



Budget Advocacy Continues as Fiscal Year Winds Down

The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto was honored to meet Assemblywoman Haider last month at a site visit hosted by The Arc of Bergen & Passaic Counties. The Assemblywoman got to tour the wonderful programs offered by the Chapter and to meet individuals who benefit from services, as well as the staff who support them. Also last month, The Arc of New Jersey continued to meet with members of the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees on our priority funding areas for the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget. These include maintaining appropriations proposed by the Governor for DSP wages and day program rate increases, among other things, and adding \$9.5 million to increase the amount of respite hours for children with IDD served through the Children's System of Care within the Department of Children and Families. Looking for ways to take part in our advocacy? Text **TheArcNJ to 52886** to start receiving upcoming action alerts and information!



Pictured above from left to right: The Arc of Bergen and Passaic's President/CEO Kathy Walsh, Assemblywoman Shama Haider, and The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto.

Awards Dinner to Honor Outstanding Advocates

Each year The Arc of New Jersey holds an awards celebration which honors the best in individual, organizational, and corporate support for people with developmental disabilities and their families. Nominations come in from all over the State, highlighting the exemplary work of dozens of individuals and organizations. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold our Awards Celebrations for the past 2 years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we are thrilled to be returning to an in-person event this year. The event will take place on June 16, 2022 at the Imperia in Somerset. **Although it's too late to submit an ad, you can still purchase tickets or support the event.** Click the image above for more details or contact Celine Fortin at cfortin@arcnj.org or 732-733-6013 with any questions.



- President's Award** - Senator Steve Sweeney
- Spirit of The Arc Award** - Jonathan Seifried, Assistant Commissioner, NJDH
- Legislator of the Year** - Assemblyman Daniel Benson
- Professional of the Year** - Karen Newburgh, CFO, SCArc, Inc.
- Volunteer of the Year** - Maria Fischer, Esq., Hinkle, Prior & Fischer, PC and President, The Arc of Mercer
- Self-Advocacy Leadership Award** - Kevin Curtis White, Chair, Council 1, NJSSAN
- Community Impact Award** - Tom Toronto, President, Bergen County's United Way
- Martin Papish Award** - Jeffrey Mattison, Executive Director, The Arc of Hunterdon
- Educator of the Year** - Robert Hulit, Jr., Director, The Achievement Center at RVCC
- Executive Excellence Award** - Lauren Frary, Executive Director, The Arc of Somerset
- Legacy Award** - Kathy Walsh, President & CEO, The Arc of Bergen & Passaic Counties and Immediate Past Chair NJCEArc

Visit our Awards Dinner [website here](#).

Chapter Spotlight: The Arc of Hunterdon Says Goodbye to Long-Time Executive Director After Years of Service



Jeff Mattison, Executive Director at The Arc of Hunterdon, will retire from the organization at the end of the month after many years of service to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Jeff is a committed advocate for those we represent and his work, in collaboration with his team, has advanced and expanded services and supports for those who rely on them in Hunterdon County. We take this opportunity to learn more about Jeff's journey as he prepares for the future.

1. How many years have you worked at The Arc of Hunterdon County and what originally attracted you to this line of work?

My time as Executive Director at The Arc of Hunterdon County began in 2007. I was introduced to The Arc in 1995 when my immediate next-door neighbor, (who just happened to be employed by The Arc's accounting firm), called me to say that a fellow by the name of Tom McKenna was looking to start a Business Advisory Council at an agency in Hunterdon County that supported people with disabilities. The Council was designed to explore employment, transportation, and real estate opportunities for the agency's clients. After meeting with Tom and serving on the committee for just a short time, I was invited to join the Board of Directors in 1997 and served as Board President from 2005 through 2007. It was then that my predecessor retired and the position of Executive Director was offered to me by The Arc of Hunterdon Board. What really attracted me to the agency and its work, however, was an annual picnic event where I was introduced to the amazing individuals supported by The Arc. Their infectious smiles and the joy that they expressed over seemingly small things drew me to a place where I knew I needed to be. [To continue reading, click here.](#)

