

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE DELEGATES



## President's Message:



Tonight, at the 2025 Annual Meeting of Delegates, we will be electing a new slate of Officers for The Arc of New Jersey. I can not believe how quickly the time has flown and that my 4 years as President will be finishing in June. When I was elected president in 2021, we were in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic and it would be 2 years before we were able to meet in person again. The issues we faced were significant and numerous; unique problems that required creative thinking and perseverance to overcome. But we prevailed, and in the process became even stronger. In the ensuing years we have had our share of challenges and accomplishments. And through it all it has been the unique blend of innovation, dedication, and vision that we call the "Spirit of The Arc" that has carried us forward. I am immensely proud of this organization, what it stands for and the tremendous impact we have had. Thank you to all of you - the Family of The Arc - who have made all this possible. Your strength has given me strength, and together we have set the stage for an even brighter future.

*Kevin Sturges*

## Activities of the Board

- 5 Executive Committee meetings, 4 Board of Directors meetings and an Annual Meeting of Delegates
- Personnel Policies revised, reviewed and approved
- Represented The Arc of NJ at The Arc of the US National Convention and Disability Policy Seminar
- Regular meetings of all Committees: Governmental Affairs, Internal, Audit, Investment, Family Advisory Council and Healthcare Advisory Board
- Reviewed and approved an updated Position Statement on Respectful Language

### Executive Committee

Kevin Sturges, President  
Lauren Zalepka, 1st Vice President  
Karen Santiago, 2nd Vice President  
Pamela Corrigan, Treasurer  
Andy Sharick, Secretary

Members at large  
Ruby Goyal-Carkeek  
Robert Hage  
Marnie McNany  
Charles Pinto  
Paul Prior

Joanne Bergin, Immediate Past President





## Executive Director's Message:

If you consult your trusty thesaurus, you'll see that many of the synonyms for "change" seem off-putting. Words such as difference or alteration. But the word I keep coming back to is transformation. Because that is how I see we will respond to the major changes happening in our organization and the State - by being transformative. As we wrap up our 75th Anniversary year as an organization, we need to approach the next 75 years with an eye as to how we innovate and initiate new solutions to the issues.

Starting in July, The Arc of New Jersey will have a new slate of Officers and a new Executive Director. Within the next 9 months there will be a new Governor and a new Administration. It is critical that we view all this as an opportunity to tell our story, advance our mission and vision, and make transformative change for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. As you read these pages and see the amazing work being done by The Arc of New Jersey, consider it the resilient and formidable foundation for the future.

*Thomas Baffuto*

### Leadership:

Thomas Baffuto, Executive Director

Céline Fortin, Associate Executive Director

Michael Prendergast, Assistant Executive Director



## Leadership Institute

In April 2024, The Arc of New Jersey launched the 2024 Leadership Institute, a unique and exciting leadership development training program which takes the best of the best of the rising leaders of The Arc of New Jersey and the Local County Chapters, and gives them the tools and confidence they need to be the leaders of tomorrow. The approach is hands-on, dealing with real world situations faced by leaders of local chapters, with opportunities to apply new skills and insights over the course of the program. After meeting once a month for full day sessions, participants presented Capstone Projects at the graduation ceremony in November 2024. Congratulations to the 27 graduates of The Arc of New Jersey Leadership Institute!



# Governmental Affairs

Sharon Levine, Senior Director

## Budget Advocacy

Working to secure funding for priority issues impacting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families is an almost-year-long process and includes testimonies, meetings, outreach to the Administration and significant time spent with lawmakers. In the final FY25 Budget, The Arc of NJ successfully advocated for the Legislature to add \$1.25 million to increase Family Support Services, specifically the day and overnight camp reimbursement rates for children with IDD within the Children's System of Care in the Department of Children and Families. The new rates will now be \$128.57 per day for traditional day camp, up from \$82 per day. This increase of \$46 brings the rate much closer to that paid by DDD. Additionally, the Legislature added \$7.5 million in state dollars to increase the fee-for-service rates.

The Budget also included:

- \$20.9 million to maintain the Direct Support Professional wage increase that went into effect on January 1, 2024, funding to move 400 people off the Waiting List,
- \$5.25 million to phase in an increase of new mandatory training for Direct Support Professionals (DHS),
- an additional \$31.8 million, for a total of \$67.8 million, (within DHS) for the WorkAbility program expansion.
- \$7.3 million to increase the amount of respite children can receive via DCF.

