

**The Arc of New Jersey**  
**2020 Report to the**  
**Delegates**  
**April 2, 2020**



## From the President

I hope that all of you and your families are staying safe and healthy. I'm sure this is certainly one of the most difficult times we've all been through. Whether you are an individual with I/DD, a family member, a caretaker, a volunteer, a DSP, or a provider, I know you are worried and feeling somewhat helpless as we face this national health emergency that is in many ways out of our control. But we are in this together, and together we will fight, and advocate, and persevere, and protect with every ounce of energy that we have. I have seen and heard of amazing examples of strength, courage and ingenuity that help to give me hope. We will get through this. And as we move ahead, I give you my promise that The Arc of New Jersey will continue to do everything in its power to assist and support individuals with I/DD, their families and our local chapters and providers.

Despite the current turmoil, The Arc of New Jersey has had a great year. Our staff are an amazingly committed and innovative group, whose dedication to the individuals and families we serve is tireless. Our programs are exceeding their goals, and their ability to shift with the ever-changing tide is impressive. Our Board of Directors has been a thoughtful and decisive body, providing the support and strength we need to move ahead. Our self-advocates and families have been outstanding advocates, taking the time to speak up for all even when their own lives are stressful and complex. Our local chapters have been the leaders in confronting every issue, and quickly and efficiently developing effective responses and solutions. I want to particularly mention Tom and the extraordinary work he has been doing to ensure that The Arc is there for our individuals and families, as well as all his efforts to support and sustain our local chapters.

Thank you to everyone for all your support, assistance, and hard work. As I said before, we are facing unprecedented times. But I know that together – as The Arc – we will come through these challenging times.



Joanne Bergin

## From the Executive Director

Let me start by expressing my fervent hope that all of you, your families and friends are safe and well. We are all facing a daunting challenge but in order to take care of our families, our chapters and our constituents, we must make sure we take care of ourselves so we can continue to fight.

Since the first news of this terrible pandemic reached us, we have been working tirelessly on multiple fronts to assist and protect individuals with I/DD, their families and caregivers, our local county chapters, and the entire I/DD community. From helping an individual with I/DD obtain technology to stay connected with family during isolation, to fighting for the rights of individuals with I/DD nationally so that they are not denied life-saving medical care, The Arc is focused and steadfast in its commitment. No issue is too small or too big for us to take on. In true fashion for The Arc, we break it down, work every angle, and keep at it until we get results.

Throughout this crisis there have been so many incredible people doing extraordinary work. The Direct Support Professionals who have continued to care for and support individuals with I/DD and their families against all odds, deserve our heartfelt thanks. Our local county chapters, and in particular our chapter leaders, have been tireless advocates, not hesitating one second to do whatever it takes to support and protect their constituents. Our volunteers and Board of Directors have provided swift and definitive leadership. And then there are the staff of The Arc of New Jersey. I have never been prouder than I am at this time of the truly amazing work of my staff. They have exceeded all expectations with their creativity, innovation and tenacity.

We will get through this crisis. It will take patience, monumental effort, heroic actions, compassion and tireless energy. But for 70 years those qualities have been the hallmark of The Arc of New Jersey. We will continue to lead the fight and be there for anyone who needs us. Please call on us if you need assistance.



Thomas Baffuto

## **The Arc of New Jersey Supports People with I/DD and Their Families Through the COVID-19 Pandemic**

During this extraordinary time, The Arc of New Jersey has had to make dramatic changes in not only the way it does business but also in the very business it does. This Annual Report to the Delegates starts with some insight into the past month, briefly describing how the programs and projects of The Arc of New Jersey have shifted to meet the needs of individuals with I/DD, their families, and the local county chapters as they face the many challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also describes how we – as a staff and organization – have adapted to continue to provide our trademark exemplary supports and services during this crisis.

