



HERALD

A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director



Lauren Panarella

On August 13, Paramount Pictures released a new comedy called "Tropic Thunder," starring Ben Stiller as "Simple Jack," a character who is diagnosed as mentally retarded. In the movie, Simple Jack is the object of derision. The movie uses words such as "retard," "moron," and other offensive language to describe Simple Jack.

On behalf of The Arc of Somerset County—an organization with a mission to provide advocacy for the inclusion of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities—I find the language and situations in this movie disturbing.

Mocking people who have been subjected to discrimination for race, ethnicity, gender, and even physical disability is no longer considered funny or acceptable. However, the public awareness and civility protecting these groups from ridicule isn't being extended to people with intellectual disabilities. For example, racial slurs are categorically forbidden in proper public discourse, yet offensive language to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities continues to be widely accepted (or at

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Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center Discontinues Preschool Disabled Program

Effective August 1, the Preschool Disabled Program at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center (JDECC) was discontinued as the average daily enrollment per year did not meet the state of New Jersey's minimum requirement



Staff members of the Preschool Disabled Program work with students.

of 16 students. "We're disappointed that our application to waive the enrollment minimum was denied," said Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services. "Preschool Disabled was one of the first programs instituted at The Arc decades ago by parents who gathered together in their homes to support each other."

Although JDECC continues to provide Early Intervention, Developmental Daycare, Private Preschool, After Care, special programs, and private therapy, staff members regret that children in need will no longer be able to benefit from the personal attention that was offered by the Preschool Disabled Program.

Several legislators wrote Commissioner Lucille Davy of the New Jersey Department of Education urging the state to waive its average daily enrollment requirement for the benefit of the area's most vulnerable children, ages 3- to 5-years old. "JDECC is the only program in Somerset County that addresses the needs of children... who are medically fragile or who have disabilities that require numerous hours of therapy a week,"

wrote Senator Christopher "Kip" Bateman and Assemblywoman Denise Coyle of Somerville.

JDECC focused solely on the needs of preschoolers, unlike other approved private schools that also offer services to older special education

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A Message from Edmond A. Brown, President

Dear Friends,

This has been an extraordinary year with unpredictable challenges, the biggest of which is the state of the economy. No increase in the state budget has forced us to do a whole lot more with a whole lot less. With a firm commitment to deliver quality programs and services to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, we must rely on volunteers and donors to play a key role in our success.

From the boardroom to Camp Jotoni, to residents' homes and our administrative offices,



Edmond A. Brown

there has been no limit to the generosity of our volunteers. Many corporate volunteer groups have filled a significant void. The article on page 5 describes the many services and goods that these supporters have donated.

The Arc of Somerset County simply did not have the resources to pay for the labor and purchase supplies for all of the projects that have been completed. Ten more volunteer groups from J&J and sanofi-aventis took on new projects at The Arc in September and October. So, on behalf

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The Arc of Somerset County MISSION

The Arc of Somerset County supports persons with developmental disabilities and their families in realizing their dreams by providing lifelong advocacy and quality services.* We further support efforts towards the prevention of developmental disabilities.

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

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of our residents and individuals receiving services at The Arc, I extend my profound gratitude to all of our volunteers.

In this exciting election year, the presidential candidates of both parties met in New York at the first ServiceNation Summit on September 11, to promote volunteerism on a national scale. I am proud to say that the

dedication of our volunteers is setting an excellent example for the nation.

Our volunteers bolster our programs, and our donors help sustain them while enjoying the benefits of a tax deduction. For this, we are grateful.

Warmest regards,

Edmond A. Brown
President

Camp Jotoni Creates Action and Adventure

Camp Jotoni, nestled into a 17-acre woodland in Warren, ended another successful season on August 29. This year, 214 campers enrolled in day, residential, and extended programs ranging from travel and adventure, to arts and crafts, music, swimming, physical education, and nature walks. "We had a fabulous time," said Chris Reagan, Director of Camp Jotoni. "Individuals with disabilities, ages five through adult, were able to experience all of the fun and excitement of summer vacation."

For the second year, Action and Adventure Week took campers on a new trip each day for five consecutive days. Day trips included experiencing an indoor Water Park at the Great Wolf Lodge in the Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania, watching the Yankees triumph over the Minnesota Twins in New York City, boating around the tip of Manhattan on a dinner cruise, and horseback riding along trails in Monmouth County.