Leading up to the Governor's FY26 Budget Address, The Arc of NJ:

- weighed in at several departmental budget listening sessions,
- outreached to the Governor and all of the relevant Commissioners,
- published an action alert that resulted in more than 1,000 participants taking action, and
- met with representatives of the Governor's Office and the Department of Treasury

In the Governor's proposed FY26 Budget, our ongoing advocacy efforts resulted in \$18 million to increase DSP wages to ensure DSPs stay ahead of the CPI increases to New Jersey's state minimum wage. We were also successful in preventing a rate reduction to the fee-for-service Medicaid rates which are the funding mechanism for the service delivery system. Additionally, the proposed Budget includes funding to move 318 people off the Waiting List in FY26.



# Governmental Affairs

## Legislative Highlights, State Advocacy Work & Outreach

- Testified or weighed in on more than 30 pieces of legislation.
- In coordination with local county Chapters of The Arc, responded to a bill package sponsored by the Chair of the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee that could have detrimental impacts on the service delivery system. A significant amount of time was spent advocating on this issue, developing requested amendments, meeting one-on-one with representatives of the Committee, speaking with staff, testifying at the hearing, and working with other disability stakeholders. Because of our advocacy, the bills were heard for discussion only and conversation around next steps is still ongoing.
- Prioritized improving dental care for people with IDD. Met twice with the DOH dental director and Assistant Commissioner and met with the NJ Dental Association. During these conversations we discuss ways of reducing obstacles that make it difficult for people with IDD to access oral health care.
- Met with the NJEA to talk about transition issues that students and their families encounter and the ways The Arc of NJ can serve as a partner.
- With The Arc of Union County, hosted a DSP Recognition Week Event in September.
- Attended the Governor's Budget Address and spoke with the Governor and other dignitaries at a post-event reception.

## Federal Advocacy Highlights:

- The Arc of NJ served as the State Captain for the Disability Policy Seminar, coordinating and meeting with the majority of the NJ Congressional delegation, including: Congressmen Kean, Norcross, Kim, Gottheimer, Pascrell, and Pallone, Congresswoman Sherrill and Senators Booker and Menendez. Topics for meetings included: protecting Medicaid, the importance of HCBS services, needed reforms to the SSI program through the Savings Penalty Elimination Act, and the Reauthorization of the Autism CARES Act.
- Spoke out against cuts to Medicaid at an invite-only press conference hosted by Congressman Pallone.
- The Arc of NJ's First-Vice President Lauren Zalepka attended the State of the Union as an invited guest of Congressman Pallone. The Arc of NJ assisted with several media opportunities focused on the importance of Medicaid.
- The Arc of NJ conducted significant outreach to all of the state's congressional delegation to push back against Medicaid block grants, per capita caps, or work requirements.
- Spoke at a Medicaid rally hosted in Trenton, the focus of which was preventing cuts to the program.



# The Arc of NJ Family Institute

## Our comprehensive website

The Arc of NJ Family Institute has its own website that offers information on a wide variety of topics designed to help families navigate the system of care. Since 2021, our website has consistently grown its visitor base by 10 percent or more each year. We take pride in the resources we share and the pages we create for the many of the individuals who reach out to us daily. Our website is comprehensive and is updated regularly. We often receive feedback from families and professionals thanking us for the resources we've developed, and they appreciate that the information is presented in various formats. This approach allows people to engage with topics in a way that suits their individual learning styles.

## Medicaid Monday Events

The Arc of NJ Family Institute, with the support of the Local County Chapters, held several "Medicaid Monday" events where we discussed the importance of Medicaid. We provided an overview of Social Security benefits and encouraged families to share their Medicaid stories with us. NJ FamilyCare also attended some of these events.

## College Tours

Each year, we organize tours of various college programs available for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are interested in continuing their education. New programs are introduced every year, and we take pride in providing families with opportunities to learn more about these programs through our tours, webinars, and our dedicated webpage that features information about these college options.

## Stay in School Until 21 Campaign

Every year, we receive calls from family members who are unaware that their child can stay in school until the age of 21 or who do not understand the benefits of this opportunity. This year, we launched a social media campaign to highlight the importance of fully utilizing all educational entitlements before deciding to leave school. Additionally, we will archive this information on our website and include it in a monthly calendar that features different topics and resources.

