



HERALD

A MESSAGE FROM THE Acting Executive Director



Lauren Panarella

As we celebrate 35 years of service for individuals with disabilities in Somerset County, I invite you to reflect on the theme of our 2007 Arc Angel Gala, "A Wonderful Life." If we were to examine our own lives, some of us may consider a wonderful life watching our children grow and develop. Others may think of having a home -- a place to gather with loved ones and friends. Still others may think of enjoying a career that allows them to make a difference in the world and, at the same time, provide for their family. At The Arc of Somerset County, we are committed to providing everyone with an opportunity to experience all of these joys. Below are just a few examples of how we accomplish this.

At Camp Jotoni – Campers returning each year to reunite with friends for a summer of enrichment and fun.

Through the Parent and Children Together Program – Families with limited financial resources enjoying a network of support systems that assist them in overcoming the challenges of everyday life.

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The Arc of Somerset Receives \$92,000 Grant From the United Way

The Arc of Somerset County received a \$92,000 general operating grant from the United Way to support the programs highlighted below.

- **Parents and Children Together (PACT)** is the only community-based in-home parenting education program in Somerset County for impoverished families headed by adults with developmental disabilities. PACT's goal is to strengthen families by preventing child abuse and neglect, psychiatric hospitalizations/re-admissions, the loss of affordable housing, out-of-home placements and/or crisis respite, alcohol and substance abuse. The program also aims to keep children physically and emotionally healthy, and to keep them on track with their education.
- **The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center's** preschool and developmental daycare programs provide educational and therapeutic services for families and their children who have developmental disabilities, or who are at risk of developmental delays. Preschool services are provided to children of all abilities who are 3 to 5 years old. The pre-



At Jerry Davis, children with disabilities have the opportunity to socialize with their typically developing peers.

school program offers a full-day program five days a week, and gives children with disabilities the opportunity to socialize with their typically developing peers. Daycare services are provided to children from 3 months to 6 years old.

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A Message from Edmond A. Brown, President

Dear Friends,

We have reached that time again when everyone is focused on **giving** as part of the holiday spirit. Webster's dictionary defines giving as 1) to make a present of (as in a gift for a child), 2) to grant or bestow by formal action (as in right to vote), and 3) to put in the possession of another.

Whether you decide to give your time, money or assistance, one thing will be for sure: Those individuals will have more of that which they did not originally have. There are so many things that can be given, even if they are just words of kindness, appreciation, and moral support.



Edmond A. Brown

We are focusing on giving better quality services to our consumers and their families, giving donors more ways and reasons to support our causes, and giving our employees more reasons to do a great job and stay with us to enhance their careers.

Giving is very personal. Find your reason.

Best holiday wishes to all.

Warmest regards,

Edmond A. Brown

P.S. For those who would like to make a donation, an envelope has been enclosed. Thank you for all that you do for The Arc of Somerset County.

The Arc of Somerset Mission

The Arc of Somerset County helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families* realize their dreams by providing lifelong advocacy and quality services. We also promote the prevention of developmental disabilities.

*The word *families* includes all biological family members, as well as friends, caregivers, guardians, and advocates.

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Alfie DeMoss Is Named Director of Development

"I am thrilled to announce that Alfie DeMoss has joined The Arc of Somerset County as Director of Development," said Lauren Panarella, Acting Executive Director. Alfie started on November 5 and after only two weeks on the job, she praised her colleagues as exceptional. "The fact that so many staff members have worked at The Arc of Somerset for decades is a testament to what this organization stands for," Alfie said.



Alfie DeMoss

With 12 years of experience in fundraising and development, Alfie describes The Arc as a "phenomenal" organization that provides people who have developmental disabilities with health, education, career, and family services. "It's so important for all people to realize their full potential," Alfie said. "The Arc is instrumental in providing individuals with the tools they need to achieve that."

As Director of Development, Alfie's goals are ambitious. She intends to do all she can to support administrators, board members, and colleagues in raising The Arc's profile. "It's critical to spread the word about the good work we're

doing here," Alfie said, "and to raise the funds needed to grow our programs, particularly those geared toward the medically fragile within our community."

Alfie became a proponent of humanitarian causes while traveling and working in Africa. Over a period of 12 years, she served as a Peace Corps volunteer in East Africa, taught English as a second language in West Africa, and raised funds to support the medical training of doctors in South Africa.