### **Executive, Governmental Affairs and Communications:**

- Advocacy and communication with the NJ Department of Human Services including: daily calls with the Assistant Commissioner for the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities to resolve problems; regular calls with Department and Division staff on specific issues; with NJCEArc, advocating for maximum flexibility for operations, and administrative rules and procedures; advocating for increased supports and services for individuals and families and increased flexibility for supported employment services; and advocating for stable funding for providers.
- Advocacy with the NJ Department of Health regarding Early Intervention Services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The program closed for 2 weeks and will resume on April 1 as a telehealth service.
- Advocacy with the NJ Department of Children and Families regarding services for children with I/DD in the Children's System of Care. The Department has been very unresponsive to our concerns and our requests to increase self-directed services for families.
- We have maintained constant contact with the local county chapters, individually and through NJCEArc group calls.
- Created a COVID-19 Updates & Information Page to centralize all relevant news and changes impacting people with I/DD and their families during this challenging time. The web site is updated daily with additional resources and web-based events and notices. <https://www.arcnj.org/information/covid-19-updates-information.html>
- Reached out to members of New Jersey's Congressional delegation regarding Coronavirus relief legislation. We urged lawmakers to include the needs of people with I/DD, their families and their staff as they develop plans and funding priorities.
- In coordination with The Arc US, we sent action alerts to our networks and through social media, to engage our grassroots on the #WeAreEssential campaign spearheaded by public policy staff on the national level.
- Advocated with members of New Jersey's congressional delegation regarding the critical need for personal protective equipment (PPE) for the Direct Support Professionals who provide hands-on care to people with I/DD living in group homes around the state.
- We also stressed the urgency for PPE to the Governor's Office, the Commissioner for the Department of Health, and high-ranking members of the Department of Human Services.
- Sent out ongoing communications keeping everyone updated on resources, changes in services and policies and ways to obtain assistance. This included a communication to all of our networks to offer our support and services during this challenging time. It covered all our programs and how each can be of assistance to people with I/DD and their families during this health crisis.

### **The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute:**

- Responding to calls and emails from families in need of information, advocacy and resources.

- Developed materials to help families understand changes in services.
- Adding all trainings and archived materials about COVID-19 to our DD databank. <https://ddtrainingresources.org/> and on our event calendar.
- Created an infographic to share on social media and the Family Institute web site that explains the different programs at The Arc, includes reminders about the Census, and links back to the COVID-19 Update & Information Page on The Arc of New Jersey web site.
- Developed a list of Facebook groups for families of a loved one with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The groups are diverse and cover a wide-range of topics from anxiety in caregivers to tips for remote learning.

### **The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project:**

- Moved the regional NJ Statewide Self-Advocacy Network Council meetings and certain trainings to a phone/video conference format.
- Since the budget hearings were cancelled, we worked with self-advocates over the phone to develop testimony for the Assembly budget committee
- Released a COVID-19 specific issue of Positive Pulse titled "COVID-19 Information and Safety," as well as 2 bonus issues packed with information about managing stress and staying healthy, active, and engaged at home during quarantine
- Created an infographic which is featured on The Arc US COVID-19 resource homepage
- Ramped up our social media content posts and have released short videos focusing on staying healthy at home, managing stress, being productive/maintaining a schedule during quarantine
- Released 3 adaptive fitness videos each week: Meditation Monday, Animal Yoga Wednesday, and Superhero Yoga Friday

### **Mainstreaming Medical Care:**

- From the first reports (toward the end of February) that the contagious Coronavirus was a danger for Americans on the east coast, the Mainstreaming Medical Care program has been extremely busy, obtaining accurate information about Coronavirus-related issues that are of concern for families and other caregivers of persons with I/DD.
- This information was widely disseminated through large group emails, website postings, and social media.
- The Coronavirus information that we disseminated to date includes an early email advising every one of the importance of hand-washing, not touching one's face, etc; as well as emails on changes at the Social Security Administration; improving access to prescription medications and a prohibition on Medicaid terminations during the Coronavirus public health emergency; and the new Coronavirus Center set up by the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD).
- The program director has also participated in conference calls and webinars that discussed health care concerns for persons with I/DD.

