



HERALD

Celebrating More Than 40 Years of Service

A message from the Executive Director

On June 15th, 1972, The Arc of Somerset County opened its doors as a new chapter of The Arc of NJ. With three employees, including the fearless Joan Sapienza as the Executive Director, and one small program for children we began our journey. In 2012, as we commemorated our 40th anniversary of service in the community, we had much to celebrate. We celebrated our expansion of services from one program to 45 programs; we celebrated our growth from offering only children's programs to offering an entire life span of services; and we celebrated 40 years of dedicated and committed employees, volunteers, families, and friends who helped us to hold steadfast to our mission and vision.



As we enter 2013, we will begin to shape our future. With so much to celebrate from the past, we have an equal opportunity to anticipate the future. Our future holds much promise for those we serve including the use of the latest technology to enhance the growth and development of children with disabilities and /or delays; the opportunity for expanded housing options for adults with disabilities; the hope of increased in-home supports for families with a loved one at home; and the dream of greater employment for young

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Surviving Super Storm Sandy

On October 28th, Super Storm Sandy, made landfall leaving behind a path of destruction and loss. The Arc of Somerset County, along with many other county chapters of The Arc, found itself faced with challenges and situations that we have never



before encountered. With temperatures dropping, hotels booked, and many group homes and apartments without power, The Arc was faced with the dilemma of finding safe and comfortable housing for over 20 individuals with disabilities. Fortunately, our Jill Court Adult Training Center in Hillsborough was

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A New Home

As we recovered from Super Storm Sandy at the end of 2012, we were reminded that one year prior we were recuperating from another devastating storm -- Hurricane Irene.

Three gentlemen in our residential program lost their home to the flooding effects of Irene in late August 2011. With nearly a foot of water in the home, the residence was declared uninhabitable, displacing the gentlemen in a matter of hours. The gentlemen took only what could be carried, leaving behind personal items, furniture, clothing – and their home. While they were welcomed in to another home, they lost what any of us lose in such a situation – certainty, privacy, favorite chairs, books, and regular routines....all the things that make a house a home.

As the time passed the gentlemen asked “Are we going back?” or “Will we get a new home?”

Nine months and 60 property visits later, a new home was found. The home needed some modifications, and after what seems like a lifetime the gentlemen moved into their new home just in time for Christmas! The house is a four bedroom colonial with space for a garden, volleyball, basketball, and barbecues – all favorite activities of its new residents.

The success in this story is not in waiting patiently, not in enduring quietly. It is the grace, advocacy, and humor with which these gentlemen lost and regained a home. By negotiating their displacement with such composure, they have earned and re-earned the respect of friends and staff alike.

Congratulations on your new home, residents of the new Pioneer Drive Group Home!



The Arc of Somerset County MISSION

The Arc of Somerset County provides quality services and advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to support development and achievement at every stage of life.

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The Arc of Somerset County

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Manville, NJ 08835
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adults graduating from their educational program. The Arc as a whole continues to strive towards the future as we work towards our strategic priorities. These priorities will give us direction in the areas of:

- Full inclusion for individuals with disabilities in their communities
- A revitalization of our Foundation
- Advocacy and equal representation in our legislative processes
- Community partnerships and shared services with local, state, and national organizations
- Employee development and wellness initiatives
- Governance and excellence at all levels of the agency

We look forward to the challenges and triumphs that lie ahead for The Arc of Somerset County, and your support will be a vital asset to us. You and the future generations of Arc family and friends are the means to a legacy of quality services and supports for the children and adults with disabilities that we serve now and in the next 40 years of our journey.

Sincerely,

Lauren Panarella

Super Storm, continued from page 1

unaffected by the storm and had power and the accommodations (including an accessible shower) for these displaced individuals. However, while we had a physical space, the larger dilemma was how to transform a day program into a comfortable shelter for persons served and their support staff. It was at that moment that the miracles began.