In the United States, Alfie's previous positions include Vice President of Medical Education for South African Blacks (MESAB); Fundraising Consultant for Adventures in Health, Education and Agricultural Development (AHEAD) headquartered in Rockville, MD; Director of Funds Development for the Urban League of Essex County in Newark; and Director of Development and Alumni Relations for the American Boychoir School in Princeton.

Alfie holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Wellesley College, and is currently pursuing an MBA at the Rutgers Business School. Said Lauren, "I know that Alfie's experience and enthusiasm will be a great asset to all of us at The Arc of Somerset County."

Welcome Alfie!

Tara Abbott Is Promoted To Assistant Director of Development

"I am delighted to announce the promotion of Tara Abbott to the position of Assistant Director of Development," said Lauren Panarella, Acting Executive Director. "Tara has been working diligently for the past three months, and despite the absence of a Director of Development, has kept the department on a progressive path."

Tara is grateful for the promotion and pleased to have had the opportunity to learn and perform such a wide variety of functions. "The exposure and experience has been really valuable," Tara said. "It feels especially good to have earned the trust and appreciation of my



Tara Abbott

colleagues." In her new position, Tara plans to support and streamline fundraising practices as well as the donor recognition and solicitation processes.

Tara has experience in marketing, business analysis, customer service, and volunteer management. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Management with a minor in Economics from Penn State University.

Said Lauren, "I look forward to Alfie and Tara using their combined experiences and knowledge to the benefit of the consumers and families we serve."

Congratulations Tara!

Karen Stanchak to Coordinate Individual Habilitation Program

Karen Stanchak has been promoted to Individual Habilitation Program (IHP) Coordinator, a newly created position. In announcing the promotion, Acting Executive Director Lauren Panarella praised Karen for her “exemplary administrative skills, strong leadership capabilities, and deep commitment to people with developmental disabilities and their families.”

As IHP Coordinator, Karen will participate in annual meetings to learn what each consumer hopes to accomplish over the coming year. “I get to hear firsthand what individuals want to do to make their lives more fulfilled,” Karen said. “And I get to support that.”

Karen’s past experience as Residential Manager of the Ardsley Group Home in Hillsborough will be particularly useful in



Karen Stanchak

recommending appropriate opportunities for recreation and education. Most important to Karen is being a good listener – to understand exactly what each individual hopes to achieve.

“There are so many consumers,” Karen said. “Someone needs to ensure that an IHP Plan is completed for each one of them within the designated time.”

Looking forward to the transition, Lauren noted Karen’s excellent people skills and enthusiasm.

Anyone who has questions about IHP is urged to call Karen at 908-240-4362.

Congratulations Karen!

United Way, continued from page 1

- **Camp Jotoni** is situated on an approximately 150-acre site in Warren NJ. It has five cabins, a dining hall with kitchen, three pavilions, two bathhouses, a swimming pool, and several activity buildings. The camp provides meaningful summer recreation programs for children and adults who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through residential camping, respite care is provided to ease the stress of families serving as caregivers 24/7. Various programs enable campers to grow physically, socially, and emotionally through outdoor recreation experiences. These programs include swimming, arts and crafts, music, physical education, nature, drama, games, and special events.

Additionally, The Arc of Somerset has applied for a \$46,807 grant from Johnson & Johnson (J&J) and a \$5,298 grant from HSBC. The J&J grant would be used to expand the safety surface areas at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center to include portable safety mats and outdoor safety flooring for a second area of the playground. It would also be used to purchase additional therapeutic equipment for the growing number of children who are physically and medically fragile. Adding to Jerry Davis’ safety and prevention measures during therapeutic sessions, physical activities, and enrichment programs will not only increase the children’s quality of life, but it will maximize their potential for growth.

The \$5,298 grant from HSBC would be used to save energy and reduce The Arc’s \$212,000 energy costs. This would be accomplished by replacing high-bay light



At Camp Jotoni, consumers are provided with meaningful summer recreation programs.

fixtures in workshop areas with energy-efficient lamps and ballasts, and by installing energy saving light bulbs in all residential areas. The light bulbs will be purchased from a vendor who has agreed to donate a portion of the total cost.

Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center Fulfills a Unique and Vital Niche

The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center fills a unique and vital niche for children with developmental disabilities. Many of the children who attend Jerry Davis have special medical requirements that call for careful monitoring. "Even school districts that support children with disabilities utilize our services for medically fragile students or those with therapeutic needs beyond the districts' capabilities," said Lauren Panarella, Acting Executive Director.

Some of the children who attend Jerry Davis have to be tube fed. Others are kept on a restricted diet. "Doctors don't want one of our students anywhere near typical foods," said Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services. "If he has a seizure, we have a registered nurse on site who can respond immediately."

Added Lauren, "Our goal is to provide our children with the intensive support they need and get them back into the school district. Addressing a child's medical needs allows the educational process to move forward with greater success."

Presently, only one child in Jerry Davis' Preschool Disabled Class is ambulatory. The others have to be lifted or moved by a staff member. "Some of our children don't have control over their arms and legs," Laura noted. "Positioning children properly assists them with eating, making appropriate sounds, and grasping something with their hands."

For many children, optimal development wouldn't be possible without the specialized services and adaptive equipment Jerry Davis provides. The teachers at Jerry Davis are licensed and certified in both early and special education. The Center's staff also includes physical, occupational, and speech therapists as well as a social worker and teacher assistants.

Corporations, such as ORTHO-McNEIL, provide Jerry Davis with adaptive equipment – such as padded floors – or the funds to purchase such items.

With the \$48,000 raised at this year's Tea with Honey fundraiser, staff members bought additional adaptive equipment, such as CDs and high-performance headphones designed to improve concentration and auditory abilities as part of the Listening Program.

The Rifton Company lent The Arc a tricycle that enabled little Natalia to fulfill her dream of riding a bicycle, just like

her typically developing sister. The tricycle compensated for Natalia's lack of muscle control, with a cushion to position her head, a vest to secure her body, Velcro-strapped pedals to hold her feet, and a lead bar for therapists to pull. Persevering with practicing on the tricycle, in only a month, Natalia was peddling up and down the halls of Jerry Davis.

"Watching typically developing children increases a child's motivation to learn," Laura explained. That's why Jerry Davis makes sure that, whenever possible, developmentally delayed students are integrated into activities with the typically developing children in the Center's Private Preschool. Some of these activities include the Library Program and Circle Time. Also popular at Jerry Davis are adaptive swimming and class trips.

"Regardless of their needs, all children benefit from a low staff-to-child ratio – and the personal attention that they receive," Laura said. Instrumental programs at Jerry Davis include Early

Intervention – which begins at birth and is provided at the infant's home or at a location convenient for the family, Developmental Daycare, Private Preschool, Preschool Disabled, and Parents and Children Together (PACT).

"Early intervention and a high frequency of occupational, therapeutic, physical, and speech therapy have proven to make a huge difference in helping children realize their full potential," Laura said. "The first years of development are so important."

Families and school districts that require professional and affordable care are welcome to visit Jerry Davis and observe classes in action. "We do amazing work here," Lauren said, laughing almost apologetically for her unabashed enthusiasm. "We have experienced a high rate of success in mainstreaming children with disabilities back into their school districts." For more information, call The Arc of Somerset County at 908-725-2266.



A therapeutic rocking horse teaches motion and balance.

The Listening Program improves concentration and auditory abilities.





Costumed Trick-or-Treaters Haunt The Arc of Somerset for Halloween

During Halloween weekend, The Arc of Somerset County headquarters in Manville was full of miniature ghosts, goblins, witches, and other creatures of the night. The haunting began on Friday, October 26 from 6 to 9 p.m., when costumed revelers attended a Halloween party as part of the Kids Night Out Program. "We had a good turnout," said Elizabeth Sanford, Coordinator of Kids Night Out. Revelers from 3- to 12-years-old danced, played games, dressed a mummy in toilet paper, and watched the Disney movie, Cars. "We ended up with toilet paper everywhere," Elizabeth said, laughing. "The kids were having so much fun. No one wanted to go home, even though, by the end of the night, some of them were pretty tired."



On Halloween morning, students from the Preschool and Daycare classes at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center also donned costumes and went trick-or-treating to The Arc's administrative offices and neighboring businesses such as Towne Centre Hardware, Midtown Gourmet, and Dunkin' Donuts.