### **Criminal Justice Advocacy Program:**

- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NJ Supreme Court issued an order releasing certain categories of county jail inmates. The Criminal Justice Advocacy Program was contacted about 4 of our clients in jail and we were able to assist quickly with locating appropriate housing and services for these individuals as they were released within 72 hours of the issuance of the order.
- We are continuing to monitor clients in jail and other institutions to ensure their safety, community safety and provision of appropriate housing and services as this emergency continues.

## **Project HIRE:**

- Project HIRE continues to provide services to those who need it most, even in these difficult times. Many Project HIRE participants are employed in essential businesses, such as nursing homes and grocery stores. Participants are continuing to receive assistance from Project HIRE, at a safe social distance, in person or on the telephone.

## **Planning For Adult Life:**

- Staff created Virtual Learning Classes for schools that host our MAPs Clubs for students in special education.
- The Director created online “Hands on Workshop” presentations (titled HOW@HOME) where schools can schedule exclusive sessions with our staff to host a presentation for their school parents.
- The staff created a parent resource download page on the website for parents with special needs students who are currently not attending our regularly scheduled MAPs Clubs. This page features lessons within all PFAL topics that parents are able to download and facilitate activities around transitioning to adult life.
- The Compass e-newsletter was sent to over 6200 emails with Covid-19 resources, virtual tours, and links to webinars on transition topics.

## **Training and Consultation Services:**

- TCS is working with state funders to develop solutions and evolving best practices for Supported Employment providers during this challenging time.
- TCS is focused on the creation of new trainings and resources for using technology to deliver the supports that change people's lives through work.

## **Development:**

- Set up a series of calls with the Development staff of the local county chapters to share concerns and ideas. Created a shared cloud drive for the staff to upload webinars, documents and other resources.
- Submitted a grant application for emergency funding for Project Hire.
- Ongoing research on grants, funding and resources for The Arc of NJ and the local county chapters.

Additionally, The Arc of NJ is working with the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities to provide small one-time grants to individuals with I/DD and families to purchase items to help alleviate social isolation, anxiety and escalating behaviors. The Arc of NJ is receiving and processing all the grant requests with approvals being completed by the Council. The Arc of NJ then works with the individuals and families to purchase the items. In just four days, more than 200 applications were submitted. The application was sent out in English and Spanish and staff from The Arc Family Institute and Planning for Adult Life have been working on the project.

Leadership at the agency also worked to ensure that every staff person at The Arc of NJ had the tools and technology needed to work remotely. In addition to setting up new and used equipment and educating staff, there has been some ongoing technical support issues that needed resolution. Also worked with staff to set up various online platforms for video meetings, conference calls, remote learning and video recording.

The Administrative Department of The Arc of New Jersey has been working to ensure the financial stability of the organization as well as responding to the many changes in human resources and personnel. The Arc of New Jersey's financial, personnel, human resource and administrative functions have moved forward seamlessly throughout the crisis.

# **The Arc of New Jersey Annual Report to the Delegates**

## **April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020**

### **Governmental Affairs – Sharon Levine, Director**

In the past 12 months, The Arc of New Jersey was successful in executing a multitude of top level priorities in regards to the State Budget as well as legislation, and increased relationship building with the Governor and key members of his Administration.

#### **Budget**

In the FY20 Budget, we were successful in advocating, alongside the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage, for \$20 million to address Direct Support Professionals. Additionally, the proposed FY21 Budget represents the first time Governor Murphy's spending plan includes an appropriation to raise DSP wages. (In previous years, any additional funding was the result of advocacy with the Legislature.) This is an important recognition of this workforce and those they serve by this Administration and is the result of multiple years of advocacy and education by The Arc of NJ and our grassroots networks. Proposed funding levels will help keep DSP wages ahead of the rising minimum wage which is set to increase each year through 2024. The Governor also proposed funding to increase day program rates in recognition of absences that occur throughout the year. Additionally, a supplemental appropriation bill to raise DSP wages in light of the January 1, 2020 minimum wage hike, was passed by the Senate earlier this year.