Despite the conditions in the community, Sleepy's, a local mattress store, was open and had seven mattresses immediately available for purchase. Our local Somerset County Office of Emergency Management donated 13 cots for our shelter, and a local church brought over a hot meal for the residents. Staff at the center and our daycare staff also prepared several trays of hot food at the main office and then drove to the shelter to help serve lunch and dinner.

The most amazing miracles of the storm were the employees of The Arc who worked long hours, often sacrificing their personal needs, to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of those we serve – both in the Jill Court Shelter as well as those in our many other residential programs. Our “Sandy’s Heroes” stories are numerous and they demonstrate the extraordinary commitment and dedication our employees have to The Arc, our Mission and, most importantly, to those in our care. During the days following Sandy, we gathered our strength, determination, and resolve in order to move forward. We learned a few things along the way and have since reflected on the experience to better prepare for future storms.

We were all affected by the storm in some way. Our employees made the difference by ensuring that not a single injury was sustained during and immediately after the storm. As a team and an agency our employees can weather any storm and continue the mission of The Arc with resilience and perseverance – qualities that define The Arc of Somerset County. We are grateful to all of our employees, families, friends, and community members who helped us during the trying days of Super Storm Sandy. We could not have made it through without you!

Volunteers Brighten The Arc

Companies and a high school from the local community generously shared their time, talent, and supplies during the last half of 2012 to spruce up some of The Arc's group homes, the Jerry Davis Center playground, and Camp Jotoni.

OVER 160 VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:



August 31 - 7 students from Bridgewater-Raritan High School MADE (Making A Difference Everywhere) club volunteered at the Branchburg Employment Program's annual end of summer picnic at Duke Island Park.



September 28 - 15 volunteers from Janssen painted and washed windows at the Old Stirling Group Home.



October 12 - Henkel sent 6 volunteers to paint an apartment at the Union Avenue apartments.

October 12 - More than 15 volunteers from Johnson & Johnson's Information Technology department painted several rooms and waterproofed the deck at the Cambridge Group Home.



October 18 - Over 25 Ethicon employees volunteered at 3 different Arc programs as part of the company's Community Works Day.

October 25 - Nearly 25 volunteers from Sanofi US revitalized the playground at the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families as part of the company's Season of Solidarity.



October 16 - Over 50 volunteers from Janssen went to Camp Jotoni to close camp for the winter and to install 9 new windows in the dining hall. This was Janssen's sixth year volunteering at Camp Jotoni and included employees from a second office location.



November 17 - 6 volunteers from St Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Church painted a workroom at the Gannett Adult Training Center.

November 20 - 10 Volunteers from Withum Smith + Brown painted common areas at the Franklin Group Home.



Thank you volunteers of MADE, Janssen, Henkel, Johnson & Johnson, Ethicon, Sanofi US, St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, and Withum Smith + Brown!

For additional information about scheduling a volunteer project for your organization, team, or group, please contact Laura Ziegler at 908-725-8544 x 608 or via email at lauraz@thearcofsomerset.org.



Arc honored Ethicon, a Johnson & Johnson



On Friday, November 16, The Arc of Somerset County held its annual Arc Angel Gala, "A Lifetime of Opportunities." The event, held at the Fiddler's Elbow Country Club in Far Hills, NJ, was sponsored by Chairman Circle Sponsors AT&T, B.W. Bosenberg Corporation, Ethicon, and Fred & Roe Patterson. For the fifth consecutive year, NJ Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli served as the event emcee.

On the occasion of the agency's 40th Ruby Anniversary, The Arc was honored to present awards to a group of individuals that have each worked to support and grow the mission of the agency. Event honorees included Arc Angel Award recipient, Ethicon; Halo Award recipient, Belinda Marie Malave; and Angel Among Us Award recipients, Alison Dolan and Anish Kumar.