New at Camp Jotoni, Travel Camp Week took participants away for a weeklong vacation to Ocean City, Maryland. Campers lounged on the beach, went swimming, cruised on a speedboat



Enjoying Travel Camp in Ocean City, in the first row (from left to right), are Nancy Hockemeier and Lauren Vigliotta. In the second row are Michelle Kelly, James Rotola, and Clare Oberle.

around Assateague Island, learned to canoe, played miniature golf, and dined out daily.

To close the season, Camp Jotoni held an Open House for parents and campers. More than 60 revelers enjoyed refreshments, dancing to music selected by a DJ, and a slide show celebrating camp activities.

Stay tuned to upcoming issues of the *Herald* for information about the exciting programs that will be offered at Camp Jotoni next year.

Camp Jotoni, accredited by the American Camp Association, receives funding from the Somerset County United Way as well as the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Human Services.



Tracy Gray (center) enjoys the day with campers Christine Maloney (left) and Taylor Jaskolski (right).

Fred Patterson Appointed to Prevention Council

This past summer, New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine appointed Fred Patterson, Board Member of The Arc of Somerset County, to the Council on the Prevention of Mental



Fred Patterson

Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD). Governor Corzine is the seventh New Jersey governor to appoint Fred to this important advisory position. Previously, he was appointed by former Governors Thomas H. Kean, James J. Florio, Christine Todd Whitman, Donald DeFrancesco, James E. McGreevey, and Richard J. Codey. The Governor's Council serves as

the advisory body to the state Office for Prevention of MRDD, located in the Department of Human Services.

The Office for Prevention aims to reduce the frequency of occurrence of severe chronic mental or physical disabilities that could have been avoided by precautions taken before conception, birth, during birth, or during the developmental years.

"More than 20 years ago, the state of New Jersey set out to prove the old maxim: 'an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure,'" Fred noted. "Today, New Jersey is recognized as a leader in the prevention of developmental disabilities. I look forward to addressing the challenges that remain, not the least of which is the prevention of autism," he added. Congratulations Fred!

Barry's Appliance & TV Sponsors "Night at the Ballpark" Resident David Morris Delivers First Pitch

Barry's Appliance & TV of Bridgewater sponsored The Arc of Somerset County's Night at the Ballpark "fundraiser" on August 16, at which the Somerset Patriots defeated the York Revolution in Bridgewater. A long-time supporter of The Arc of Somerset County, Barry's Appliance & TV helped raise more than \$1,000 for The Arc of Somerset County.



Lauren Panarella addresses the crowd.

Before the game, Lauren Panarella, Executive Director, spoke to a crowd of nearly 8,000 spectators about the pivotal role played by The Arc of Somerset County. "Our goal at The Arc of Somerset County is to help each individual we serve learn to grow, play, live, and work in an inclusive community, along with their peers, family, and friends," said Lauren. Following her

speech, David Morris, a resident of the Common Apartments in Bridgewater threw the first pitch—to the enthusiastic cheers of his family and friends.

They were especially overjoyed because, last December, David had been struck by a car, and was not expected to survive. His mom, Evelyn Morris, praised The Arc of Somerset County as instrumental to David's remarkable recovery. "We are so very lucky to have The Arc of Somerset County in our community providing care for our most vulnerable population," she said.

Evelyn was so moved by The Arc's support that she wrote an article entitled "Somerset County Arc Became a Second Family," which appeared in the *Courier News* in Bridgewater



David Morris is accompanied to the pitching mound by Christopher Gunning, Director of Residential Services.

ting a home run for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Enjoying a night at the ballgame are (left to right) Robert Burgess, Kaibah Mavolo, Assistant Manager at South Street Apartments, Barbara Blair, and Barbara Cornelius.

on September 3. "The Arc was there for both David and me," she wrote. "Every department provided us with support, from the executive level to the Direct Support Providers."

Thank you to all contributors to this fundraiser, especially Barry's Appliance & TV, for bringing the magic of baseball to children and families while hit-

Growing Number of Walkers and Sponsors “Step Up for The Arc”

On May 17, more than 270 family members, friends, and local business leaders participated in the sixth annual “Step Up for The Arc” Walkathon at Duke Island Park in Bridgewater, generating a net income of \$17,600. “The number of walkers and sponsors rose from last year, reflecting an increase in support from community residents and business leaders,” remarked Tara Abbott, Assistant Director of Development.