#### **Legislation & Regulation**

In the last year, Governor Murphy signed three bills impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition, The Arc of New Jersey testified numerous times before the Budget and Human Services Committee and served as an invited guest/speaker for legislative hearings. The organization also plays a pivotal role when it comes to advocacy on regulation and the implementation of fee-for-service. This advocacy has a direct impact on Chapters of The Arc and community providers across New Jersey who support people with I/DD. In coordination with The Arc US, we weighed in with New Jersey's congressional delegation on Money Follows the Person, SNAP benefits, the Autism CARES Act, and COVID-19 relief bills.

#### **Communication & Get Out the Vote**

The 2019 Get Out the Vote Guide was distributed to Self-Advocates and families and shared via social media and through our e-newsletters. This annual publication assists individuals understand the voting process ahead of Election Day and provides background on who is running for office as well as the ways in which a person can cast their vote. Additionally, public policy updates were included in newsletters and through "Updates from Trenton."

#### **Relationship Building & Advocacy**

The Arc of New Jersey enhanced our relationship with Governor Murphy and Commissioners throughout the Administration. The Arc of NJ participated in a Disability Community Advocate Meeting hosted by the Governor's staff to contribute perspectives and insights on current issues impacting this population. We also attended the State of the State Address as well as several press conferences with the Governor on issues related to those we represent. Executive Director Tom Baffuto spoke with Governor Murphy multiple times throughout the year and we keep in close contact with the Departments of Human Services, Children and Families, Health, Education and Labor.

## **The Arc of NJ Family Institute**

**Lisa Ford, Director; Michael Pearson Jr., Assistant Director; Cheryl Crick, Coordinator**

This was another very busy year for The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute as outreach to families grew and so did the staff. The program added an Assistant Director dedicated specifically to Children's Advocacy. Michael Pearson Jr. started in March and his work will focus on children served by DCF, special education issues, as well as families receiving services through the early intervention system.

### **By the Numbers:**

- Individuals assisted: 3,502
- 32 presentations reaching 532 people
- Website visitors: 18,662
- Friends and Families: 5,249
- Twitter Followers: 336
- Instagram: 289 (Double the number of followers from last year)
- Facebook Followers: 1,783
- 20 Webinars with more than 1,700 viewers
- 1,281 watched our archived webinars this year resulting in a total of 1,981 viewers.
- 5 podcasts added this year and 650 listeners
- 11 College Tours with more than 400 attendees

### **Highlights of this Year's Webinars:**

- A two part series educating viewers about special needs trusts and how not all trusts are the same. The series also highlighted what families needed to know about purchasing necessary items for their son/daughter with I/DD with money from the trust and what types of expenditures are allowable, and which are not, in accordance with NJ Medicaid rules and regulations.
- 2020 Census: Shape Your Future. This webinar explained why the 2020 Census is so important and guided attendees step-by-step through the Census process.
- Private School Option: What Parents of Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Need to Know. This webinar educated viewers about federal laws that require your local school district to consider a full range of options – including private schools – when determining a child's placement.

### **Census 2020**

The Arc of New Jersey also received a grant from The Arc US which enabled the Family Institute to help raise awareness among families and individuals with I/DD about the importance of participating in the Census process and why everyone needs to be counted. Toward that end, the Family Institute participated in state level official complete count committees (Census Community Partners and The Complete Count Commission). Other work included the sharing of census information on all of our social media outlets, in our newsletter and through updates to our family list, meeting with Chapters to provide census information, creating a Census 2020 page on the Family Institute web site that includes fact sheets, language guides, information about how to avoid scams, archived webinars about the census and posters to download and share.