"We called everyone beforehand to let them know the children were coming," said Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services, "and encouraged staff and neighbors to offer healthy snacks, such as pretzels. Some of our children can't eat candy." Many parents accompanied their children as they went door-to-door, reaching for treasured goodies with wide-eyed pleasure. "Everyone had a really good time," Laura said.

Jerry Davis Receives \$5,000 Gagnon Foundation Grant

The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center received a \$5,000 Gagnon Foundation Grant for training that will allow therapists to offer children an even wider range of services. Among those services is the Miller Method for treating children diagnosed with autism and other developmental disabilities. Said Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services, "Children diagnosed with autism benefit from a variety of techniques. Yet it is rare for schools and agencies to offer more than Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). We find that offering options

and combining approaches is the best way to reach the most children, and it's more effective."

In addition, the grant will provide funding to train several therapists in the Listening Program Technique designed to meet the sensory integration needs of children who experience auditory processing issues. "Having these therapeutic modalities available to the children we serve can only enhance their development," Laura said.

New Job Contracts Are High Volume and Ongoing

DID YOU KNOW... that consumers at all of our Production Centers are busily engaged in contract work that is ongoing? Arc employees at Green Brook and Gannett are assembling repair kits for Oticon; at Valley Park, they are organizing employee benefit folders for Chubb; and at Branchburg, they are completing projects for TRIMLINE Medical Products, VitaKraft, Niagara Conservation, and Stoelzle-Oberlgas.

DID YOU KNOW... that we have been assembling 5,000 energy conservation kits each week for Niagara Conservation, a nationwide supplier? Arc employees are also prepping 200,000 makeup bottles each month for Stoelzle-Oberlgas, in support of L'Oreal, a leading cosmetic company.

DID YOU KNOW... the Trimline team is now producing, on average, more than 11,000 assembled blood pressure tube and connector sets every day? One team member produced an all-time high of 4,000 sets in one day. Congratulations to the consumers and staff!

DID YOU KNOW... that sales of Arc products through state set-aside programs exceeded \$20,000 during the past two months, resulting in net profits of more than \$2,000? These funds are now available to support Arc programs.

DID YOU KNOW... that revenues for Employment Services reached a record high during the 2006 - 2007 fiscal year?

DID YOU KNOW... that we are always looking for additional projects for our Production Centers? Those who need help with work projects should contact Britt Blomgren, Contract Sales Manager, at 908-707-0920 or brittb@thearcofsomerset.org.

LEARN MORE... The Arc of Somerset County employs more than 200 adults with developmental disabilities in four local production centers. Our diverse workforce provides services to an equally diverse customer base ranging from pharmaceutical marketing and medical device companies to food service, pet products, financial services, hardware sub-assembly, energy conservation, cosmetics, and direct mail businesses.

Employment Services is committed to providing our customers with a reliable and cost-effective alternative to in-house assembly, packaging, cleaning, mail handling, and light office tasks. Companies that recognize The Arc's contribution increase the visibility of consumers within the community.

Charlotte Hayden Receives National RCEP Certification



Charlotte Hayden

Charlotte Hayden, Assistant Director of Employment Services, received national certification from the Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP) for Region II, which consists of New York, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico. The certification ensures that Charlotte is following best practices in the field of supported employment. Said Christopher Corvino, Director of Employment Services, "Charlotte goes out of her way to provide and

receive training for an enormously varied population. Individuals receiving services from Supported Employment may have multiple needs, preferences, and diagnoses. Because the population is so diverse, Charlotte has made it a priority to seek training beyond traditional, center-based work. She has consulted with mental health practitioners and professionals who support people with needs that extend beyond developmental disabilities."

To achieve certification, Charlotte participated in eight one-to-two-day seminars at the State University of New York in Buffalo, the coordinator for Region II. Presently all 15 of Charlotte's direct reports are participating in the RCEP program. Four of them are nearly finished and expected to receive certification soon.

Said Charlotte, "Eventually I want all of our coaches at The Arc of Somerset to be certified. It's important for our consumers and their caregivers to know that we are following best practices – pointing employees in the right direction."

Indeed, RCEP certification means that The Arc of Somerset County is on the leading edge of career development and teaching within the community.

Said Christopher, "Charlotte has set high training standards for herself and her staff. She keeps extending her knowledge and keeping it current with what is happening in the field. Her certification is a credit to her own initiative, but also to our department and to the entire Arc of Somerset County."

Congratulations Charlotte.

