenheim was in Palm Springs for The Arc of the United States 2016 NCE Summer Leadership Institute. Jessica presented: "Using Personalized Justice Plans (PJPs) & Other Tools to Create Pathways to Justice for People with I/DD." This session provided a brief introduction to PJPs, an overview of The Arc National's Center on Criminal Justice and Disability's Pathways to Justice Program, and other ways Chapters can improve their criminal

justice advocacy efforts. The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCJD) is



Self-Advocates Raise ADA Awareness on Boardwalk



Pictured Above: Self-Advocates celebrate the importance of the Americans with Disabilities Act on the Boardwalk in Point Pleasant, New Jersey.

More than 30 Self-Advocates, along with the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project team, set up an information table and spoke with beach-goers on the Point Pleasant Beach Boardwalk on Friday, July 8, 2016 to celebrate the Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Month. This important legislation, signed into law in July 1990, was a big step forward for people with I/DD because it prohibits discrimination based on a person having a disability. More than 300 people stopped by the event to speak with Self-Advocates and get information. In addition, more than 180 people signed the [R-word pledge](#).

If you're a Self-Advocate and you're interested in attending future events, contact Dennis Donatello at ddonatelli@arcnj.org or 732-743-8345.



PLANNED GIVING CORNER

Understanding Gift Taxes

Did you know that the federal government allows tax payers to transfer up to \$14,000 each year to family members without triggering the gift tax? This can be a great opportunity to begin transferring assets to your family during your life-time instead of leaving it entirely to your executor or administrator to handle through your estate.

However, if one of the possible recipients of such a gift is a person with an intellectual or developmental disability



on a mission to support chapters to "widen the lens" of criminal justice professionals to help them see people with I/DD in a whole new light, understand the difference between crisis intervention vs. crisis prevention, and provide viable alternatives to incarceration through the use of PJs.



Jessica Oppenheim presents at the Palm Springs 2016 NCE Summer Leadership Institute.

Register for August Webinar

WEBINAR - School Anxiety in Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Starting school, moving and other stressful life events may trigger the onset of school refusal. Join The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute as we discuss the trigger, symptoms, and ways parents and caregivers can help support the child through their anxiety. The webinar's presenter will be PJ Wenger, LPC, MFT, NCC who has 17 years experience working in the field of mental health. She has spent considerable time in a variety of settings developing her counseling experience. These settings include psychiatric emergency, inpatient treatment with both adults and children, home care for mental health issues, residential treatment, schools and private practice.

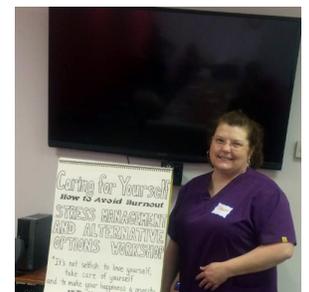
[Thursday, August 11 at 6 pm](#)

Caring for the Caregiver



Last month, The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute and Bayada hosted

a workshop designed to help caregivers learn about the different ways to alleviate stress. Dawn Mitten, a parent and licensed massage therapist and Reiki practitioner, spoke with a group of family caregivers in Mount Laurel. Her presentation, entitled

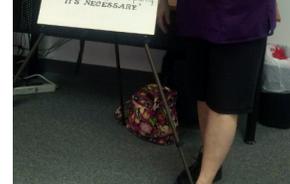


(I/DD), you will want to consider how you can make the transfer without endangering current or future government benefits. A special needs trust (SNT) is one way to handle that situation without creating negative consequences for the person with I/DD. If you need legal assistance, especially with the creation of a SNT, you should use the services of an attorney who specializes in special needs planning. To learn more about SNT's and other planning options for a person with a disability, please go to: <https://futureplanning.thearc.org>.

In Part 2 of this article, to be posted next month, you can learn how you can use the tax laws to your advantage when creating your estate plans. In the article you will learn more about the annual gift exclusion, the lifetime exemption and other types of tax deductions that can help you when planning for the future and how you want to pass your assets along to your family. After reading these articles, use the opportunity to review our planned giving webpages at <https://arcnjorg.presencehost.net/help/plannedgiving.html> to learn more about possible gift options that can be used to benefit The Arc of New Jersey.

If you have any questions about the information provided or if you would like to talk about making a gift, please contact us at cfortin@arcnj.org.

"Caring for Yourself: Stress Management and Alternative Options Workshop," recognizes that caregiving can put a strain on even the most resilient person. If you missed the July presentation but are interested in learning more, additional sessions are being scheduled for the fall. Contact The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute Director Lisa Ford at Lford@arcnj.org or 732-828-2022 for more information.



Dawn Mitten presented at Bayada Pediatrics in Mount Laurel, New Jersey.

Help Us 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.
5. Shop through Amazon Smile. Simply select The Arc of New Jersey from the charities at [Amazon Smile](https://www.amazon.com/AmazonSmile), and shop like you always do at Amazon.

Partners in Policymaking Now Accepting Applicants

The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities was awarded funding from the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities to coordinate New Jersey Partners in Policymaking.

New Jersey Partners in Policymaking is an 8-month leadership development and advocacy education program for adults with developmental disabilities and family members. The goal of program is to prepare the next generation of disability advocates to work toward meaningful change in our state.



Participants selected for the program will learn about best practices and important areas for advocacy from nationally-known experts through a series of educational leadership development sessions held one weekend per month, beginning in November of this year and ending next June.

The Boggs Center is now accepting applications from people with developmental disabilities and family members interested in participating. Visit the New Jersey Partners in Policymaking page on The Boggs Center's website to learn more about the program and how to apply.

Applications must be received by **September 9, 2016**, and applicants will be notified of acceptance by **September 30**.

Community Health Law Project Announcement

The Law Project is very pleased that once again its attorneys and advocates can provide legal and advocacy assistance to individuals and families in the community who are receiving services from the Division. The Law Project has provided representation to residents of New Jersey for forty years through its five regional offices and four satellite offices. Attorneys and advocates will provide representation and brief service in many civil law issues and in entitlement cases. Assistance will be

available in areas including:

- Housing advocacy such as landlord-tenant disputes;
- Public entitlements, including eligibility for SSI, SSDI, public assistance, and food stamps;
- Medicaid, Medicare, and other healthcare issues such as managed care disputes;
- Child support, visitation, domestic violence;
- Barrier-free accessibility, American with Disabilities Act and New Jersey Law Against Discrimination matters;
- Surrogate decision making issues including wills, living wills, advance directives, powers of attorney, and



uncontested guardianships (also limited guardianship and conservatorship)

Please see our web site at www.chlp.org for further information about the Law Project. The Community Health Law Project is a private not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing legal and advocacy services, training, education, and related activities to persons living with disabilities and the frail elderly, emphasizing those most vulnerable and needy.

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