



## A Message From The Executive Director



As we reflect on FY 2016, we are thrilled to share with you how The Arc of Somerset County continues to be a leader in disability advocacy

and services in the community. On a county level, The Arc of Somerset County has launched important new projects in areas that showcase our expertise in the disability field.

In the fall of 2015, we launched the pilot phase of our new college based program, "The Achievement Center". Located on the campus of Raritan Valley Community College, The Achievement Center offers young adults with disabilities the opportunity to attend college alongside their peers in a supportive and collegiate environment. The goal for our students is much the same as any other college student, to engage in new experiences and relationships that will eventually guide them towards gainful employment and a career path. In the fall of 2016, the full roll out of the program will begin as well the initiation of new partnerships with several local high schools.

With the State of New Jersey moving towards a Fee for Service system, The Arc has begun to offer new services that will provide enhanced supports to individuals in the community. Two of our new programs are based out of our PACT (Parents and Children Together) program and are designed

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# HERALD

*Celebrating More Than 40 Years of Service*

## Philadelphia 2016 Host Committee for the Democratic National Convention Partners with The Arc to Offer Employment Opportunities to Disabled Individuals

The Branchburg Adult Training Center will once again be busy this summer working on a contract with AT&T filling thousands of gift bags for the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia this July. The communications company provides products and services for this event and adults from our employment day program have been hired once again to assemble gift bags for convention delegates. 10,000 bags for the Democratic National Convention Committee will be filled with 24 different components.

"For many years AT&T has supported The Arc of Somerset County. They've never disappointed us," remarked Tom Brooks, Vice President of External Affairs for AT&T.

"The quality of work and dedication of the staff and the workers at the employment centers is unsurpassed. We value our partnership with them and appreciate their eagerness to take on large projects like those involved in the upcoming conventions."

"The Arc of Somerset County currently partners with 20 local organizations, to create and develop employment opportunities for persons we serve" stated Gary Kummer, Director of Employment Services. "We presently support 215 adults at their jobs at our Adult Training Centers, in addition, The Arc of Somerset County is also actively involved in supporting individuals at job sites in the community".

"This particular contract is extremely exciting for the individuals with disabilities we serve because it connects them to the community on a much larger scale at a national level." stated Michelle McMahon, Associate Executive Director for The Arc of Somerset County.

"Throughout the convention planning efforts, the Host Committee has been committed to diversity and inclusion, and we are excited to continue that commitment by providing members of The Arc with volunteer opportunities to help Philadelphia host the Convention," said former Pennsylvania Governor and Philadelphia 2016 Host Committee Chair Ed Rendell. "This event will be a special experience for all our volunteers, and we are thrilled that our friends in The Arc community will fill all of our gift bags to welcome Convention guests to Philadelphia, thanks to the support of AT&T."

"It's an honor to be able to offer meaningful projects that provide adults with disabilities the opportunity to work and thrive. The work offered by The Arc of Somerset County affords adults with disabilities a sense of purpose and integrity. Those benefits are the reason AT&T is honored to support this respected organization", concluded Mr. Brooks.

Currently, approximately 33% of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the United States are underemployed according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. The Arc of Somerset County is proud to have this partnership with AT&T and all employment service contracts that keep our adults actively engaged in productive work within our community.



## 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.

### The Arc Board of Directors:

President.....Tim McKeown  
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Immediate Past President..... Ron Slahetka

### *The Arc acknowledges members of the Board of Directors*

### The Arc Board Members:

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Danielle LaRochelle

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Executive Director ..... Lauren Frary  
Associate Executive Director  
.....Michelle McMahon

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Children & Family Services .....Jen Orlick  
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Human Resources .....Christina Faraone  
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Maintenance and Safety.....Jason Scheib  
Parents and Children Together (PACT)  
.....Jeanne Guarnieri  
Quality .....Lisa Intili  
Residential Services ..... Stella Ecep

### The Arc of Somerset County

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## Foundation Donation Helps Consumers Increase Access to Technology

Thanks to a generous \$10,000 donation from the Fidelity Charitable Trust Foundation – consumers at The Arc of Somerset County will enjoy greater access to technology including computers and the internet.

