



Advocacy Matters

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

November 2018

This November self-advocates were busy making their voices heard!

NJACP held their 35th Annual Conference and this year they added a "Self-Advocate Track" with workshops presented by NJSAP team members Michael and Daniel Pearson.

Council 3 of NJSSAN received a response to a letter they sent to the governors of NY and NJ regarding accessibility of public transit.

Members of Council 1 of NJSSAN went to Montclair University to speak to graduate students about advocacy.

Let's reflect back on these moments!

NJACP Conference

This month, [NJACP held their 35th Annual Statewide Conference with the theme of "Embracing Change"](#), featuring the brand-new "Self-Advocacy Track" for self-advocates, their caregivers and DSPs. NJSAP team members presented two workshops at the event. Michael Pearson led "Forming Self-Advocacy Groups", a workshop focusing on the roles and responsibilities of group members, elected officers, and group advisors of self-advocacy groups. Daniel Pearson led the "Governmental Affairs Ambassador Program (GAAP)" workshop. This workshop provided an in-depth look at New Jersey's state government and how individuals can make their voices heard.

Additionally, the NJACP Board of Directors selected Tom Baffuto, Executive Director of The Arc of NJ, as the recipient of the "Advocate of the Year Award". It was awarded in recognition of Mr. Baffuto's outstanding leadership as Chairperson of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage. His work has raised the visibility of the critical need for a Direct Support Professional (DSP) wage increase and has brought the issue to the attention of policymakers, the press and advocates.











Council 3 : Transportation Letter

Back in August, Council 3 of the NJSSAN wrote to Governors Murphy and Cuomo regarding the continued struggles for people with disabilities utilizing public transportation. [You can read the original letter here.](#) Their letter has received a response acknowledging NJ Transit's need for improvement and commitment to ADA compliance.

John D. Del Colle, Senior Director of Legislative Relations at NJ Transit, stated in the letter, "not all of our stations are accessible to residents with disabilities, however, be assured we are fully committed to making our system accessible to all. We have undertaken a review of all stations to see what can be done to improve access in the short and long term.

We have met the initial criteria mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act; however, we have a long way to go to have a system that is able to meet the needs of each and every resident. We agree with you that maintenance of our current services is critical to the riding public. Our staff is concentrating on resolving issues with out-of-service elevators and facilities that are not functioning the way they should. The dedicated members of my staff know the importance of transportation and are aware that expanding options to people with disabilities is critical."

Great advocacy work, Council 3!

Montclair State University Panel

On November 28th, advocates representing Council 1 of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network participated in a self-advocacy speakers panel at Montclair State University. A panel of self-advocates and direct support professionals spoke to a graduate class of special education students about topics such as employment, residential supports, and techniques for teaching young students about self-advocacy.





Call for Submissions



Do you have any art, stories, poems, songs or videos to share? The NJSAP team is starting The Total Inclusion Project, a web page for displaying creative works by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Send us your work and we may feature it on our website and in future editions of Advocacy Matters!

Contact us at NJSAP@ArcNJ.org or call 732-749-8514 for more information.

**Interested in a training or workshop at your location?
Hit REPLY and let us know!**

A training on our program, NJSAP
Starting a Self-Advocacy Group
Team Building
Human Rights and Responsibilities
Erasing the R-Word & Person First Language
Legislative Advocacy
Governmental Affairs
Advocating for Yourself



Voting
Boosting Your Self-Confidence
The Americans with Disabilities Act
Employment & Pre-Employment Skills
Healthy Communication
Respectful Behavior
Anger Management

Healthy Relationships
Online Dating
Aromatherapy
First Aid
Get Better Sleep
Outdoor Safety
Illness Prevention
Proper Hygiene

Proper Portion Sizes
Dangers of Sugar
Quick Healthy Snacks
Stress Relief
Yoga & Meditation
Indoor Exercise & Adaptive Fitness



Save the date for the Spring Luncheon!



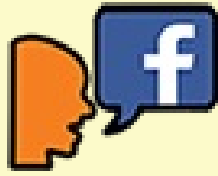
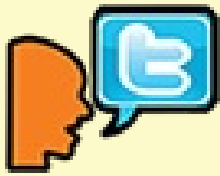
**The 14th Annual New Jersey
Statewide Self-Advocacy Network
Awards Luncheon will take place
on**

**Saturday,
April 13th, 2019**

at The Imperia in Somerset

Registration information will be available in December.

For more photos from our events and information about upcoming events,
check us out on social media!



New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project & Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983

**Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**