Tom Baffuto, Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey, provided the event’s welcoming remarks, along with The Arc of Somerset County’s Lauren Panarella, Executive Director, and Chris Corvino, Associate Executive Director.

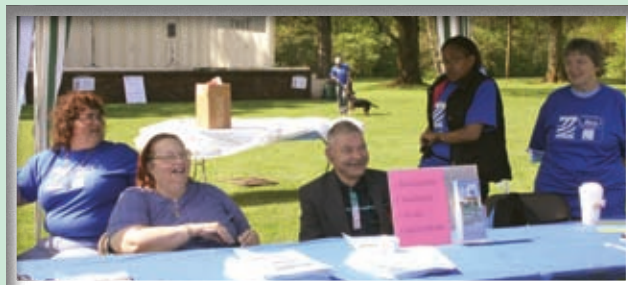
Sponsors from Manville and surrounding areas included American Legion Post 304, Applebee’s in Bridgewater, Armour Lock and Safe Co., Bank of America, Chubb & Son of Branchburg, CVS, Dunkin’ Donuts, Family Care of Somerset, Manville Area Federal Credit Union, Manville Chiropractic, Midtown Gourmet, Inc., Millington Savings Bank in Millington, Northern Highlands Regional High School in Allendale, and Sign-A-Rama.

New this year, members and advisors of the Self-Advocacy Group managed an Advocacy Tent, where they distributed information on legislative and other initiatives to help individuals with disabilities realize their dreams.

For the sixth consecutive year, District 12 of the Grand Lodge of New Jersey’s Free and Accepted Masons not only raised funds, but treated walkers and volunteers to refreshments. All of the food was donated, cooked, and served by the Masons. Union Lodge 19 even hosted a pancake breakfast.

Congratulations to the Top Individual Consumer Fundraisers: Barbara Cornelius and Dawn Prag; Top Individual Fundraiser: Eric Mandelbaum; Top Family Team: the Kuzian Family; Top Community Team: Free and Accepted Masons District 12; and Top Arc Staff Team: Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center.

“We appreciate the growing enthusiasm throughout the community for The Arc of Somerset County and its vital programs,” Tara said.



Staff members and consumers from The Arc of Somerset County distribute information in the Advocacy Tent.



District 12 of the Grand Lodge of New Jersey’s Free and Accepted Masons was instrumental in the Walkathon’s success.



Young walkers enjoy the beautiful day.



The Walkathon made raising much-needed money a walk in the park.

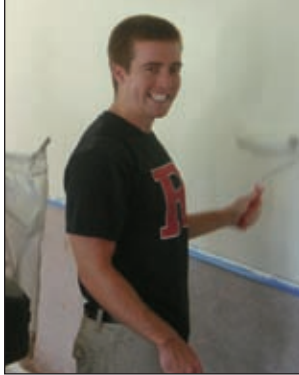


Participants enjoy a two-mile walk.

Volunteers Plant Gardens and Paint Apartments

Thank you to the many volunteers who planted gardens and painted residences for The Arc of Somerset County during the United Way's Days of Caring from June through August.

- On June 17, a team of J&J volunteers led by Kate Wetzel weeded and planted flowerbeds in front of the Cambridge Group Home in Bridgewater. They also planted a vegetable garden and a variety of flowers. The volunteers donated all of the plants, soil, and mulch.
- On July 8, Victor Johnson led a group of volunteers from UPS who painted an apartment on Union Avenue in Bridgewater.
- On August 14, team leader Marissa Wojcik and volunteers from J&J painted two Union Avenue apartments. All of the volunteers were college students currently completing an internship with J&J.



Volunteer paints a Union Avenue apartment in Bridgewater.



J&J volunteers plant flowers in front of the Cambridge Group Home in Bridgewater.

"These volunteers take time out of their busy work schedule to visit the homes of people they've never met, and perform chores they rarely have time to do at home," Tara remarked. Their initiatives left delighted residents with a bounty of fresh vegetables, colorful flowers, and bright and cheery apartments.

Knights of Columbus Donate \$830

On September 3, John Buico, Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus Commodore John Barry Council #2544 in Dunellen presented a check for \$830 to The Arc of Somerset County. Other recipients of the Knight's annual charity fundraiser included The Arc of Monmouth County, the Piscataway Regional Day School, and For KEEPS (Kids Embraced and Empowered through Psychological Services) at Saint Peter's University Hospital in New Brunswick.

