



UPDATE FROM TRENTON

The Arc Testifies on FY20 Budget Priorities

Last month, The Arc of New Jersey testified at the Department of Human Services (DHS) Budget Listening Session about funding priorities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. Held on December 5, the Listening Session was an opportunity to communicate with DHS Commissioner Johnson and senior members of her team about the Fiscal Year 2020 State Budget. As a member of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage, The Arc of New Jersey focused our testimony on the ongoing Direct Support Professional workforce crisis. In addition, Executive Director Tom Baffuto spoke about the need to review and adjust the day program rate and he advocated for one-time capital funding to pay for costs that will no longer be covered in the fee-for-service system. To continue reading, [click here](#).



Pictured Above: Executive Director Tom Baffuto testifies at the DHS Budget Listening Session on December 5, in Trenton.

CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

Leslie Long Named Cape May Executive Dir.

The Arc of New Jersey would like to take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate Leslie Long on her new role as Executive Director of The Arc of Cape May County. As a way of introducing our readers to leadership on the local level, please enjoy this month's Chapter Spotlight which highlights Leslie, her background and her plans for the Chapter moving forward.

1. Can you tell us a little bit about your background and your previous work with people with I/DD?

I joined The Arc of Cape May County as the Executive Director December 3rd. I am fortunate that I have an extensive history of working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for the past 25 years. My experience has included working with communities around the country, leading individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families into current and future services across residential, employment, and community living supports. Early in my career I was the Transition Coordinator, then the Director of Project Hire at The Arc of New Jersey. This gives me a unique knowledge of The Arc's philosophy and vision. In addition to my work at the Arc of New Jersey, I have worked at the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Autism



New Jersey, and the Northward Center for Autism and was the Vice President of Adult Services at Autism Speaks.
To continue reading, [click here](#).

Advance Auto Parts Partners with The Arc & Chapters to Train, Hire People with Disabilities



The Arc of New Jersey is proud to announce a job training and hiring initiative in partnership with Advance Auto Parts. This outstanding business is already working with our organization and local County Chapters to find and hire people with disabilities in competitive employment. Last month, The Arc of New Jersey visited Advance Auto Parts in Shrewsbury to celebrate the first day on the job of an individual served by The Arc of Monmouth County's supported employment program. In addition, Advance Auto Parts is working on a job training program with The Arc of Ocean County. We appreciate this wonderful partnership with Advance Auto Parts and we look forward to working with them in

the weeks and months ahead!

Holiday Dinner Dance Attracts Hundreds of Attendees



The Arc of Bergen & Passaic Counties hosted their Annual Holiday Dinner Dance last month and more than 400 people attended the great event at the Venetian River in Garfield. Pictured here is Tom Baffuto, Executive Director The Arc of NJ, Cliff Pettinelli, Chair of The Arc Bergen and Passaic's Board of Trustees, Kathy Walsh, President/CEO of The Arc Bergen and Passaic, Assemblyman Gordon Johnson, and Ralph Mastrangelo, Jr. Board Secretary and Trustee Emeritus.

Registration for Self-Advocacy Luncheon Now Open



The 14th Annual "Spring Into Action" Luncheon will take place on Saturday, April 13, 2019 and registration is now open. The event, hosted by The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project and the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network includes an awards presentation, lunch and networking opportunities. This year's Luncheon will take place at The Imperia in Somerset from 10 am to 2 pm. The registration deadline is March 11, 2019 so make sure you reserve your tickets today by [clicking here](#). You can also register by mail. [Click here](#) to download the registration form.

[Check Out These Upcoming Webinars & Events](#)

Lunch & Learn Webinar Safety Series: How Caregivers Can Work Effectively with Law Enforcement and Emergency Responders
[Tuesday, January 15, at 12 pm](#)

Building relationships with local law enforcement and first responders can help prevent possible misunderstandings from occurring. Join us as Jessica Oppenheim, Director of The Arc of New Jersey's Criminal Justice Advocacy Program, discusses how families and caregivers can build these positive relationships and what to do if a loved one with an intellectual or developmental disability becomes involved in the criminal justice system.



Webinar: Planning for Transition: Applying for SSI and Medicaid
[Wednesday, January 16 at 6 pm](#)

As students in special education prepare to enter adulthood, there are several areas that need to be addressed. One of the most important is for individuals with I/DD who are turning 18 years old to apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid. Join us for this informative presentation which will discuss why applying for SSI and Medicaid is important, the steps you need to take to prepare to apply, and then how to apply for this important benefit.

Equal Justice Talks: Effectively Advocating for the Client with Developmental Disabilities who has been charged with a sex offense

[Thursday, January 17 at 2 pm](#)

Professor Heather Ellis Cucolo, J.D., is an adjunct professor with New York Law School, co-owner of the Mental Disability Law and Policy Associates educational company and the author of numerous books and articles on topics related to sexual offending and mental disability. Please join us for an informative hour in which Professor Cucolo will provide an overview of this difficult, multi-layered issue.

Webinar: Overview of Services from the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
[Wednesday, Feb. 20 at 6 pm](#)

As students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families begin to think about the transition from high school to adult life, they often wonder about what services are available in the adult world to support someone with I/DD to live as independently as possible. Join us for this informative webinar by Nkechi Ugoji, Senior Coordinator, Transition, Policy & Training for the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities as she discusses what DDD has to offer and how to plan for the transition to DDD services.

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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