Lisa Ford, Senior Director



3,739

Help Desk Requests



46,582

Website Visitors



8,083

Family and Friends List



3,343

Facebook Followers



105,130

Pages Viewed



1,131

Instagram followers



4,942

Webinar views and attendees



# Children's Advocacy

**Adara Heilmann,  
Director**

The Children's Advocacy Program marks its 5th year of operation, during which it has consistently responded to an increasing demand for support among children and young adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). This year, we saw a rise in requests for assistance, particularly in the areas of early intervention, the children's system of care, and special education. Of these, 97% were specifically related to special education services and programs, highlighting the growing need for guidance in this field.

Throughout the year, our team remained engaged with key stakeholders by attending workgroup meetings, provider fairs, and by participating in numerous Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and mediation conferences. Additionally, we continued to advocate on behalf of families by drafting position papers and providing testimony before the State Board of Education and the Department of Health on 4 separate occasions. Our focus included critical issues such as early intervention, transition services, and ensuring the least restrictive environment (LRE) for children with IDD. We were also fortunate to have an intern join us for a three-month period, who assisted with family intakes and the development of informational fact sheets that are being widely distributed to families across New Jersey. These efforts support our ongoing mission to ensure families have access to the necessary resources and advocacy they need.

The Director of Children's Advocacy worked on The Arc of US/ Coca-Cola Grant with PFAL, which offered a self determination curriculum for students, and a parent advocacy curriculum for parents and families.

The Director began hosting webinars in September 2024 and has already held 8 webinars for 90 attendees with the recordings viewed 25 times.

928

Problem Intake Forms

IEP/504 Plan: 90%  
Early Intervention: 0%

Transition: 6%  
Other: 4%

13,142

Advocacy assists

750

People Spoken to at  
Provider Fairs

224

Attendees attended  
16 Community  
Presentations

64

IEP Meetings  
Attended

2,536

Recorded Views from  
21 Facebook Lives



# Health Care Advocacy

Connor Griffin, Director

**867  
Responses**

to helpdesk requests for assistance

**1,265  
Views**

8 webinars were attended and viewed 1,265 times

**1,776  
Attendees**

at 17 presentations for other organizations

**2,900  
Views**

Live & recorded 22 "Catching Up with Connor" Facebook episodes

The Health Care Advocacy Program promotes quality health care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout New Jersey, advocating for the highest level of care as it pertains to medical, dental, behavioral health, and mental health care services. Health Care Advocacy continues to experience a high demand for assistance from families, caregivers, support coordinators, care management organizations, and other professionals and disability advocates from across the state. The program provides assistance in offering comprehensive information and numerous resources across key areas such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Disabled Adult Child (DAC) and Non-DAC status through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Waiver Unit.

The Medicaid "Unwinding" over the past 2 years, which followed the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, resulted in thousands of individuals losing their Medicaid. The Health Care Advocacy Program has helped numerous families regain and keep their Medicaid benefits through the annual renewal process, submitting new applications, and navigating the DAC process, which helps adult children keep their Medicaid and DDD services, after a parent starts collecting Social Security or passes away. The program director is actively engaged in statewide systems advocacy, organizing meetings with the Department of Human Services Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services, which oversees the state Medicaid program, and the Department of Health (DoH) Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Community Health Services and Dental Director. Health Care Advocacy has been especially busy in recent months regarding possibilities to improve and expand dental services for individuals with IDD, remaining in active conversations with DoH.

Health Care Advocacy creates and distributes new and updated fact sheets and flyers, in-person presentations, virtual webinars, regular emails, a Healthy Times e-newsletter, and an annual webinar series presented by healthcare and disability professionals. In March 2024, the program began a new Facebook Live series "Catching Up with Connor" that releases biweekly episodes on The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute Facebook page. The series features brief, 10-15 minute presentations for families to be informed about important healthcare news and related topics regarding their loved one with IDD. Last October, Health Care Advocacy organized the Beverly Roberts Memorial Healthcare Symposium at the NJ Law Center in New Brunswick. The symposium featured a main panel presentation on healthcare for individuals with IDD and 3 workshops that covered direct care and perspectives from members of our local chapters, oral health and access to dental care, and aging individuals with IDD and dementia.





8000+  
Visitors

PFAL Website

The "Got Plans?" Guide received **80+** downloads. Widened our reach to include a Spanish version of our Guide entitled, Time To Travel featuring questions that will guide families in exploring their community.

7,400+  
Subscribers

The Compass E-Newsletter

The monthly newsletter includes articles on transition issues and concerns, transition-related resources, event announcements and helpful tips.

7000+  
Students

PFAL's Making Action Plans for Life and Career (MAPS) Clubs

took place in 60 school districts. There were an average of 150 sessions a month and featured impactful lessons, peer-to-peer discussions and activities to foster independence.

