



## Special Education Eligibility Bill Moves Through Assembly, Budget Advocacy Continues



As we close in on the final weeks of the fiscal year, The Arc of New Jersey continues to advocate with members of the Budget Committees and legislative leadership for funding priorities impacting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. Decisions about what will be included in the state's final spending plan are ongoing and we will stay vigilant throughout June to keep our Budget "asks" at the forefront. In legislative news, The Arc of New Jersey testified before the Assembly Education Committee and the Assembly Appropriations

Committee last month in support of A5366 which would require boards of education to provide special education and related services to certain students exceeding the age of eligibility. Subsequently, the bill passed in the full Assembly. This remains a top-level priority for our organization as many students set to graduate this month lost out on transition services and other critical components of schooling because of COVID and remote learning. [Click here to continue reading](#) (*Pictured above, Governmental Affairs Director Sharon Levine testifies in support of A5366 before the Assembly Education Committee held virtually on 5/12/21*)

## Criminal Justice Advocacy Director to Retire from Agency

As Jessica Oppenheim prepares for her retirement from The Arc of New Jersey, we take a moment to spotlight her 11 years with the organization and the tremendous work she's done as the leader of the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program. The Arc of New Jersey thanks Jessica for all her hard work and dedication on behalf of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and while we will miss her greatly, we wish her all the best in her retirement. You can reach Jessica, ahead of her last day - June 30, 2021, at [JOppenheim@arcnj.org](mailto:JOppenheim@arcnj.org).

1. ***What originally attracted you to the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program at The Arc of New Jersey?*** When I was in the Attorney General's Office I obtained a Dept of Justice grant to do training for law enforcement about people w/IDD that we called Justice for All. I partnered at the time with Denise Palermo, then Director of the Developmentally Disabled Offenders Program, the original name for CJAP. It was a great experience working with The Arc of NJ, so when I retired from the Middlesex Prosecutor's Office I reached out to Tom in hopes of continuing to collaborate and here we are! The Arc of NJ and the DDOP had an excellent reputation in the community and I was lucky enough to have that great training experience, which resulted in some very good quality work. [To continue reading, click here.](#)



# Continuing Education Credits Now Available to Medical Care Conference Attendees

**IMPORTANT UPDATE:** We want to call your attention to The Arc of New Jersey's partnership with Rutgers UBHC to provide continuing education credits for the attendees at our 31st Annual Conference on Medical Care for Individuals with IDD on June 10th and 11th from 9 am to noon. Content has been submitted for review for the following professional disciplines:

- **NJBSWE Social Work**
- **ANCC Nursing**
- **AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ CME for Physicians**
- **APA Psychology**
- **Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Counselors**

For questions about continuing education credits, please contact Rutgers UBHC Center for Continuing Education (CCE): [cce@ubhc.rutgers.edu](mailto:cce@ubhc.rutgers.edu). The Conference is for everyone who is concerned about providing quality health care to individuals with I/DD. This includes health and mental health professionals, administrative and direct care staff, family members, social workers HMO representatives and employees of the New Jersey Departments of Human Services, Children and Families, and Health. [Click here](#) for more information and to purchase tickets for this event. [Click here](#) to view the conference brochure.



The Arc of New Jersey's  
31st Annual Conference on Medical and Dental Care  
For Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

This will be a virtual conference  
Thursday, June 10th from 9am - 12pm  
Friday, June 11th from 9am - 12pm

Exhibitor and Contributor Opportunities Available

Please contact Jennifer Lynch at [conference@arcnj.org](mailto:conference@arcnj.org) for more information

## Chapters Host Walks & Virtual Events Across NJ



Congratulations to The Arc of Cape May County who celebrated their **60th anniversary** with a virtual event on May 8th. The evening included entertainment, awards and a silent auction. In addition, Cape May County Commissioner Director Gerald M. Thornton was named the 2021 Community Advocate Honoree and Pete Thompson served as the Event Master of Ceremonies. The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director was honored to deliver remarks as part of this great evening.



Congratulations to **The Arc of Camden County** who held their 20th Annual Walkathon on Sunday, May 16, at Lindenwold Memorial Park. The event included lunch, snacks, a basket raffle and more. Pictured above is Tom Mannion, CFO for The Arc of Camden, Self-Advocate Barb Coppens, The Arc of NJ's Executive Director Tom Baffuto and The Arc of Camden's Executive Director Peggy Englebert.

## The Arc of NJ Receives Donation, Awarded Grant

The Arc of New Jersey thanks the Middlesex County Bar Association and Document Solutions for their recent support of our organization. Last month we received a \$1,000 donation following a fundraiser, hosted by the two organizations, that took place on May 11, at the Colts Neck Still House.