Arc/Morris Celebrates Staff & Community Awardees



Sharon Levine, Senior Director of Governmental Affairs and Communications, was honored to serve as Master of Ceremonies for the 2022 Awards Gala hosted by Arc/Morris on May 25, at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The evening included special keynote speakers, a presentation of awards to both staff and community members, and more! Pictured left is Sharon Levine with The Arc of NJ's Executive Director Tom Baffuto. Pictured right is Arc/Morris Executive Director Sal Moran, The Arc of NJ's Sharon Levine, and Arc Morris Board President Tom Horn. Also, Arc/Morris unveiled their newly redesigned website at the event, which you can [view here](#).



The Arc of Atlantic County Celebrates at Golden Nugget Casino

Congratulations to The Arc of Atlantic County who hosted a celebratory evening at the Golden Nugget Casino, Hotel & Marina on Thursday, June 2. The event included summer themed food, live entertainment and dancing, a silent auction and more. Proceeds will benefit programs for people with IDD served by the Chapter. Pictured from left to right is The Arc of Atlantic's Board President Stan Kozlowski, Chief Operations Officer Pat Jones, Chief Executive Officer Scott Hennis and The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto.

Chapters Host Walks Throughout the State



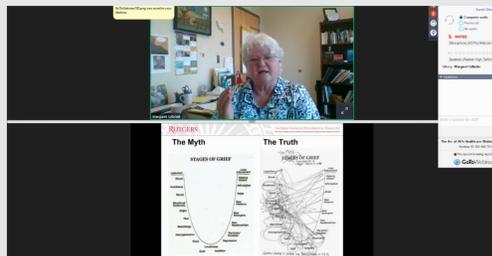
Last month, six Chapters of The Arc hosted their annual Step Up for The Arc Walk-A-Thons across the State. The Step Up Walks are great opportunities to support the incredible work taking place on the local level. **Pictured above from left to right: The Arc of NJ's Executive Director Tom Baffuto at The Arc of Somerset County and Associate Executive Director Celine Fortin at The Arc of Burlington County.**



Pictured above (from top to bottom) is The Arc of NJ's Executive Director Tom Baffuto at SCARC, The Arc of Middlesex, The Arc of Camden and The Arc of Ocean.

Planning for Adult Life Program Awarded Employment First Grant

The Arc of NJ was thrilled to be awarded a grant from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities to enhance its focus on competitive employment for high school students receiving special education services, once they leave school. The **Employment First Initiative** will be implemented by the Planning for Adult Life Program as an additional offering focusing on all the tools students with disabilities will need as they leave school and enter the world of work. The **Initiative** will work intensively with 4 schools, conducting intensive hands on workshops with students and educating families. In addition, teachers from the schools will participate in "train the trainer" sessions so that they will be able to continue the program with future classes.



Pictured above is Margaret Gilbride, JD,CT, who presented: "Grieving Lives Lost and Loss of Lives," on May 17.

Healthcare Webinar Examines Needs of People with IDD Post-COVID

The Arc of New Jersey's Mainstreaming Medical Care Program hosted a four-part healthcare webinar series last month focused on the medical, behavioral and dental supports that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities will need as we transition out of the pandemic. Recordings of the presentations and copies of the slide can be found on the [Mainstreaming Medical Care Program's website.](#)

Tell Congress: Support the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act NOW!

The **Supplemental Security Income** (SSI) program provides critical support for millions of people with disabilities and their families to be able to afford necessities like food and rent. But it

has many strategies that make it hard for people to save money and get out of poverty. SSI has an asset limit that has not been updated since 1989. Assets include money in bank accounts, property, and savings. Right now, people who get SSI can only have \$2,000 in assets. Married couples can only have \$3,000. These asset limits mean that people cannot save money and force people with disabilities into poverty. **TAKE ACTION:** Urge your U.S Senators to support people with disabilities and their families by cosponsoring the bipartisan SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act ([S.4102](#)) which would raise these asset limits.

