



The Arc of New Jersey Mainstreaming Medical Care Program

29th Annual Conference on Medical Care for
Persons with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

The Arc of New Jersey is pleased to dedicate our 29th Annual Conference on Medical Care to the memory of Ellen Boyle



Ellen Boyle

October 3, 1965 - January 21, 2018

When Ellen Boyle, the youngest of Jack and Eleanor Boyle's four children, was born with Down Syndrome in 1965, the family pediatrician gave her anxious parents simple advice: "Take her home and love her."

They did just that. She lived at home and in the community until her death at age 52 from complications of Alzheimer's disease.

Ellen lived a rich and remarkable life. She graduated from high school at age 21, worked for 20 years, and then attended adult day programs until shortly before her death. She won countless Special Olympics' medals for swimming (butterfly and freestyle), bowling, basketball, and track and field. She enjoyed an enviable social life, traveled widely, and loved dance and music. She delighted in spending time with friends and family, cheering her sports teams - Yankees, Giants, Jets, and meeting her favorite soap opera star Eric Martsof of Days of Our Lives. Each year, she eagerly anticipated her October 3rd birthday and would commence planning next year's celebration on October 4th.

Shortly after her 50th birthday, Ellen was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Over the next two years, she experienced the progressive declines associated with the disease. Her journey was marked not only by myriad challenges, but by poignant moments of love and connection. Each day, she bravely faced changes that she could not understand, and yet she could exude the love and joy that were her defining features.

Ellen's story is one of triumph over disability. It is also the story of the triumph of love.

Andrew Lloyd Weber said it best:

***"Love, love changes everything:
hands and faces, Earth and sky,
Love, love changes everything:
how you live and how you die..."***

***Yes, love, love changes everyone,
live or perish in its flame.
Love will never, never let you be the same."***