### **Training and Resource Databank**

The number of databank visitors since April of 2019 is almost 8500. More than 1000 postcards and flyers about the DD databank have been distributed to family members. DD Training Resources provides a wide range of information about trainings and support resources for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families throughout the State of New Jersey. DD Training Resources includes information and archived resources originating from state service systems, community providers, advocacy organizations and community resources. The trainings, resources, local New Jersey event calendar, national event calendar, and archived materials address a number of areas including, but not limited to, accessing services, navigating systems, individual rights, advocacy tools and finding resources in the community.

## **Planning for Adult Life – Jerisa Maseko, Director**

Planning for Adult Life celebrates its sixth year of supporting students, ages 14 to 16 in special education, and their families, in the planning process of transitioning from school to adult life. PFAL continues to challenge families to create plans focusing on eight different areas including Entitlement Programs and Eligibility; Post-secondary Education/Employment; Planning/Visioning for the future; Housing; Legal/ Financial Planning; Building/Maintaining Community Ties; Self-Direction; and Health/Behavioral Health.

### **Highlights of the Year:**

- The Making Action Plans for Life and Career Clubs (MAPs Clubs) continue to run strong in 89 schools serving all 21 counties of New Jersey.
- The Hands On Workshop Series (HOW) has provided 81 presentations full of valuable information to more than 800 students and their families on SSI and Medicaid, Creating a Plan for Transition, Guardianship Basics, and Exploring Employment Options.
- The PFAL website has welcomed more than 10,000 unique visitors who have viewed our informational pages, watched archived videos and asked helpdesk questions.
- Our helpdesk has responded to more than 1,200 inquiries.
- The Planning For Life After High School Conferences were held 4 times throughout the calendar year.
- The monthly Webinar Wednesday Series was held 11 times on various topics, including:
  - Financial Planning for Families with Special Needs
  - State Services for Students Under 21
  - SUPPORT BROKERAGE SERVICES AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
  - Let's Talk About Healthy Sexuality & Sexual Safety
  - Preparing for Community Living: Sharing Possibilities
  - Bridging the Gap Between Assistive Technology in Your Child's IEP and How to Maximize It In The Workplace
  - SSI and Medicaid: Things You Need to Know
  - Understanding Educational Advocacy: Incorporating Self-Determination in the Transition Process
  - Recognizing and Preventing Bullying
- The COMPASS E-newsletter is distributed to more than 6,200 individuals monthly

### **By the numbers in the 2019-2020 School Year:**

- 320 Grad Bags Distributed
- 14 Community Site Tours
- 1754 MAPs Clubs conducted
- 6886 Student participating in MAPs Clubs
- 880 Wednesday Webinar Series Attendees

## **Mainstreaming Medical Care – Beverly Roberts, Director**

The Mainstreaming Medical Care Program promotes quality medical, dental and behavioral health care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout New Jersey. In recent years, there has been a requirement that everyone who receives services from the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) must have Medicaid. This Medicaid requirement has led to an increasing number of requests to provide assistance: (1) to help individuals with I/DD to obtain Medicaid in order to receive DDD services and (2) to help when a person who has had DDD services receives notification about a termination in Medicaid benefits.

### **Highlights of the Year:**

- Responded to **883** requests for assistance from families and staff, including support coordinators and transition coordinators at schools.
- More than **360** persons registered for our very successful 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Medical Care, which featured a morning plenary panel discussion on Medical Marijuana for persons with I/DD. The afternoon keynote speaker provided a national perspective on sexual violence against individuals with I/DD. The conference also featured 10 breakout sessions.
- Presentations and webinars on SSI and Medicaid and a webinar on Medicare Part D for persons who have both Medicare and Medicaid - **616** persons
- Wide dissemination of information on preventing the seasonal flu and the new Coronavirus, as well as emails on other important health-related topics: **1,610** persons
- Involvement with a variety of efforts to improve dental care for individuals with I/DD, including a Dental Summit.