The Planning for Adult Life Program (PFAL) is celebrating its eleventh year of supporting students ages 14 to 21 who are eligible for special education services, along with their families, as they prepare for the transition from school to adulthood. PFAL's Transition Navigators deliver interactive presentations and activities on critical topics, including employment, housing options, building and maintaining social and community relationships, understanding legal and financial responsibilities, eligibility for entitlement programs, self-direction, and accessing health and behavioral health supports. By equipping students and their families with essential information and resources, PFAL empowers them to maximize their educational entitlements and develop informed plans for a successful future. To ensure broad accessibility, PFAL offers its services both in person and virtually.

**PFAL responded to 850 helpdesk requests for assistance.**

**Hands on Workshops (HOW Series)** educate schools, agencies, and parent groups about systems and services for people with IDD. More than 70 events were held for 800 attendees. The PFAL Director was selected to present at the NJEA Impact Conference for educators throughout NJ and the The Association for Middle-Level Education (AMLE) which is the premier international organization dedicated to middle school educators. She shared strategies to:

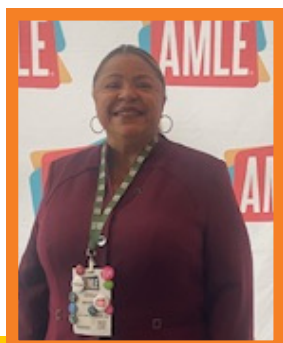
- **Increase Student Decision-Making and Self-Determination**
- **Develop Effective Transition Goals**
- **Maximize High School Entitlements to Build a Strong Foundation for Adulthood**

### Webinar Wednesday Series

The FY25 series focused on: Navigating New Changes in Medicaid and SSI and What You Need To Know, Navigating Limited Circumstances Where a Person Ages 18–21 May Receive DDD Services, Navigating Support Coordination in New Jersey's Adult Service System, Navigating Reverse Job Fairs, Navigating Financial Planning, Navigating College Options, and Navigating Community Based Instruction. More than 1200 people attended the webinars with another 495 viewing the recordings.

### Employment First Initiative

In its third and final year of a grant from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, PFAL offered the Employment First Initiative (EFI) as a statewide virtual summer school. EFI works with schools to provide an 8-10 week intensive experience for students to focus on employment. The EFI grant allowed for hiring a teacher to work with students on Why Work?, What am I Good At? How Can I find a Job, How Not to Get Fired, and other employment-related topics. Per the grant, EFI has focused on specific regions and worked with Edison Success Academy, Holmdel High School, Mastery High School and Burlington City High School.



**It's Time to Travel Guide and Online Videos**

- FREE Downloadable guide for students
- Fun videos of students answers





# The Criminal Justice Advocacy Program

Robyn Holt, Director

This year, the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program (CJAP) has made substantial strides in expanding its initiatives and community outreach, reinforcing its commitment to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the criminal justice system. Our key areas of focus included juvenile justice, research collaborations, training, outreach, and the development of law enforcement resources. Through these efforts, we have strengthened partnerships and broadened our impact on the justice system.

CJAP placed a strong emphasis on juvenile justice, particularly the intersection of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and IDD. We conducted 12 specialized trainings and presentations at universities such as Stockton, Rowan, and St. Elizabeth, covering topics like cultural competence, challenges in the justice system, diversion programs, as well as policy advocacy. In collaboration with Princeton University, we are developing a curriculum designed to equip future professionals with advocacy skills for youth with IDD. These initiatives aim to reduce recidivism and address the root causes of juvenile justice involvement.

Our outreach and training efforts have significantly increased, with 32 training sessions conducted for law enforcement, support coordinators, crisis specialists, educators, correctional staff, and community organizations. CJAP facilitated 10 Crisis Intervention Trainings (CIT) for law enforcement and first responders, preparing them with essential skills to engage with individuals with IDD. Additionally, we led 37 training initiatives on key topics including dual diagnosis of IDD and mental illness, highlighting the challenges faced by individuals with co-occurring conditions in the justice system. Key partnerships with forensic psychiatric facilities, such as Ann Klein Forensic Center, addressed competency restoration and IDD-specific accommodations. Court-focused training sessions were provided to newly appointed judges, municipal court staff, and legal professionals to enhance their understanding of IDD and best practices for supporting individuals with disabilities in legal proceedings. To further improve interactions between law enforcement and individuals with IDD, CJAP developed a Special Needs Registry training and manual, which will be distributed to all police departments in Middlesex County.