"The Knights of Columbus have been friends of The Arc for several decades," remarked Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development. "They were instrumental in helping us build the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center in the 1970s, and have been supporting Camp Jotoni and Arc programs ever since. I am very moved by their loyalty and generosity." Thank you!

What's New in Communications

The Arc of Somerset County is celebrating an award from The Arc of New Jersey, and announcing updates to print, television, radio, and online communications. Following are details.

- The Arc of Somerset County received the 2008 Communications Award from The Arc of New Jersey for its quarterly *Herald* newsletter. The award honors outstanding public relations and communications that relate positive information about The Arc, its mission, and constituents. "Congratulations to all those individuals who help craft compelling stories and informational materials, and a warm thank you to the consumers who inspire us!" said Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development.
- Four editions of the *Herald* will be published every calendar year. Beginning with this issue, the masthead on the *Herald* lists the quarterly issue (Issue 4) and web address, rather than the volume and season. Published earlier this year were the Fall 2007, Winter 2008, and Summer 2008 issues, which we have renamed Issues 1, 2 and 3. This Issue 4 is the final quarterly newsletter for the 2008 calendar year.
- The fifth public service announcement (PSA) produced by Cablevision on The Arc of Somerset County's mission and programs will air on 33 cable channels from October through November. Stay tuned!
- WDVR FM Radio 89.7 and 91.9 in Princeton is currently running ads promoting The Arc of Somerset County. These ads will run randomly each day for one year.
- A new website has been launched to provide the latest information on Arc programs. Visitors at www.thearcofsomerset.org can click on links to The Arc of Somerset County's YouTube page. And don't miss the link on "How to Get Involved."

Preschool Disabled, continued from page 1

students and count them in their average daily enrollment. "Ending this valuable and important program runs contrary to the public interest and the welfare of the children it serves," added Senator Bateman and Assemblywoman Coyle.

Assemblyman Michael J. Doherty of Warren and Hunterdon Counties wrote that a comparable program does not exist in Hunterdon County either. Others voicing support for the Preschool Disabled Program included Senator Jim Whelan of Northfield and Assemblyman Peter J. Biondi of Somerville.

In tribute to the Preschool Disabled Program, following are just some of the countless success stories that resulted from the dedicated initiatives of students, parents, and staff.

CHARLOTTE DOWNEY ACHIEVES THE "IMPOSSIBLE"

Nearly all of the students in the Preschool Disabled Program were non-ambulatory and considered medically fragile. Charlotte Downey, 4, came to JDECC after surviving two open-heart surgeries, a kidney transplant, and a stroke. She spent the first 20 months of her life at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, for the most part in intensive care.



Charlotte Downey

Since attending Preschool Disabled at JDECC, Charlotte has been healthy. "This has been the first year of her life that Charlotte has not been admitted to the hospital," said Linda Downey, her mom. "Staff members at JDECC have been very careful to see that the school stays sanitary." Prior to her third birthday, the equivalent of a cold virus landed

Charlotte in the hospital on a ventilator for six months.

Despite a medical prognosis that Charlotte would never eat, walk, or live like a typically developing child, therapists in the Preschool Disabled Program had Charlotte on her way to doing just that. With time and patience, therapists helped Charlotte develop the muscles that prevented her from aspirating or breathing food into her lungs. "First, Charlotte had to become accustomed to having food placed near her gums and tongue," explained Laura. "It was a new sensation. Then staff members had to repeat the same process again and again, until Charlotte was able to ingest her first bites."

Therapists also started Charlotte walking with a gait trainer. "The Preschool Disabled Program at JDECC

gave Charlotte the extra attention she needed," Linda said. "I am very disappointed the program has been discontinued." To date, Linda has been unsuccessful in finding another school willing to take the risk of feeding Charlotte by mouth, rather than a tube. "They consider it a liability risk," Linda explained.

Looking at the bright side, Linda noted that therapists in the Preschool Disabled Program proved that Charlotte will indeed achieve more than anyone thought possible. "I am hugely grateful to JDECC, and very sad," she said.