Ethicon, the 2012 Arc Angel Award recipient, has been an outstanding partner of The Arc through its philanthropy and commitment to volunteerism. Most recently, Ethicon funded the establishment of a new day program for aging adults, and supported our subsidized daycare tuition program for low income families. Additionally, Ethicon and Johnson & Johnson's volunteer efforts have provided The Arc with hands-on support in maintaining, updating, and beautifying our many facilities. Finally, Ethicon and Johnson & Johnson have provided vital leadership and guidance for our agency through The Arc Board of Director leadership of its employees. Some of The Arc of Somerset County's founding trustees were longtime Johnson & Johnson employees in the Somerset County area.



n Company, and others at Arc Angel Gala

Belinda Marie Malave was presented with the Halo Award, an honor reserved for an individual who receives services from The Arc while also making a significant contribution to the organization and the larger community. Belinda was honored for her advocacy work at the local and state levels, including her Board of Directors participation for The Arc of Somerset County for the past eight years.

The Angel Among Us Award was presented to Alison Dolan of Immaculata High School. Alison has given generously of her time to a variety of organizations that provide services to individuals with disabilities. Also receiving the Angel Among Us Award was Anish Kumar of Bridgewater-Raritan High School. Anish has volunteered with The Arc of Somerset County and other local organizations for several years.

The event would not have been possible without the efforts of the Arc Angel Gala Committee. Thank you, Eileen Bradbury, Barbara del Grosso, Carol Fanning, Gail Maureen Ferraro, Pat Fox, Diane Galfy, Kristin Fanning Lees, Lisa Pancoast, Carol Penn, Ann Silwanowicz, Carole Simonse, and Barbara Vanderberg!

The 2012 Arc Angel Gala raised net proceeds of more than \$73,000. We could not have done it without our many generous supporters!



Arc Celebrates the Holidays with Friends and Family

Each year, The Arc of Somerset County is thrilled to work with various local organizations, groups, and individuals to ensure that the holidays are a truly special time for those we serve. We would like to acknowledge the following for their contributions toward a festive season at The Arc:

- The **Lion's Club of Warren** for coordinating the Thanksgiving basket drive for countless Arc families and group homes. We are truly thankful for this drive that the Lion's Club conducts annually.
- The **United Way of Northern New Jersey** for including persons served by The Arc in their annual Gifts of the Season program. This gift drive ensures that all members of the community receive at least one special present for the holidays.
- The **Courier News** for featuring several stories about Arc consumers and families in their 2012 WishBook. We have since found out that two youngsters in our Childhood Services programs will have their wishes granted by the generosity of Courier News readers!
- The **Red Cross** for donating unused Super Storm Sandy relief supplies including water, diapers, and food.
- **Henkel Women's Affinity Group** for "adopting" the Commons Apartments for the holidays; providing a holiday party and gifts for the residents. This is the second year of Henkel's program at The Arc.
- **American Legion Post 12** and **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** for hosting the annual holiday celebrations for the Union Avenue Apartments and Commons Apartments respectively.
- The Arc's many generous donors that ensure that Arc consumers and families will continue to enjoy lives filled with growth, development, and achievement well beyond the holiday season.



"Achieve With Us" Annual Appeal

Mikayla is my daughter, and she has autism.

While one in 88 children is diagnosed with autism today, it was more like one in 10,000 ten years ago. Shortly after the autism diagnosis, we found ourselves in the early intervention and daycare programs at The Arc. My wife and I attended every session so that we could learn from the therapists. The support that we received from Arc staff, therapists, and fellow parents was invaluable to us and to Mikayla's development.