In the realm of thought leadership, the Director contributed to NJ Spotlight and has been invited to teach a Rutgers course on supporting individuals with IDD in the criminal justice system. Future publications will include contributions to Autism Spectrum News (Spring 2025), the Advancement of Forensic Studies (AIAFS), Forensics Mental Health Insider (FMHI), and Autism Advocate Parenting Magazine.

Looking ahead, CJAP plans to continue its juvenile justice initiatives, expand research into the lived experiences of individuals with IDD in the legal system, and strengthen academic partnerships, including collaborations with Seton Hall and international research groups in the UK. These research initiatives will focus on identifying systemic barriers and advocating for reforms, particularly in the impact of FASD on the justice system. This year's accomplishments reflect CJAP's unwavering dedication to expanding knowledge, improving justice system practices, and advocating for systemic reform.



**150 Clients**

were assisted by CJAP's advocacy efforts



**120 Meetings**

and appearances in court



**1,000+ Participants**

attended 10 Equal Justice Talks webinars

*Topics Included:*

- School-to-prison pipeline
- FASD
- Traumatic brain injury
- Intersection of IDD and criminal justice





# New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

Erin Smithers, Director

**Virtual Programming for Self-Advocates, Family Members, & Staff** The NJSAP team delivers digital content and advocacy education every weekday. We disseminate 1 monthly e-newsletter, *Positive Pulse* and 1 Monthly Blog Post, *Advocacy Matters*, as well as a bi-annual newsletter, *The Self-Advocate*. Thanks to the generosity of The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, the Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) continues to flourish. February 2024 - February 2025, the NJSAP team coordinated 535 virtual events for 9899 participants!

**Stay Healthy at Home Webinar Series** launched in April 2020 as a way of staying connected while day programs and schools are closed or operating at reduced capacity. The weekly series has reached 3,531 people thus far. Topics have included Consent, Employment Rights, Healthy Living, Mental Health and Dual Diagnosis, and Sexual Health to name just a few.

**Healthy Lifestyles Project: LIVE** launched in June 2020. These interactive workshops are held on Zoom twice each week and provide socio-educational experiences for students and adults with I/DD. These interactive topics include art therapy, music therapy, Zumba dance classes, personal training sessions, and a lot more.

**Brain Games** every Thursday at 1 PM on Zoom: Self-advocates are invited to play live, interactive board games with the NJSAP team. We test our creativity and knowledge, build communication and teamwork skills, and have fun! From February 2024 - February 2025 HLP:LIVE and Brain Games have reached 2848 Participants.

**Trailblazers** was a weekly virtual program created for people with disabilities to get more movement in their daily lives as well as learn how to set goals. The program started in 2023. From June 2024 to September 2024 we had 23 participants walk 5,637 miles!

**Empowered** was created in October 2023. It is a virtual, weekly cooperative tabletop roleplaying game that takes place over the winter. Empowered was designed to help develop important life skills in language, communication, self-awareness, and empathy. It also helps participants understand risk-taking and making choices. 12 Participants joined us on this campaign.

NJSAP also facilitates panels throughout the year, where advocates can talk about their lived experiences to students, families, professionals, other advocates, and other supports. From February 2024-February 2025 NJSAP facilitated 4 panels with 12 advocates, for 243 participants. The panelists talked about voting rights, guardianship, advocating opportunities, and experiences with Law Enforcement officers.

**NJSAP Wrap-Up** was started in August 2024. It is a monthly Facebook Live video series where the Director of NJSAP, Erin Smithers, briefly explains about a certain topic that would be of interest to NJSAP participants. The topics include NJSAP, advocacy, Healthy Lifestyles Programming, governmental affairs, social media, and Action Alerts. In total there have been 7 videos, with 969 views.

**17,111 Reached**

through group facilitation and workshops

**667 Attendees**

at 52 webinars

**607 Responses**

to I&R requests

**39,744 Reached**

through 230 Action Alerts and Email Blasts

Between February 2024 - February 2025, NJSAP's YouTube channel had **3381** New YouTube subscribers with a total of **963.7** watched hours

**10 Trainings**

Governmental Affairs Ambassador Program (GAAP) legislative advocacy trainings for **60** advocates

**488 Participants**

attended **49** NJSAP facilitated Self-Advocacy groups

# Project Hire

Colleen Collick, Director

In addition to providing thousands of hours of job development and supported employment services to people with disabilities, Project HIRE also engaged in:

## Project SEARCH:

Project SEARCH provides a select group of students with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive internship and training program at the Overlook Medical Center in Summit in place of their last year in high school. Interns for the 2024/2025 year are currently enrolled in their second rotation of internships at Overlook Medical Center. The first round of Interviews for the class of 2025/2026 have just been completed.