**Pictured from left to right: Kevin O'Connor,**

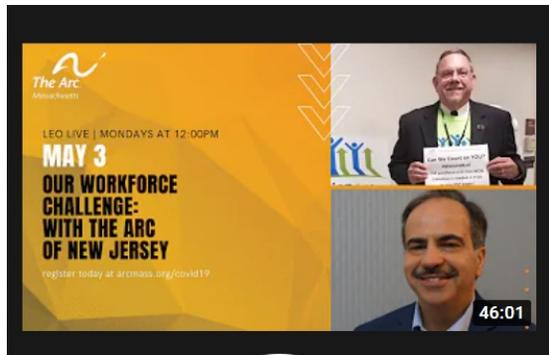
**Partner, Document Solutions, The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto, Criminal Justice Advocacy Program Director Jessica Oppenheim.**

### **The Arc of NJ Awarded Grant from Kessler Foundation**

The Arc of New Jersey's Project HIRE was recently awarded a \$34,000 grant from the Kessler Foundation. The funds will be used for the training and exam for 3 employees to become Benefits Coordinators to support the new [Ticket to Work](#) component of Project HIRE. In addition, funds will be used for training and application for 10 Employment Training Specialists to become Certified Employment Support Professionals (CESP), a national professional designation.



### **Exec. Director Discusses NJ Advocacy on 'Leo Live'**



Executive Director Tom Baffuto was interviewed virtually last month by Leo Sarkissian, the Executive Director of The Arc Massachusetts, for the Chapter's Leo Live Webinar. The discussion focused on workforce issues, our experiences with COVID here in New Jersey and how we are continuing to advocate for individuals and their families during this challenging time. To view the conversation, [click here](#).

### **First VP Discusses Special Education as Part of NJ Dept of Education Podcast**

As part of Special Education Week in New Jersey, The Arc of New Jersey's First Vice President Kevin Sturges participated in a podcast last month hosted by the New Jersey Department of Education. The conversation focused on collaborations between school and parents/guardians and is available to download or stream by clicking the links below:



- [Listen on Apple Podcast](#)
- [Listen on Stitcher](#)
- [Listen on Spotify](#)
- [Listen on Anchor](#)

### **Criminal Justice Advocacy Director to Moderate Webinar: "Partnering to Promote Safety, Access, and Inclusion for Every Survivor"**

### **Caregiver Task Force Seeks Input Via Survey**

The NJ Caregiver Task Force was created with the purpose of determining the availability of caregiver support services in the State, and providing recommendations for the improvement and expansion of such services. The Arc of New Jersey serves on this body. The Task Force has held listening sessions to receive testimony from caregivers on their experiences and is now conducting a survey of caregivers in the state to develop an aggregate summary of caregiver characteristics and gain better understanding of their needs. **The survey will close June 30.** [Click here to take the survey in English](#), and [here to take the survey in Spanish](#). Please reach out to the Task Force with any specific questions you may have.

**Partnering to Promote  
Safety, Access, and Inclusion  
for Every Survivor**

**June 15th  
@ 9:30AM**

A virtual panel discussion featuring National Experts:



**Vilissa Thompson**  
Founder & CEO of Ramp Your Voice!



**Lydia X. Z. Brown**  
Director of Policy, Advocacy, & External  
Affairs, Autistic Women & Nonbinary  
Network



**Leslie Myers**  
Senior Program Associate for the Accessing  
Safety Initiative at Vera Institute for Justice.



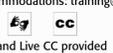
Moderated by:  
**Jessica Oppenheim**  
Director, The Arc of NJ's Criminal Justice  
Advocacy Program

Earn NJ DVS & CE Credits

**Register Here!**  
[bit.ly/DDSJunePanel](http://bit.ly/DDSJunePanel)

Informed by the New Jersey Needs Assessment  
for Survivors of Interpersonal Violence with Disabilities

To request info or accommodations: [training@ssw.rutgers.edu](mailto:training@ssw.rutgers.edu)


This program was supported by subject No. 2019-WF-AK-0016, which is awarded by the State of New Jersey, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law and Public Safety, administering office for the STOP Formula Grant Program through the New Jersey Department of Human Services - Division of Disability Services.