The Lions Club Donates 16 Thanksgiving Baskets

The Lions Club of Warren Township generously donated 16 Thanksgiving baskets to The Arc of Somerset County – 14 for the group homes and two for participants in the Family Support Services Program. Each of the baskets contained enough goodies to prepare an enormous Thanksgiving feast, including a turkey, stuffing, sweet potatoes, vegetables, bread, and pumpkin pie. Said a pleased Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services, “In addition, the Lions Club gave us bags of extra food in case we needed it. The residents and staff were thrilled!”

Thank you, members of the Lions Club, for making this Thanksgiving holiday a culinary delight for many happy recipients.



Laffoon Family Donates a Week at Condo So Residents Can Holiday in Hatteras

The Laffoon family again donated a seven-day holiday at their condo on the outer banks of Hatteras, NC, making it possible for Arc residents to enjoy a much-appreciated vacation. Said Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services, “This was a great opportunity for people who otherwise wouldn’t be able to afford a vacation.”

Five consumers from the Griggstown Group Home and the Commons Apartments in Bridgewater traveled to

Hatteras in October. Last year, six other consumers from the Commons Apartments and the Warren Group Home vacationed at the condo. “Every one of them – including the staff – loved it,” Chris said. “No one wanted to come home. One resident, Burt, saved everything from the ferry stub to a map of the places they visited.”

A BIG thank you to the Laffoon family for donating lifelong memories and lingering smiles.



The lighthouse at Cape Hatteras, NC.

The Spirit of Giving Came Early To The Arc of Somerset County

ORTHO-CLINICAL DIAGNOSTICS • SANOFI-AVENTIS • TIBOTEC THERAPEUTICS • BIOVAIL PHARMACEUTICALS

Thanks to the generosity of several organizations, the spirit of giving brought peace and joy to The Arc of Somerset County as early as September. Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, sanofi-aventis, Tibotec Therapeutics, and Biovail Pharmaceuticals all participated in the United Way's Days of Caring from September through November. Dozens of volunteers visited The Arc's homes and offices and left them with sparkling windows, spotless carpeting, walls gleaming with fresh paint and more. When consumers at the Cedar Grove Group Home stepped into their newly renovated kitchen – complete with new vinyl flooring – they gasped, “W-o-w!”

Following are details of these devoted volunteers' initiatives.

- On September 18 at the Cedar Grove Group Home in Branchburg, Vinal Patel and a team of 15 volunteers from **Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics** removed hardware on the kitchen cabinets and painted them, repaired holes in the walls, painted the kitchen, and even installed a new vinyl floor. They also painted the living room.
- On October 12 at The Arc of Somerset headquarters in Manville, David Royack and a dozen volunteers from **sanofi-aventis** refurbished the Finance office. In preparation, Arc staff moved heavy file cabinets and desks away from walls that hadn't seen fresh paint in 20 years. The volunteers not only painted the walls and stairwell, but repaired broken molding and installed a kick-plate on the door.
- On October 19 at Camp Jotoni in Warren, more than 60 volunteers led by Nicole Burricelli, Kim Cumber, and Megan Dubrowski from **Tibotec Therapeutics** braved the rain and neatened up the camp, painted cabins, repaired loose railings, replaced a broken door jam, and installed locks on an outhouse door.
- On November 2 at the South Street Supervised Apartments in Manville, Melissa Wade and volunteers from **Biovail Pharmaceuticals** rolled up their sleeves and steam cleaned carpets, washed windows, and pressure-washed the building's exterior. Some of the volunteers came from as far away as Pennsylvania.

Rick Vohden, the last volunteer to leave the Cedar Grove Group Home on September 18, was packing away his tools when consumers walked into their newly renovated kitchen for the first time. Witnessing the residents' pleasure made him realize the positive influence volunteering has on the everyday lives of consumers and staff.

Tibotec Therapeutics volunteers braved the rain to work at Camp Jotoni.

Said Tara Abbott, Assistant Director of Development, “No one is required to participate in Days of Caring. These volunteers are busy professionals. For so many of them to get away and do chores that most of us dread at home – knowing that their work at the office or laboratory is backing up – says something about their character.”

Thank you volunteers.



Neighbors Ensure Ardsley Group Home Residents Are Integrated into the Community

In October, a group of neighbors led by Dave Coder visited the Ardsley Group Home in Hillsborough and asked if they could offer assistance. When Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services, suggested painting, the neighbors were happy to oblige.