PARENTS AND SIBLINGS PAY TRIBUTE TO PRESCHOOL DISABLED

In August, staff members from the Preschool Disabled Program had a farewell party with students and parents. "They have become a part of our lives and we have become a part of theirs," Laura Liebel said. The families and staff had much to celebrate, and had, without success, done their best to persuade the New Jersey State Department of Education to waive its enrollment minimum for JDECC. In letters to the state:

- Tim and Jennifer Fischer credited the Preschool Disabled Program with teaching their son, Shawn, to walk without falling down, communicate with the aid of a picture book, and extend the number of sounds he makes. "Now he actually wants to interact and play," they said.
- Susan Donovan, former board member of The Arc of Somerset County, said her daughter Megan entered Preschool Disabled as a nonverbal, anti-social, developmentally delayed 27-month-old, and blossomed into an animated, social butterfly. "Megan's metamorphosis was extraordinary, and she has been soaring ever since!" said her proud mom. Today, Megan is a typically-developing 7th-grader at Branchburg Central Middle School, and has a Junior Blue Belt in Tae Kwon Do.
- Kelly Hartigan-Love praised the Early Intervention and Preschool Disabled Programs for providing her twin sons with the foundation they needed to succeed later in life. Therapies involving a communication device, an adaptive seating arrangement, and early stages of toilet training all led to achievements physicians told her were impossible.
- When Ayush Kar, 3, entered the Preschool Disabled Program, he did not make eye contact, lacked motor and social skills, and was "out of control at times," reported his sister Ayesha, 13. "Ayush never made an attempt to communicate with anyone," she said. "I could see his improvement immediately after week one of the Preschool Disabled Program. Today, Ayush is miles away from where he started, all because of JDECC. He makes better eye contact and communicates in his own special way. Autism may be incurable, but JDECC showed our family that my brother can and will get better!"



A heartfelt thank you to all of the staff and students of the Preschool Disabled Program. We will miss you, and wish you well.

Staff of the Preschool Disabled Program.

CHILDHOOD CENTER

The Earlier the Intervention, the Better!

At the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center (JDECC), intervention begins as early as birth, and extends to 3 years old. Regardless of the medical diagnosis, the earlier intervention begins, the greater the probability for optimizing a child's physical, intellectual, social and emotional capabilities.

For children born with muscular torticollis, for example, where the muscles on one side of the neck are shorter than the other, early intervention can mean the difference between a child growing up looking straight ahead or with his/her head tilted. Early intervention is also critical for the development of language skills.

Jennifer Orlick, Assistant Director of the Early Intervention Program (EIP), encourages all parents to consider placing their children in EIP if their children were born prematurely or have a medically diagnosed disability or the predisposition for a disability. "Many children who are born premature have to catch up with developmental milestones, such as smiling and grasping toys or objects by 3 months old," Jennifer explained. "It is important to note when a child is having difficulty tracking movement with one or both eyes, is unresponsive to loud noises, or babbles rather than imitates sounds by 4 months old. Parents who believe their child may need help, are advised to follow up on those instincts."

The benefits of EIP extend far into the future. One parent of a young student at JDECC wished she had sent her older son to EIP, as well, to improve a speech impediment. "I had no idea his speech was so delayed," she said. "He could have benefited from EIP and saved us a lot of grief."



Among the specialty services EIP provides are speech and language therapy, feeding, augmentative communication, occupational therapy and sensory integration, physical therapy, ambulation, recommendations for special seating and other adaptive equipment, and the fabrication of hand and foot orthotics and splints.

STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES

Mike Clancy placed his daughter, Mikayla, in both EIP and Developmental Daycare after she was diagnosed with autism at 16 months old. He appreciated the variety of techniques therapists used, including sign language and the Picture Exchange Communication (PEC) and Greenspan Methods.

"Mikayla really progressed with occupational and physical therapy," her father said. "She started using her hands to do things she had been doing with her feet, like picking up a ball. And the obstacle course made her more sure-footed. To this day she is agile."

Therapists tailor EIP to the individual needs of a child and the primary concerns of the family. Services and support are provided in a setting that is natural and convenient for the family, such as the home, local library, or childcare facility including the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center in Manville.

Parents who believe their child may benefit by early intervention are advised to call the New Jersey Early Intervention System at 800-322-8174 for a free evaluation of eligibility. If the child is eligible for this program, a service coordinator will be assigned to contact the family. For more information, please call Jennifer Orlick at 908-725-2266, ext. 633.

See more about the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center on the next page.