- The Task Force's direct email address: [doas.caregivertaskforce@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:doas.caregivertaskforce@dhs.nj.gov)
- Task Force website: [www.nj.gov/humanservices/doas/home/caregivertaskforce/](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/doas/home/caregivertaskforce/)



Jessica Oppenheim, Director of The Arc of New Jersey's Criminal Justice Advocacy Program, will moderate the June 15 webinar: "Partnering to Promote Safety, Access, and Inclusion for Every Survivor," The event will be hosted by The Center on Violence Against Women and Children with support from the Department of Human Services, Division of Disability Services. [To register, click here.](#)

## Children's System of Care Extends Summer Camp Application Deadline



Please be advised that the deadline for **CSOC Summer Camp Services** applications has been extended again to **Monday, June 21**. The PerformCare website has been updated to reflect this change, and all PerformCare associates are aware of the new deadline. Completed applications for CSOC Summer Camp Services (Financial Support toward Summer Camp Tuition and One-to-One Aide Services for Summer Camp) must be postmarked or received by PerformCare **no later than June 21**. Applications must be

complete for the services requested for it to be considered. More information about CSOC Summer Camp Services is available at [www.performcarenj.org/SummerCamp](http://www.performcarenj.org/SummerCamp). If you have any questions regarding this change, please contact the PerformCare Service Desk at [www.performcarenj.org/ServiceDesk](http://www.performcarenj.org/ServiceDesk) or call 1-877-652-7624.

## Living Safely with Disabilities & Special Needs Survey Now Open

**Living Safely**  
with disabilities and special health needs



This initiative was funded in part by an Inclusive Healthy Communities Grant from the Division of Disability Services, New Jersey Department of Human Services.

## Project Directors from The Arc of NJ Present at May Law Conference

Funded by a grant from the [NJ Division of Disability Services](#), Living Safely is an 18-month program focused on safety education and injury prevention for people with disabilities throughout their lifespan. The grant partners recently released a brief survey and we invite you to participate. By completing the Living Safely with Disabilities and Special Health Needs survey, you can help guide efforts and recommendations to improve safety education and information for people with disabilities. **The survey will be available until June 30, 2021.** [Click here](#) to participate in English and [click here](#) to participate in Spanish.



Directors from The Arc of New Jersey presented at the Community Health Law Project's Law & Disability Conference on Wednesday, May 5. Topics for the conference included supportive housing, special needs trusts, Medicaid eligibility and transition from the children's to the adult system of care. The Arc of New Jersey's Family Institute Director Lisa Ford (pictured above) participated on a panel entitled: "Transition Process and Planning for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Transitioning from the Children's System of Care to the Adult System of Care." Mainstreaming Medical Care Director Beverly Roberts presented on a panel entitled "MEDICAID - Eligibility and Other Issues." For more information about the event, [click here](#).

## Energy, Utility Assistance and Resources

Please note this recent message from the New Jersey Department of Human Services:

*As you may know, the moratorium on utility shut-offs in New Jersey is ending June 30, 2021 and may compound the challenges that some individuals already face when paying for utilities. In response to this, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is highlighting a variety of energy assistance programs.*

- [Click here](#) to access the BPU Energy Assistance Flyer (English)
- [Click here](#) to access the BPU Energy Assistance Flyer (Spanish)

For additional information about New Jersey's Utility Assistance programs, visit the [New Jersey Board of Public Utilities](#).



## Upcoming Virtual Events!

We've added additional webinars to help individuals with I/DD and their families during this difficult time. Register today and be sure to check out our [calendar](#) for other upcoming events.



### Webinars:

- June 16 at 6 pm: [Including Siblings. An Integral Part](#)
- June 17 at 2 pm: [Providing Advocacy for People with IDD in the Criminal Justice System: How One Professional is Working to Ensure Equal Justice](#)
- June 18 at 1 pm: [Creating a Culture of Inclusion: Bullying Prevention Strategies](#)

Zoom with Us:

- June 22 at 6 pm: [ABLE Act](#)

### 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.

- June 8: [Getting Back on Transit: Staying Healthy and Mobile in 2021](#)
- June 15: [Money Management: Where Does Our Money Go and How Can We Make Better Decisions?](#)
- June 22: [REPLAY: Resolution Solutions & Healthier Habits](#)
- June 29: [Can't We All Just Get Along? Conflict Resolution](#)

### 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 2: [Cooking and Meal Planning](#)
- June 9: [Center Stage: Virtual Talent Show](#)
- June 16: [Look Who's Dancing: Inclusive Dance Class](#)
- June 23: [Art Therapy: Ground Yourself When Feeling Overwhelmed](#)
- June 30: [Tea Ceremony](#)

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

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## A Message from The Arc of New Jersey

# Thank You

Thank you to all our generous donors who, over the past few weeks, 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.

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### 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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## 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](#)

The Arc of New Jersey | 732.246.2525 | [info@arcnj.org](mailto:info@arcnj.org) | [www.arcnj.org](http://www.arcnj.org)

STAY CONNECTED

[DONATE NOW!](#)