Disability Rights New Jersey Survey Opportunity

Disability Rights New Jersey is the state's designated Protection and Advocacy agency under federal law. They advance the human, civil, and legal rights of persons with disabilities and promote their self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration into all facets of community life. To ensure that their limited resources are used to address the most pressing needs of people with disabilities across the state, they are seeking input from people with disabilities, family members, professionals, service providers, and the general public to guide in determining their priorities and areas of focus for the next three years. To provide feedback to DRNJ via their survey, click the flyer image for more details about how to participate.

Disability Rights New Jersey's mission is to protect, advocate for and advance the rights of persons with disabilities in pursuit of a society in which they exercise self-determination, meet their needs, and live in a world with dignity and respect.

We need your input to help understand the needs of the disability community and help us establish our goals and priorities for the next three (3) years.

- Are there topics missing from the conversation of Disability Rights?
- Do you wish certain issues were given more attention?
- Do you have suggestions on what we can do to support New Jerseyans with disabilities against abuse, neglect, and discrimination?

Your feedback will guide our work and help us create a more inclusive world for people with disabilities.

Complete the survey online at <https://fp.constantcontactpages.com/zw/RSpoGHP> or participate in an upcoming focus group.

Scan the QR code to complete the survey

Upcoming Virtual Events!

Click below to register for one of our many upcoming virtual events/webinars. And be sure to check out our [calendar](#) for other future events.

Mondays with Michael:

Every week at 10 am, catch a brief update from Michael Pearson Jr., Assistant Director, Children's Advocacy, on a topic or featured resource related to special education. Click [here](#) to view upcoming dates/topics. Mondays with Michael are Facebook Live events.

Webinars:

- June 16 at 2 pm at 6 pm: [What Do I Need to Know About...The Rollout of "988" the New Nationwide Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Prevention Number](#)

Stay Healthy at Home - a webinar series hosted by the NJ Self-Advocacy Project - every Tuesday at 2 PM on GoToWebinar

The webinar series covers a variety of topics related to advocacy, life skills, employment, and civic engagement. Sessions are designed to be accessible to self-advocates, parents, and support staff. Live viewers can share comments, ask questions, and access resources. Live transcription is available.

- June 7: [Accept the Unexpected: Julia and Ray Speak About Autism Acceptance](#)
- June 14: [REPLAY: Follow Me! Guided Activities to Boost Your Health and Happiness](#)
- June 21: [REPLAY: How May I Assist You? Benefits of Assistive Technology](#)
- June 28: [REPLAY: Fitness that Fits You: Adaptive Exercises to Stay in Shape](#)

Healthy Lifestyles Project LIVE! - every Wednesday at 11 AM on Zoom

This interactive series of events is hosted by the NJ Self-Advocacy Project and focuses on activities to promote health and wellness education for students and adults with I/DD. Live viewers will be able to share comments, ask questions, and participate in activities led by professionals *in real time*.

- June 8: [Music Together with Blue Light](#)
- June 15: [Art Therapy Session](#)
- June 22: [Zumba: Dance-based Fitness Class](#)
- June 29: [Music to My Ears: A Collaborative Song-Writing Session](#)

We also have Fitness Fridays at 1 PM: [Click here to register.](#)

A Message from The Arc of New Jersey

Thank You

Thank you to all our generous donors who, over the past number of months, have made donations to support us. These critical funds will help us in our efforts to assist individuals with I/DD and their families, as well as our local county chapters, through the COVID19 crisis. To put your donation to work for individuals with I/DD and their families, [click here](#). If you have questions or need assistance, our staff is here to help. [Click here](#) to access information about our Programs.

Use Your Amazon App to Support The Arc of New Jersey

If you are an AmazonSmile customer, you can now support The Arc of New Jersey, Inc. in the Amazon shopping app on your Android device! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. If you have the latest version of the Amazon Shopping App, open the App on your Android device.
2. View Settings and select AmazonSmile.
3. Follow the in-App instructions to complete the process.

If you do not have the latest version of the Amazon shopping App, update your App. Click [here](#) for instructions.



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