Our past Board President, Ron Slahetka saw the need for consumer access to technology while on a recent visit to an Arc group home. Many consumers who live in Arc programs have their own technology and an increasing number of individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities are using computers, cell phones, iPads and tablets to access information on the internet and to stay connected with family and friends. Recognizing that not all individuals had the income to purchase these items, Ron facilitated a significant donation to be used to provide access to technology for more of the individuals we serve.

Through several meetings with staff and management, a pilot program was created to determine how to best meet the various needs of residents living in group homes. Three programs received a computer with a touch screen, large and adapted key boards and software for games and word processing. Our Pioneer, Commons and Cedar Grove programs were set up with the technology and our consumers were instantly enjoying their opportunity to use the equipment. The pilot was such a success with our residents, that 3 more programs will be provided with the same equipment during the summer months.

*“Visiting the group homes is one of the most enjoyable and important experiences for a Board member” states Ron Slahetka, Immediate Past Board President for The Arc of Somerset County. “The idea came about while talking to consumers, why not provide even greater ability to stay connected with family, friends, and current events. I am very pleased the experiment is going well, and look forward to providing this opportunity to consumers wherever we can.”*

## The Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families QRIS Updates

The Daycare/Preschool Program at the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families (JDCCF) continues to participate in Grow NJ Kids, New Jersey’s Quality and Rating Improvement System (QRIS) designed to improve the quality of child care across the state. For parents, the program provides information on selecting a provider to help them make the most of their kids’ early learning opportunities. For child care programs, the program provides resources that help raise their quality and continuously improve their programs.

Since JDCCF began participating in the pilot program in early 2014, the QRIS program has supported the growth and development of the staff and the program. Staff are required to take courses relevant to their work in and out of the classroom. Topics range from the social emotional development of children and positive behavior guidance strategies to ways to increase a family’s involvement in their child’s education and implementing the national “Let’s Move” initiative, which addresses childhood obesity by focusing on healthy eating and exercise. Michele Reilly, Head Teacher, recently took a class focused on increasing the movement of the children in the classroom throughout the day. *“We were taught songs and games during the Let’s Move class,” stated Reilly, “and I was able to use them the very next day with the students.”* In addition to learning, these classes provide a place for staff to talk with their peers at other childcare agencies. Not only do these classes present the staff an opportunity to network with peers, they have the opportunity to problem solve as a group, sharing their experiences with others.





## Rutgers OTA Program Partners with The Arc of Somerset County for Student Fieldwork Experience

For the past two semesters, The Rutgers Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program has partnered with The Arc of Somerset County's Employment Services Department to provide OTA students with a unique and inspirational fieldwork opportunity. For eight Fridays each semester, two OTA students spend their day with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities – working alongside each other and learning from each other.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program (OTA) was established in 2012 within the School of Health and Related Professions (SHRP) in response to a national, state, and local demand for OTA practitioners. Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) help people of all ages who are challenged by disability, trauma, and/or the aging process to participate in occupations that are necessary and meaningful to them.

Students who completed their fieldwork at The Arc of Somerset County were provided with the opportunity to practice skills developed within the academic portion of the Rutgers OTA. The students have worked with consumers on increasing their production rates through the use of environmental enhancements and have worked on life skills such as hand washing. The goal is to find new ways to encourage self sufficiency which, in turn, increases self esteem. *"It is such a wonderful opportunity to work with these students" says Lauren Frary, Executive Director "they bring a unique perspective to our program and more importantly they work to enhance the skills and independence of those we serve."*

*"It wasn't just a place to go to work. It was a place that brought out the best in every single person" states Rekha Tabjula, OTA. "The Arc of Somerset will always remain special to me as this is where I got my very first fieldwork experience" states Vrunda Shankar, OTA. "I had a wonderful and unforgettable experience being at the The Arc of Somerset County, stated James Mejia, OTA. He added, "I saw how the facility and program set them up to succeed by not allowing their conditions to limit them in any way. I also saw how professional the staff interacted towards the management of their consumers".*

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to provide intensive in home supports to children ages 5-21 who are experiencing difficulty with daily living skills and emotional / behavior challenges. The program's goal is to work with the child in their natural setting, while also increasing the skills of the parents and the success of the family as a whole.