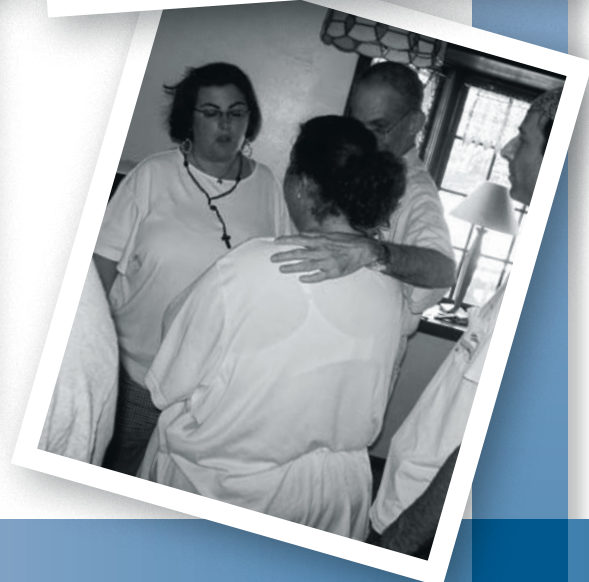
It all started when Boyd Hannold, Senior Pastor of the Princeton Alliance Church in Hillsborough, encouraged parishioners to become more involved in their communities. "Now the parishioners are talking about having a party at the Ardsley Group Home over the holidays," said Chris. Moreover, they intend to volunteer their services on a regular basis.

"We don't want to be in and out of there once because it makes us feel good," Pastor Hannold said. "This is not about us. This is about the residents at the Ardsley Group Home...what they need and want."

Pastor Hannold wants to get to know the residents, and develop a relationship with them. He finds their company very rewarding. "They are so appreciative," he said. "And they seemed to love having us around. The next time we visit, we'd like to bring goodies and have some fun."

Chris Gunning is thrilled. "We would like to see more of this," he said. "It's so important for our residents to be accepted and integrated into the community."

Thank you parishioners of the Princeton Alliance Church. Your neighbors at the Ardsley Group Home look forward to your future visits.



Plainfield Youth Corps Helps Renovate Union Avenue Apartments

The Plainfield Chapter of the New Jersey Youth Corps is giving the Union Avenue Apartments in Bridgewater a much-needed painting as well as renovations. Said Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services. "We've been in desperate need of renovations at the apartments for a long time."

Funding provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development isn't enough to adequately maintain the facility. Consequently, Chris and his staff have to be creative in finding additional funding resources.

"Presently we're applying for a community development block grant to install doors leading from each of the first-floor apartments directly to the outside sidewalk," Chris said. "None of

the residents on the first floor are completely ambulatory. Most are in a wheelchair or use a walker. The doors are necessary to speed up evacuation in case of an emergency."

Meanwhile, Chris and his staff are extremely grateful to the Plainfield Chapter of the New Jersey Youth Corps for helping to keep the Union Avenue Apartments in good repair for the 16 residents who live there. A special thank you, also, to Olga Terry, who was so grateful to The Arc for the services received by her late daughter, Mary Ellen, that she and her friends donated enough money for Residential Services to buy a commercial washer and dryer for the building. Their thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Individuals and Teams Honored As Instrumental To Walkathon's Success



Barbara Cornelius

Those who played an important part in the success of the Step Up for The Arc Walkathon in May were honored at The Arc of Somerset County's 2007 Expo, Election, and Awards celebration in June, and at The Arc of New Jersey's annual awards dinner in November. Honored were Eric Mandelbaum as Top Individual Fundraiser, Barbara Cornelius as Top Individual Consumer Fundraiser, the Inzitari

Family as Top Family Team, and the Free and Accepted Masons, District 12, as Top Community Team.

"We thank all of our supporters again for their service to The Arc," said Lauren Panarella, Acting Executive Director. "We couldn't have done it without them."



Top Community Team: Free and Accepted Masons, District 12.



New Arc Residents Are Welcomed

Three newcomers have moved into The Arc of Somerset's group homes or apartments:

- Karen Komar moved into the Mobus Group Home in North Plainfield, from the Respite Group Home in Hillsborough.
- Gloria Kostuk moved into the Union Avenue Apartments in Bridgewater, from her mother's home in Manville.
- James Rotola moved into the supported living apartment in Rocky Hill, from his grandmother's house in Plainfield.