## Career Pathway Evaluation:

The Career Pathways Evaluation (CPE) is a service for those individuals who may be better served by an alternate approach to traditional evaluation methods. The CPE is a collaborative effort that affords the job coach and the consumer the opportunity to identify vocational interests, skills, and attributes that will lead to successful vocational planning. The intent is to carve a career pathway to competitive integrated employment. Services occur in the consumer's home, in the community and in competitive integrated employment settings. This program is currently in a Pilot phase that has been extended for a minimum of one year. Project Hire is the selected vendor in Middlesex county.

## Ticket to Work

In FY 2022, Project HIRE became a federal Ticket to Work provider. This program assists individuals who receive benefits from SSA to leave the benefit through gainful work and financial guidance. At the time of this publication, 3 Project HIRE staff members are certified as Work Incentive Practitioners. Not only is the program able to provide Ticket to Work services, but it utilizes knowledge from the certification process to better serve individuals in adult services.

23

field staff members

4.3

average years working for Project HIRE

13

NJ counties served

13,945

service hours logged

599

individuals served

67

new placements this year



# Training and Consultation Services

Samantha Goldfarb, Director

Training and Consultation Services (TCS) specializes in developing high-quality education and technical assistance related to supported employment. Our fully-customizable trainings help providers develop the skills they need to perform at high standards and teach advocates how to best benefit from this service. TCS is also available to consult on any questions or concerns related to DDD-funded supported employment in New Jersey.

**62** Training Sessions  
& 9 service consults

**150** Direct Provider Support

**24** Agencies Supported  
including eight that began receiving support in FY 25

TCS also developed eight new trainings, all of which were requested or inspired by the needs of supported agencies. Topics of the new trainings include helping clients prepare for service graduation; travel training for supported employment; and self-management strategies for field staff. TCS continues to provide weekly virtual office hours, monthly public training sessions, and three monthly newsletters to maximize the accessibility and outreach of its services.

Additionally, The TCS director developed and presented a workshop titled "Collaboration Destination: Building Relationships in our Communities" for the 2024 Facing The Future conference. This allowed TCS to provide 104 attendees with information and practical strategies for creating and strengthening an agency's supports within their community. The TCS director also joined New Jersey APSE's Board of Directors and became a co-chair of their Professional Development Committee as well as remaining active on their Conference Planning committee.



## Wings For All

The Arc of NJ was proud to co-host a Wings for All program on December 7, at Newark Liberty International Airport. This incredible event provides a simulated run-through of the airport experience to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in navigating the air travel process. The event included a pseudo-rehearsal of the airport experience, including a simulated security screening, a terminal walkthrough, and the boarding process. Thanks to all of our partners who were integral in making the event such a success, including our co-host, The Arc of Essex County.



# SVPP Sexual Violence Prevention Project

The Sexual Violence Prevention Project finished its work on December 30, 2024. After 2 years of grant funded activities, Project Coordinator Jennifer Harrison was pleased to report a number of innovative and creative activities geared toward reducing the incidence of sexual violence against people with IDD. These activities include:

**Ponder** – An interactive game to help people with IDD negotiate decision-making.

**Spilt Milk** – An interactive and educational emotion-regulation tool to help people with IDD practice relaxing in tough situations.

**Sexual Education Curriculum** – a 10-lesson sexual education curriculum for people with IDD to be used by educators or by families at home. The curriculum features 10 lessons, corresponding worksheets and educational videos. The curriculum is available on the SVPP website.

**Resources** – The Project Coordinator researched a variety of resources related to sexual violence prevention including hotlines, advocacy programs and legal services, as well as videos on a number of topics. All are posted on the SVPP website.

**AWARE Program** – the Project Coordinator researched, developed and implemented the A.W.A.R.E. program which educates attorneys about people with IDD and gives them critical tools to assist in their advocacy on behalf of their clients with IDD.

**Police CAR** – the Project Coordinator collaborated with The Arc of NJ Criminal Justice Advocacy Program to develop this tool to educate police officers about people with IDD. The SVPP Coordinator contributed materials regarding sexual violence prevention for people with IDD.