### **Areas of Continuing Advocacy:**

- Advocacy pertaining to NJ WorkAbility, which ends abruptly at age 65.
- Assisting families when their son/daughter with I/DD was notified that Medicaid for their adult children who receive DDD services will be terminated soon.
- Explaining the process to be eligible for “Non-DAC” Medicaid.
- Advocating for a process for a Qualified Income Trust (QIT) for persons with I/DD whose monthly income exceeds the limit for “Non-DAC” Medicaid.
- Helping families when PPP or PCA services have been reduced or terminated.
- Helping families who need to access medical, dental, or behavioral health from a Medicaid managed care organization.

### **Feedback:**

- Following our 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference: *“The quality of the speakers was top notch and I came away with lots of new information. You are an amazing woman – 30 years putting together such an important, informative event as well as helping people like my son is pretty special.”*
- Following a presentation on SSI and Medicaid given by the program director: *“Thank you for the BEST workshop of the year!! We have a lot of workshops, but yours was the BEST one!”*
- After the successful resolution of a very complicated Medicaid case that we worked on in cooperation with Disability Rights NJ: *“If you hadn’t helped us, my sister would be out of the system. I am acutely aware of that and will forever hold both of you in my heart.”*
- A woman contacted our program because her brother’s Medicaid was terminated, in error, by the County Board of Social Services. The sister had this comment: *“My brother’s Medicaid is now in good standing and the case was adjourned. Individuals with special needs and their families need more advocates like you!”*

## **Project HIRE – Adam Kubler, Director**

Project HIRE experienced many changes in the Supported Employment sphere over the last year. True to Project HIRE's goal of continuing to be a leader in the field, the program continues to adapt to these changes to ensure continued success. These are some of the highlights from past twelve months.

Project HIRE's work with Union County Project SEARCH again proved successful with the 2019 cohort completing the program and meeting all required benchmarks. Additionally, the 2020 cohort was selected and is expected to experience the same, excellent outcomes when they graduate this summer.

The program collaborated with The Arc of The US and The Arc of New Jersey's Criminal Justice Advocacy Program to launch the successful Growth Through Opportunity Cadet Program in Monmouth County. This pilot program connected individuals living with disabilities with local law enforcement offices with a goal of providing a comprehensive internship from which cadets would gain valuable universal employment skills and develop confidence to increase their chances of obtaining competitive employment. The program consists of 2 groups of interns. The first group successfully graduated in February and the second group starts in March and is expected to graduate in June of 2020.

Project HIRE is well prepared for the renewal of the agency's CARF certification. This important certification allows the agency to continue providing Supported Employment services to 100s of individuals across the state. The program is expected to meet and exceed CARF standards and the director is proud to have the opportunity to show the program to surveyors.

Project HIRE continues to push to provide more Pre-ETS hours. Currently, the program is approved to provide these DVRS funded services in all counties in which Project HIRE operates and is projected to grow in service hours in the next year.

Finally, with the implementation of a new electronic monitoring system, Project HIRE is operating more efficiently than ever. Staff are now able to access important information about their cases instantly and in any location. This reduced costs, cut down on staff time spent on administrative work and increased the time spent face to face with participants.

### **By the Numbers:**

Placements: 150

Average Service Hours Per Month: 2,180

Individuals Served: 825

Transition hours: 2,666

Adult Service Hours: 24,000

## **The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project – Ashley Ritchey, Director**

The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project team take their cues from the 2,150+ members of the affiliated New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (NJSSAN). Members of NJSSAN are most proud of the many educational and outreach events that have amplified awareness throughout the year.

On March 11, 2019, 44 members of the NJSSAN attended the annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month outreach event at the State House in Trenton. Legislators and Department of Human Services Acting Commissioner Carole Johnson visited the display to meet with advocates and to discuss current NJSSAN initiatives. On April 18th, the NJSSAN hosted the 14th Annual Awards Luncheon. More than 320 NJSSAN members attended this event which featured an awards ceremony attended by Heroes Award recipient Assemblyman Daniel R. Benson.