From Early Intervention to After Care: *Learning to Live Your Dreams*

From the first spontaneous “haaa” for “hi” from a student diagnosed with autism, to the mainstreaming of a 6-year old who goes on to graduate college, staff members at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center celebrate the achievement of milestones some pediatricians declared impossible. “Making a positive impact on the lives of children and their families is what Jerry Davis is all about,” said Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services.

Families from Somerset County and beyond have been relying on JDECC for more than 30 years. The Center’s comprehensive interdisciplinary programs are tailored to the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of individuals with a diverse range of abilities.

The programs at JDECC are top quality and affordable. In addition to Early Intervention, programs include Developmental Daycare for children ages 18 months to 3 years, Private Preschool for typically developing children ages 3 to 5, After Care for all ages to adulthood, private therapy, and special group sessions.

EARLY INTERVENTION

For the Early Intervention Program (EIP), therapists visit families at home or a place convenient for the family (See *The Earlier the Intervention, the Better!* on page 7)

DEVELOPMENTAL DAYCARE

Developmental Daycare is provided for typically developing students as well as students with developmental delays.

Mikayla Clancy received EIP services and attended Developmental Daycare after being diagnosed with autism at 16 months old. Her father, Mike Clancy, said he benefited from Daycare as much as Mikayla did. He and his late wife, Mary Kay, observed the EI therapists and applied their care-giving techniques at home.

“It is essential for parents and teachers to communicate regularly,” Laura said. “That’s why we provide parents with daily notes and a monthly newsletter. More important, we encourage families to participate in classroom activities.”

PRIVATE PRESCHOOL

“Many people don’t realize that JDECC provides services for typically developing children ages 3 to 6,” Laura noted. Private Preschool teaches kindergarten readiness skills through hands-on activities that challenge the imagination, engage creative thinking, and assist socialization as well as optimal growth and development.

“Young children learn best when they feel safe and secure in their classrooms,” noticed former Principal Gail Strong. “By encouraging young children’s social and emotional development, JDECC strengthens all aspects of learning.”

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

Before and After Care is provided for students in the Private Preschool Program from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

JDECC also manages an After Care Program funded by the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities for students from other schools, ages 5 through adult. From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., After Care allows individuals with developmental disabilities to stay at JDECC until they are adults and can be transitioned into employment or residential programs. “One student came to our After Care Program as a teenager and stayed until he was 21 and began working at the Branchburg production and training center,” Laura said. “Once you enroll in one of The Arc’s programs, you become part of our family.”



Many people don’t realize that JDECC provides services for typically developing children ages 3 to 6.



Developmental Daycare

JDECC Develops Group Sessions

SPEECH • MOVEMENT • MOMMY AND ME SIGNING • PRESCHOOL PREP

For those who would like extra practice but cannot afford private therapy, the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center is developing group sessions in speech, movement, sign language, and preschool preparation. Group sessions, to be led by therapists and teachers, will provide students with the additional benefit of interacting with peers and developing their social skills.

SPEECH CAMP

JDECC offered its premiere Speech Camp to 30- to 42-month-old students every Wednesday in July. Parents were so pleased, they asked for additional sessions. Students practiced imitating, identifying objects as well as people's names, and sharing with one another. Each session focused on a theme, such as the letters "b" and "p." Students progressed from making sounds to speaking in full sentences.

"Speech Camp was one little girl's first group experience," said Jennifer Orlick, Assistant Director of the Early Intervention Program. "It was rewarding to watch her advance from feeling frightened to interacting freely with her teacher and peers."

MOVEMENT CAMP

A Movement Camp is also being developed for 30- to 42-month-old students. "This is a formative age, when children are developing body awareness," explained Jennifer. "They are

making mental-motor connections: synchronizing their minds and muscles so when they walk up a step, they know to put their foot down."

Movements such as throwing a ball overhead will help students develop muscle strength, stability, and balance.

MOMMY AND ME SIGNING CLASS

Because sign language is so helpful in facilitating communication, a Mommy and Me Signing Class is being developed for parents and children ages 1 to 3. This class will be taught by a deaf education teacher.

PRESCHOOL PREP PROGRAM

For 3- to 5-year-old children who are considered borderline and in need of assistance, a Preschool Prep Program is now being developed. "Many children can benefit by extra therapy following early intervention," Jennifer said. "A Preschool Prep Program that focuses on pre-verbal and early verbal skills, and provides an introduction to academics can keep students advancing so that, by the time they get to kindergarten, they feel prepared."