Our children's services have also had an active year, participating in the "NJ Race to The Top" initiatives to help develop a rating scale for childcare providers and to help enhance the quality of daycares across the state. Our Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families was one of only a handful of centers chosen to participate in the pilot phase of this initiative—and we are the only child care center that serves children with disabilities in the pilot. In addition, on November 24th, 2015, The Jerry Davis Center for Children and families was awarded the 2015 Disability Advocate Award by the Somerset County Freeholders for their outstanding work in supporting and promoting children's educational, social and emotional well-being through their program offerings.

This past year we also continued our commitment to self-advocacy, which is a vital aspect of our work. Our self advocates participated in several important initiatives that will further our efforts to ensure that all individuals, regardless of ability, are given the opportunities and rights that all community members enjoy. The Arc of Somerset County's self-advocates were awarded an advocacy award at the State Self Advocacy Annual Luncheon and several of our self advocates efforts were acknowledged through individual awards. Our self advocates are at the heart of our organization and they have worked tirelessly and passionately to move our mission and vision for individuals with disabilities forward.

While FY 2016 presented us with its share of challenges, The Arc has been fortunate to achieve new gains on behalf of the community we serve, exceeding even our own high expectations.

Please join us as we look back on this year of tremendous growth and look forward to another outstanding year of service in FY 2017.

With warm regards,

*Lauren Frary*

Executive Director



## The Arc of Somerset County Continues to Receive Enormous Support from Volunteers

Since March 2016, The Arc of Somerset County received over 3,500 volunteer hours from numerous local corporate and civic communities who believe in The Arc's mission and seek to fulfill the work needed that helps our agency focus on the quality of programs supported for those we serve.



On March 12th St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Church painted our Gannett Adult Training Center.

On April 6th, Janssen and the DePuy Synthesis Group came to the Branchburg Adult Training Center and painted their cafeteria.

On April 28th, Financial Resources Credit Union helped clean and organize Steinmetz Group Home.

On May 6th, over 50 employees from both the New York and New Jersey offices of Turner Construction came to Camp Jotoni for various major projects around the 15 acre campus.

On May 14th the Hillsborough Education Association performed yard work and spring cleaning at the Ardsley, Respite, and Steinmetz Group Homes.

On May 18th, Henkel visited our Branchburg Adult Training Center for a group project with program participants to create planters for all Arc group homes.

On May 20th volunteers from CIT Group Inc. joined Commons apartments for a paint job of the upstairs hallway.

On Tuesday May 26th an international group from Janssen helped landscape the grounds at Cedar Grove Group Home.

On June 10th, L'Oreal of Franklin spent their International Volunteer Day at Camp Jotoni for some major spring cleaning and various new projects as well as painted the outside of Old Stirling Group Home.

Also on June 10th, L'Oreal of Clark sent a group to paint the inside of the Mobus Group Home.

On June 11th a group from Composecure, LLC. helped with spring landscaping projects at Claremont Group Home.





# The Future of Aging-in-Place and Your Financial Investment With The Arc Foundation of Somerset County

Planning for our elder years is something we all think about by the time we reach our 50th birthday. Where we will live, identifying who will be our caregiver and how certain modifications to a healthier lifestyle now can help you live stronger and longer are all common thoughts we encounter at middle age. If we are smart, we not only think about it, we physically and financially plan for it.

As the individuals we serve age, The Arc's services need to be modified and expanded to meet our residents changing needs, as well as to meet our goal of providing a safe and healthy place to live.

Currently, The Arc of Somerset County houses 97 adults in our residential programs. 35 adults over the age of 60. Many of these adults have experienced cognitive decline, have aging and related needs. Looking to the future, we currently care for 15 adults between the age of 40-50 and we will soon be strategically planning for their aging needs. In total, we serve 38 adults who live with both intellectual/developmental disabilities along with physical disabilities.

In order for The Arc of Somerset County to ensure that our group home environments meet the changing needs of aging residents, we need your support. Our goal is to secure funding for the current needs of our adult residents as well as their future needs. It is important we seek out financial security now for these changing needs as we plan to have each and every one of our adults to successfully age in place.

Various physical modifications can make it easier for aging residents to safely navigate through and live in their homes. Additional nursing services can also help with this transition as nurses also provide the professional, emotional and social support needed as our individuals continue to live in the place they have called home for many years.

The vision of The Arc Foundation of Somerset County is to ensure the financial viability of The Arc of Somerset County's programs which support lifetime achievement and success to each of the individuals served.