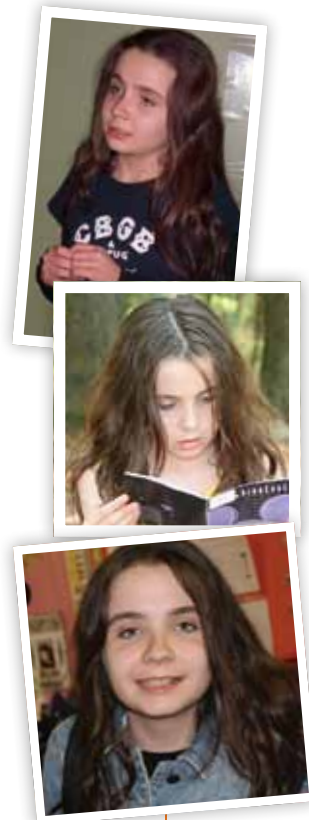
The first few years after Mikayla started school were tough. She still was not verbally communicating or showing signs of progress in learning to read and write, and we were still learning to work through her behavioral challenges. Sadly, through all of this, cancer took away Mikayla's mother, and I was now the sole provider and advocate. Just as all families after the loss of a loved one do, we forged ahead with our journey together.

There are a few groundbreaking moments of this journey that I will forever remember, including one of the first times that Mikayla spoke. We went on her first roller coaster and her smile was ear-to-ear. We rode again and she actually began to verbalize her excitement! Autism has a sensory component, and there is something about riding a roller coaster that removes pressure for Mikayla. We have gone to amusement parks more times than I can count, and I'm now starting to see the same families riding the roller coasters over and over – families just like us.

Mikayla is a truly remarkable child whose many talents were unlocked when she learned to read and use a computer. A lover of languages, Mikayla has taught herself over ten different languages using the computer, and she now reads at a college level! Also, Mikayla is learning to communicate her ideas, wants, and needs without the use of her augmentative communication device – a major step for her. I am not sure Mikayla could be where she is today developmentally if it were not for computers and her love of reading.

I am so grateful for the people and professionals in our life that have directly contributed to Mikayla's growth. While we still deal with daily hurdles, and I think of new challenges that will likely surface as Mikayla gets older, I could not be more proud of my daughter. As Mikayla approaches her young adult years, I am comforted in knowing that The Arc will be with our family every step of the way. Your gift to The Arc will ensure that children just like Mikayla can continue to receive the specialized services that they need to achieve their greatest level of success.

Sincerely,
Michael Clancy
Father, Advocate



Yes, I would like to support the "Achieve With Us" Annual Appeal!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of: ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

I would like to make my contribution by:

☐ Enclosed check made payable to *The Arc of Somerset County*

☐ Credit card (circle one) Visa, MC, Amex Card # _____ Expiration date _____

☐ I work for a company that will match this gift. _____

☐ Please contact me about Planned Giving opportunities at The Arc of Somerset County.

Would you like to pledge your support for the future of The Arc Mission? Join the **Realizing Dreams Legacy Society!**

☐ Option A: I have included The Arc of Somerset County in my estate plan.

☐ Option B: I pledge to make a contribution of at least \$500 per year for the next 5 years.



For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities.

141 South Main Street
Manville, NJ 08835



**Somerset County
United Way**

Affiliated Agency

The Arc of Somerset County is a
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Achieve with us.

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Save the Date

Step Up For The Arc Walk & 5K Run

This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, May 4 at Duke Island Park in Bridgewater. Visit our website for more information or to sign up as a runner or walker. T-shirt sponsorship opportunities are currently available.

Questions? Contact Tara Abbott at 908-725-8544 x610 or via email at taraa@thearcofsomerset.org.

Annual Membership Meeting & Awards Ceremony

The Arc will honor its volunteers, staff, consumers, supporters, and community partners on Monday, June 17 at the Bridgewater/Somerset Holiday Inn at 6:00 pm. Join us for refreshments and exhibitions by program directors at 5:00 pm. Event is free and open to the public. Contact Laura Ziegler at 908-725-8544 x608 for additional information.

Are you a member of The Arc of Somerset County?

There is still time to join The Arc in membership for 2013!

By becoming a member of The Arc, you lend your voice to a network of advocates dedicated to ensuring quality services are available for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Simply send your dues payment of \$25 to:

The Arc of Somerset County
141 South Main Street
Manville, NJ 08835

All membership dues are tax deductible.

Questions? Contact Laura Ziegler at 908-725-8544 x608 or via email at lauraz@thearcofsomerset.org.

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