The Advisory Board of the NJSSAN worked on several critical issues during the year, including a letter writing campaign to raise awareness about the need for accessibility improvements to public transportation systems and the ongoing initiative to raise wages for Direct Support Professionals. The NJSAP team presented 32 voting rights and responsibilities workshops throughout the state. Legislative advocacy opportunities were shared with members of the Network via Constant Contact e-mail blasts and targeted outreach to members of the Governmental Affairs Ambassador Program, which gained 113 additional members this year.

On July 12th, NJSSAN members hosted their 8th annual event on Point Pleasant Beach Boardwalk to celebrate the 29th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Throughout the day, more than 350 community members visited the booth and learned about the importance of the protections included in The Americans with Disabilities Act. The NJSAP team expanded their training to include 13 school-based programs throughout the state. Training topics included self-advocacy skill building, healthy relationships, effective communication, stress management and many more.

September 28th marked the 36th Annual NJSSAN Fall Conference, which was held at The Westin Princeton. This educational and networking event drew a crowd of more than 250 advocates and staff members and featured 5 educational workshops, and 13 exhibitor tables, as well as a cadre of speakers and presentations by members of the NJSSAN. Beginning in January, the NJSAP team unveiled a new training on the 2020 census titled “Census 2020: Be Counted!”. To date, the NJSAP team has delivered 9 trainings to 290 advocates and DSPs statewide as part of an ongoing effort to encourage census participation amongst people with I/DD.

In January 2020, members of the NJSSAN were among a select group of invited guests who testified before the Senate Select Committee on NJ Transit and AccessLink. The hearing was convened by Senate President Sweeney in order to find ways to make NJ Transit services more accessible for people with I/DD.

Also in January the 6th grant cycle of the Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) began. The HLP is funded through a grant generously provided by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. In addition to the educational workshops and community-based fitness events, this year’s grant cycle will include mock office visits to dental clinics and medical offices, to allow self-advocates to experience the “sights, sounds, and smells” of a typical office visit and have the opportunity to ask questions of dental and medical staff to better prepare for their next check-up.

### **By the Numbers:**

- Reached a total of 7,385 self-advocates through groups, trainings, and events
- The NJSAP team coordinated 565 self-advocacy meetings, public awareness displays & fundraisers statewide
- The NJ Statewide Self-Advocacy Network gained 132 new members across all 5 Councils
- The NJSAP team provided a total of 4,484 information and referral services
- As part of their Healthy Lifestyles Project, the NJSAP team presented 72 workshops and coordinated 42 community-based events attended by 1,980 Self-Advocates
- The NJSAP Facebook page now has 431 likes and 484 followers, an increase of 129 people from last year.
- The NJSAP Twitter feed has 451 followers, an increase of 86 followers since last year.

## **Criminal Justice Advocacy Program – Jessica Oppenheim, Director**

In addition to assisting individuals with I/DD who become involved with the criminal justice system, the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program also hosted a number of successful and well-attended webinars and a Summit that brought together stakeholders from many different arenas in order to focus on ways to prevent sexual abuse and harassment of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Equal Justice Talks Webinar Series has been very successful, bringing highly knowledgeable speakers on a wide range of difficult issues, including topics related to offenders with autism spectrum disorder who engage in sexually inappropriate behavior; how courts view ASD; SSI Appeals; sexual consent for people with I/DD and many other topics, seen by well over 1,000 viewers live and more once posted on our website.

CJAP and Project Hire partnered for a new program, the first in New Jersey, to place individuals with I/DD as cadets to work with law enforcement mentors in local agencies in Monmouth County for a grant program through The Arc of the US called JusticeWorks. A one day training called Pathways to Justice was conducted for law enforcement officers in Monmouth County followed by the Growth Through Opportunity mentorship program. This pilot was very successful for 5 cadets working in 5 different agencies over a 16 week period. All 5 cadets successfully completed the program.