Please consider making an annual gift or planned gift so that the adults we serve can be guaranteed quality of life as they age in place for many years to come. Thank you for helping make a difference and helping secure The Arc's financial future.



## Arc Grant Achievements

- Investors Bank Foundation: \$5,000 for the PACT Program
- The Provident Bank Foundation: \$2,500 for the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families Tuition Subsidy Program
- Stop and Shop: \$1,000 for the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families Veggie Friends Program
- Dombal-Vogel Foundation: \$5,000 for the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families Tuition Subsidy Program



## Arc Donations

- NJ State Council Knights of Columbus: \$1,000 to The Arc of Somerset County
- Roselle Savings Bank: \$1,000 to The Arc Foundation of Somerset County
- L'Oreal, The United Way of Northern NJ and Somerset County Community for Adopt a Family and Holiday Wishbook



# The Arc of Somerset County Celebrates Another Great Day of Community Support for the Step Up for The Arc Walk and 5K on June 4th

The Arc of Somerset County hosted their annual “Step Up for the Arc Walk and 5k Run” event on Saturday, June 4th at Duke Island Park in Bridgewater to hundreds of runners, community walkers and supporters many who gathered for their first time, and others who showed their annual support of our agency and those we serve.

Special thanks to the overwhelming support of our sponsors this year that made the back of our T-shirts full from top to bottom!



## Thank You!

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## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STEP UP FOR THE ARC— TOP FUNDRAISERS

Top Department Team  
Ilene Court Craftsman  
(Maintenance)

Top Arc Staff Member  
Roy Lawrence

Top Family Team  
Mandelbaum Family

Top Community Teams  
Team Happy Days

Top Corporate Group  
Cerminara Architect



## The Arc of Somerset County Hosts their 44th Annual Meeting on June 9th at The Olde Mill Inn

The Arc of Somerset County hosted its 44th Annual Meeting on June 9th at the Olde Mille Inn in Bernards Township to celebrate the past year's successes and to honor community business members and individuals who made those successes possible.

Ortho Diagnostics received an award for The Arc of Somerset County's *Employer of the Year*

Lori Moog, Director of Service Learning and Community Outreach at Raritan Valley Community College received an award for *Distinguished Community Service*

Knights of Columbus, Raritan accepted an award for *Community Partner of the Year*

Andy Burnstein, Phong Phan of Fundraiser.Fund received an award for *Development Partner of The Year*

Nikki Bryant, of Community Childcare Solutions accepted the award for *Teacher of the Year*

Jackie Jones of Old Stirling Group Home received the award for *Direct Support Professional of the Year-Residential*

Chris Raphael, Camplain Rd. received the award for *Direct Support Professionals of the Year — Employment Services*

Lance Floden, Director of Information Technology for The Arc of Somerset County accepted the award for *Professional of the Year*

During the Annual Meeting, The Arc of Somerset County nominated and accepted 2 new members to the board, Danielle La Rochelle and Daryle Peterson.

Thank you to all of our Board Members for their dedication and support of The Arc of Somerset County!





For people with intellectual  
and developmental disabilities.

141 South Main Street  
Manville, NJ 08835



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United Way**  
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## Save the Date

### ***Camp Jotoni 40th Birthday Celebration!***

Join us for an afternoon of family fun as we celebrate Camp Jotoni's 40th Birthday **Sunday, August 28th 2016, 12:00pm-4:00pm** at Camp Jotoni with outdoor activities for all, an awesome tricky tray auction, BBQ picnic and goodies all day as well as a camper and camp counselor award ceremony at 3:00pm. To RSVP and request tricky tray tickets in advance, please contact Laura Ziegler at 908-658-3805 or email: [lauraz@thearcofsomerset.org](mailto:lauraz@thearcofsomerset.org) before August 25th

### ***National Disability Awareness Month (NDEAM)***

During the month of October, The Arc will honor our many community business partners that provide employment opportunities for adults with disabilities. Please check our website for future updates about NDEAM events.

### ***Arc Angel Gala:***

The 2016 Arc Angel Gala: "A Celebration of Inspirational Families" will be held on **Friday, November 4, 2016** at a new location - **Dolce Basking Ridge** in Basking Ridge, New Jersey. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For additional information, please contact Lisa Marie Arieno at 908-658-3805 or e-mail: [lisamariea@thearcofsomerset.org](mailto:lisamariea@thearcofsomerset.org)