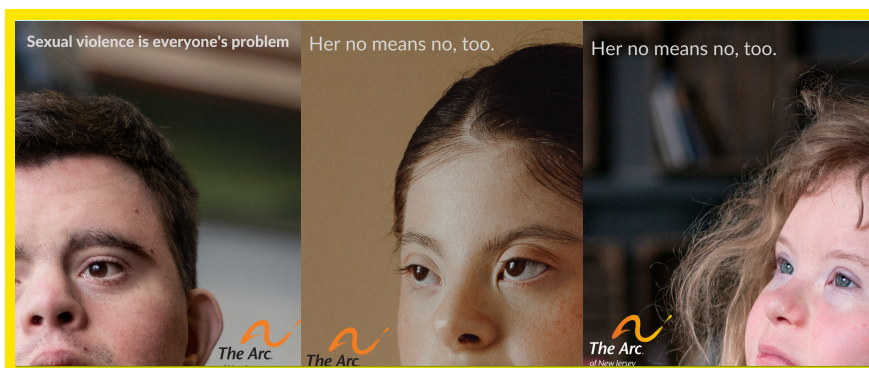
**SART A.I.D.** – the Project developed educational materials for SART teams (Sexual Assault Response Teams) to help them identify victims with IDD and ensure they are appropriately supported.

**Website** – The Sexual Violence Prevention Project website was created and includes links to activities as well as a community blog.

**Speaking engagements** – the Project Coordinator conducted in-person presentations regarding the SVPP and keeping people with IDD safe to Special Education Parents Groups and college students studying to become special educators.

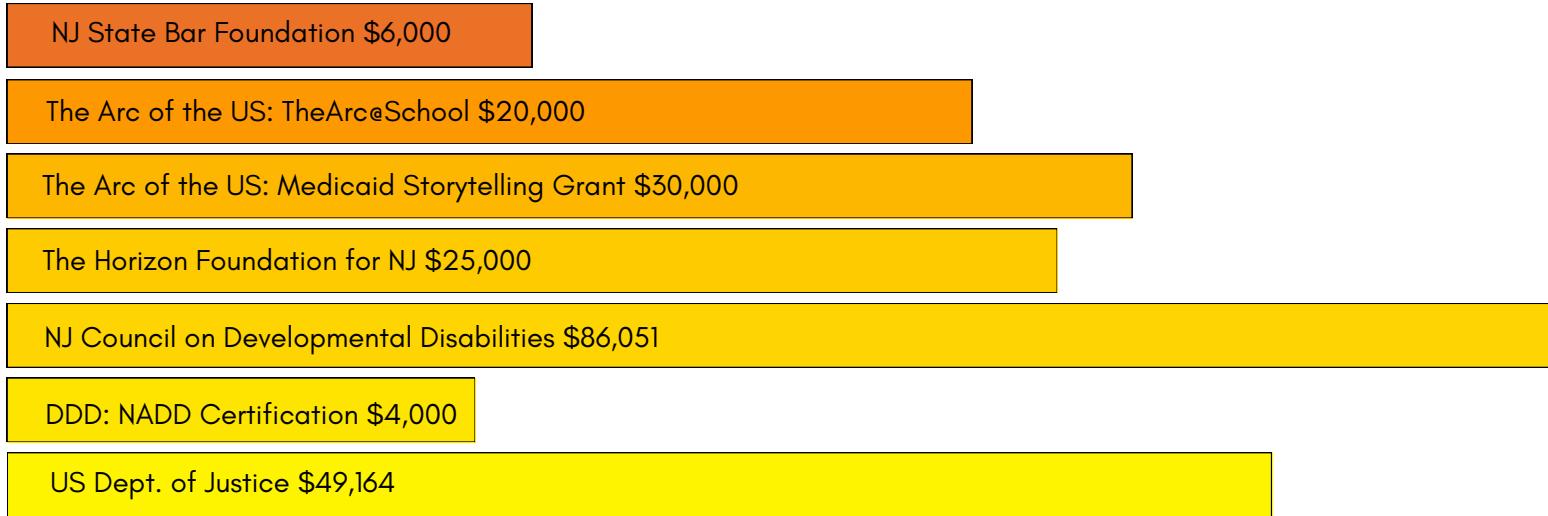
**Public Policy** – the Project Director worked with the Governmental Affairs Director of The Arc of NJ to develop a policy white paper addressing students in special education and their access to appropriate health and sex education curricula in school.

**Posters** – posters were developed with the message that sexual violence can happen to anyone, regardless of disability, and that people with IDD should have the education and support to say “no” the same as anyone without a disability. The posters were distributed to high schools across the state.