We welcome Karen, Gloria, and James into The Arc community.

Single Parent Needs Car To Transport Daughter

A single parent who drives her daughter to The Arc of Somerset County where she receives medical assistance and daily support services is in dire need of a vehicle. "The mother is very independent and asks for nothing," said Mary Atchey, Assistant Director of Family Support Services. "She is a consumer and works for The Arc, but her income is minimal. She is getting older and having more medical issues." The single parent's station wagon is over 30 years old and always in need of service. While a friend of The Arc has been providing free repairs to keep the station wagon running, he is worried that the car

won't pass the Division of Motor Vehicle's inspection on February 8.

"If the car fails inspection, the mom will no longer be able to take her daughter to medical appointments, to The Arc for support services, or even buy groceries," said Mary. She continues, "The single parent also transports her daughter to all Arc recreational events. She is so giving and generous, yet she doesn't have enough money to give to herself." To donate a new or used but reliable vehicle, please call Mary Atchey at 908-725-8544, ext. 624.

The Arc of Somerset Is Honored as a Leader In Implementing Therap Services

The Arc of Somerset County was featured in the Fall issue of *Insight*, the newsletter of The Arc of the United States, as a leader in implementing Therap Services, a secure state-of-the-art Internet application that is extremely helpful to those who serve people with developmental disabilities. Interviewed were Karen Ennis, Director of Continuous Improvement, and Jesica Dominguez, Therap Administrative Assistant, both of whom have become spokespersons for Therap Services. "We were pioneers in using the system and it's really working for us – it's making life easier for the staff," Jesica said.

In November, Karen and Jesica gave a workshop at the Therap conference for Provider Administrators in Southbury, CT. According to Jesica, Provider Administrators are the power behind the scenes when it comes to staff training. Karen and Jesica spoke about how the Web-based application has improved both the quality of Arc services as well agency-wide communication. Said Jesica, "It feels great to be able to give other people tips on how to train their staff, and to know we can be so helpful."

To date, 330 staff members at The Arc of Somerset have completed computer training and gone live with Therap Services. This includes Direct Support Professionals who work with consumers and representatives from development and human resources. "We've received amazingly positive feedback from all of the participants in our pilot programs," Karen said.

For The Arc of Somerset, Therap Services has become a draw for prospective staff members. Known to greatly streamline operations, the application provides staff with instant access to consumers' healthcare records, making it easier and faster to follow up on support needs, recurring medical issues, incidents, and individual service plans.

"It all about our consumers," Jesica said. "The bottom line is that Therap Services reduces time spent on paperwork, and gives staff more time to spend one-on-one with consumers." Anyone who has questions about Therap Services is welcome to contact Jesica Dominguez at 908-725-8544, ext. 611, or Karen Ennis at ext. 612.

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At the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center – Seeing a child with developmental disabilities walk for the first time without assistance, or hearing toddlers say their first words, or watching a child begin to communicate or maneuver a wheelchair. It also means watching children of all abilities learn, play, and grow together.

Through Residential Services – An adult who has disabilities holding the keys to his own apartment, where he can engage with the community independently. It also means giving adults the opportunity to live with friends in a house where they can share laughter, holidays, and celebrations.

Through Employment Services – Providing adults who have special needs with work skills, competitive employment, a paycheck, and the joy of making friends at work.

Through Family Support Services – Always having someone available to answer questions, secure financial resources, or listen to families who are providing care 24/7.

It is our Mission to help those with disabilities “learn to live their dreams.” Thanks to support from partners like you, we are able to pursue this Mission. I am grateful to know that we can count on corporations, organizations, and families to continue our work. Your contribution – whether it be time, energy, or funding – gives us the ability to assist people with developmental disabilities. Without you, we would not be able to make a difference in so many lives.

As you enjoy the festivities over this holiday season, please take a moment to celebrate your contribution to The Arc of Somerset County. Your contribution has given people in your community the opportunity to experience “A Wonderful Life.”

Happy Holidays,

Lauren Panarella

Acting Executive Director

For information on our successful 2007 Arc Angel Gala, stay tuned for our upcoming winter issue of the *Herald*.

The Arc of Somerset County is a 501(c)(3) organization.

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