We have reconvened the New Jersey Partners in Justice, a multidisciplinary group of professionals, families and self-advocates from across NJ to work together to end sexual violence against people with I/DD and improve all facets of community life. Meetings of subcommittees and the full Task Force have been ongoing and include discussions about media campaigns around improving an understanding about people with I/DD and healthy sexuality, legislative changes and additional training. On March 2, we held the Partners in Justice Law Summit: Preventing Sexual Abuse and Harassment of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, bringing in great speakers for a capacity audience of 150. Topics included communicating effectively with people with I/DD about sexual assault allegations with Special DAG Robert Laurino and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Leone Murphy. The event also included speakers from Disability Rights New Jersey, the Vera Institute for Justice along with Liz Shea, former assistant commissioner at DDD, to discuss case studies around guardianship and sexual consent.

CJAP continues to provide direct case management as our primary mission to individuals with developmental disabilities who become involved in the criminal justice system, at the municipal and superior court level. Our caseload is routinely over 100 cases and is, as of April 30 currently at 121 clients receiving services statewide. The average caseload among our Community Care Coordinators is 40, which is above target for our best practices; however, this number includes cases which only require monitoring. The Program monthly LOS averages between 700 and 1,000, well above expected services.

## **Training and Consultation Services – Wesley Anderson, Director**

Training and Consultation Services (TCS) provides guidance to supported employment providers in an effort to improve employment services and outcomes for people with disabilities in New Jersey. TCS staff utilizes a myriad of formats for disseminating current industry best practices, including; classroom style training, webinars, consultation services, information & referral, and advocacy. TCS has retained its standing as the authority on matters related to Employment First, providing more than 250 hours of training and consults to DDD funded providers throughout the state. Some of the topics covered have included:

- Documentation & Record Keeping
- Implementing Interventions
- Organization Tools for Job Coaches
- Employment First
- Fee for Service
- Job Development
- Job Coaching

## **Some additional highlights included:**

- Member of National & NJ APSE Boards. Chair of Professional Development for national APSE
- Ongoing partnership with Rutgers' Boggs Center
- Assisted in the revision of DVRS's Supported Employment documentation manual revisions
- Conducting presentations for the Mental Health Association in New Jersey- Career Connections Employment Resource Institute (CCERI)
- Presented at Iowa APSE, NJ APSE Conference, Access NJ Conference, National APSE Conference.
- Created "What is Job Coaching" explainer video

## **Human Resources, Finance and Operations - Michael Prendergast, Assistant Executive Director**

### **Anna Scruggs, Coordinator, Financial Services**

### **Helen Rivera, Coordinator, Administrative Services**

- The FY 2019 audit of The Arc of New Jersey financials was completed. No findings were discovered.
- The FY 2019 audit of NJ Camp Jaycee financials was completed. No findings were discovered.
- 2020 Finance Manual was reviewed by the Internal Committee and updated as needed.
- 2020 Personnel Policies were reviewed by the Internal Committee and updated as needed.
- Full Time Staff: 51; Part Time Staff: 7
- Average Seniority: 8.4 years

## **Communications and Development – Sharon Levine, Communications and Céline Fortin, Associate Executive Director**

- Support of 16 local county chapter walkathons
- Monthly e-news: 1,388 subscribers
- Website: 42,919 visitors, 102,424 pages viewed
- Facebook: 3,185 page likes
- Twitter: 3,186 followers
- \$25,000 grant for the Healthy Lifestyles Program from The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey
- \$41,459 in grants from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities for Year 3 of the Training and Resource Databank
- \$10,000 grant from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities and \$7,500 grant for The Arc of the US for the JusticeWorks Mentorship Program
- \$18,100 in grants from The Arc of the US and the Community Foundation of New Jersey to support work on the Census 2020
- 70th Anniversary Celebration on November 21, 2019 with more than 200 attendees, six exceptional award winners and guest speakers. More than \$42,000 raised for The Arc of New Jersey's programs and services.