# Fundraising

## Grants



## Fundraising

75th Anniversary Gala and Campaign: \$75,780  
General Donations: \$27,074  
Annual Appeal: \$26,201

## Communications

**For The Arc of NJ, not including The Arc Family Institute or Planning for Adult Life:**

Website visitors - 61,900  
Pages viewed - 136,203  
Website downloads - 10,245  
Facebook followers - 4,800  
Mailing list - 4,500  
X Followers - 3,349

# Finance and Human Resources

**Helen Rivera, Director, Administrative Services**

- The Finance Department prepared the FY 2026 proposed budget and it will be presented at the Annual Meeting for approval.
- The FY 2024 audit of our financial statements was completed. There were no findings discovered.
- The Arc of NJ staff completed the FY 2024 audit for NJ Camp Jaycee and no findings were discovered.
- The Arc of NJ employed 53 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 2024.
- The agency Personnel Policies were revised to meet current legal requirements.
- Administered the Student Loan Forgiveness Program: Fourteen Local County Chapters are participating in the program.



In 2024, The Arc of New Jersey celebrated 75 years of services and supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The rich history of the organization, the dedication of its founding families and the advocacy efforts of its members and staff were celebrated throughout the year.

On June 13, 2024, The Arc of New Jersey hosted a grand 75th Anniversary Gala where we celebrated the history of the organization and honored very special 75th Anniversary awardees. More than 280 guests attended the event which featured guest speakers, a video on the history of The Arc of New Jersey and congratulatory videos from Governor Phil Murphy, Senator Cory Booker and Congressman Tom Kean Jr. Our 75th Anniversary honorees included Governor Phil Murphy, Barbara Coppens, Laura Williams, Leone Murphy, the firm of Hinkle Prior & Fischer PC and Pamela Corrigan. A special recognition was made to the Legacy Families of The Arc with a tribute video.

*The Arc*

On September 30, 2024, The Arc of New Jersey was presented with a joint Senate/Assembly resolution on the floor of the Senate, honoring the work of the organization and recognizing its 75th Anniversary.





# Committees, Taskforces and Workgroups

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
APCO Mental Health Working Group  
Atlantic County CIACC  
Atlantic County Youth Services Commission  
Bergen County CIACC  
Boggs Center Consumer Advisory Committee  
Bridging IDD and Aging- NJCDD  
Burlington County Partnership for Youth Success  
Camden County CIACC  
Cape May County CIACC  
CAT- Center for Adult Transition Advisory Board  
CIT Stakeholders  
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates  
DDAN Children and Youth Issues  
DDD Leadership Committee  
Developmental Disabilities Advocacy Network  
Educational Partnership  
Envisioning the Best Life at All Life Stages  
State Action Team  
ESSA Stakeholder Focus Group  
Essex County CIACC  
Future is Now Train the Trainer  
Gloucester County CIACC  
Gun Violence Prevention Advisory Board - Camden County  
Hudson County CIACC  
Hunterdon CIACC  
Medicaid Monitoring and Storytelling  
Medicaid Eligibility Topics Biweekly, chaired by Medicaid Director  
Medicare and Medicaid Integration Workgroup, hosted by Justice in Aging  
Medicare Partners  
Monmouth County CIACC

Monmouth County CIACC - IDD Subcommittee  
Monmouth County Education Partnership Committee  
National Association of Social Workers - NJ Chapter  
National Conference of Executives of The Arc (NCE)  
NJ APSE Board of Directors  
NJ APSE Conference Committee  
NJ APSE Membership and Outreach Committee  
NJ APSE Professional Development Committee  
NJ Business and Industry Association  
NJ Coalition for Special Education Funding Reform  
NJ Community of Practice State Action Team.  
NJ Conference of Executives of The Arc (NJCEArc)  
NJ Dental Association Oral Health Coalition  
NJ Special Education Advisory Stakeholder Outreach  
NJ WorkAbility Communications Workgroup  
NJCDD Children & Youth Subcommittee  
NJCEArc Development Directors Group  
NJCEArc Finance Directors Group  
NJCEArc Technology Committee  
Ocean County Blue Envelope Rollout Committee  
Restraint and Seclusion Stakeholder Group  
Somerset CIACC  
Somerset Youth Services Commission  
SPAN Parent Training Information Stakeholder Advisory Council  
Supportive Housing Association of NJ  
The Arc@School  
The Human Services Equity Coalition  
Transition Leadership Network  
TriCounty CIACC