Parents who are interested in participating in any of these group sessions are invited to contact Jennifer Orlick at 908-725-2266, ext. 633.

Sponsors Keep JDECC on the Leading Edge

Donations and grants provided by corporations and organizations, such as Ortho-McNeil and the Gagnon Foundation, have made it possible for the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center to educate children with some of the most progressive adaptive equipment and training techniques available. "Padded floors and high-performance headphones for improving concentration and auditory abilities are only two examples of equipment that would have been prohibitively expensive had it not been for the generosity of sponsors," noted Laura Liebel, Director of Childhood Services.

"Contributors to the annual 'Tea with Honey' fundraiser have also been instrumental in keeping JDECC on the leading edge of childcare and development," Laura added. Using proceeds raised through Tea with Honey, JDECC bought a Rifton tricycle designed to compensate for a student's lack of muscle control. Thanks to the adaptive tricycle, Natalia, who is diagnosed with cerebral palsy,

realized her dream of riding a bicycle like her typically developing sister. Secured with a head cushion and straps, Natalia practiced until she was able to pedal up and down the halls of JDECC.

A grant by the Gagnon Foundation paid for a therapist to learn the Miller Method for treating children with developmental delays. This method is an alternative to Applied Behavior Analysis. And a grant from Johnson & Johnson allowed for the purchase of adaptive computer programs, an adaptive keyboard, and a touch screen so that students with special needs can develop their computers skills early.

"Our tuition is kept competitively low and pays for routine operating expenses," Laura explained. "The support we receive from corporations, organizations, and caring individuals allows us to provide the extras that make a lasting difference in the lives of children and their families. We are very grateful for the support we receive."



Jim O'Rourke

Jim O'Rourke Appointed Director of Employment Services

Jim O'Rourke was appointed Director of Employment Services, effective August 25. From 2003 to 2006, Jim served as Contract Sales Manager at The Arc of Somerset County. More recently, he was Director of Occupational Services at The Arc/Mercer, Inc.

"Being at The Arc of Somerset County feels like coming home," Jim said. "I am happy to be back, reconnecting with colleagues and especially consumers."

Jim holds an undergraduate degree from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania and an MBA from Rutgers University.

"I am excited to have Jim here, and look forward to benefiting from his expertise in the area of Employment Services," said Lauren Panarella, Executive Director. Welcome back Jim!

Employment Services Earns Record Revenues

DID YOU KNOW...that in the first two months of the current fiscal year, employees completed projects for HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, Oticon, Professional Management Associates, Somerset County Business Partnership, Stoelzle-Oberglas, Synergy Direct Marketing, Top Safety Products, TRIMLINE Medical Products, and Vitakraft?

DID YOU KNOW...that employees in Branchburg, Gannett, Jill Court, and Valley Park are currently busy with ongoing contract work?

DID YOU KNOW...that, in July, the TRIMLINE team assembled more than 500,000 tube and connector sets used to produce blood pressure cuffs? Congratulations to employees and staff!

DID YOU KNOW...that we are always looking for work for employees at our production centers? For help with projects, please 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 at four local production and training 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 and sub-assembly, energy conservation, cosmetics, and direct mailing businesses.

Employment Services is committed to providing customers with a reliable and cost-effective alternative to in-house assembly, packaging, mail handling, cleaning, and light office tasks. As an added benefit, companies that employ consumers increase the visibility of people with developmental disabilities within their community.



Tom Boney and Barry Bohler assemble tubes for TRIMLINE.

Save the Date!

SPREAD THE WORD OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT MONTH

The Arc of Somerset County employs hundreds of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Organizations that need reliable and cost-effective services are encouraged to call Jim O'Rourke, Director of Employment Services, at 908-707-0920.

LISTEN TO WDVR FM BROADCAST PROGRAM TO FEATURE THE ARC OF SOMERSET COUNTY

On Nov. 3, a radio show entitled "Out and About" with host Richard Gerstner of WDVR FM 89.7, 91.9 in Princeton, will broadcast an hourlong radio show featuring The Arc of Somerset County. Interviewees will include Lauren Panarella, Executive Director, as well as program directors and administrators.

Tune in to the show to hear about The Arc's latest programs as well as The Arc Angel Gala on November 14 in Far Hills! For more information, please contact Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development at 908-725-8544, ext. 613.

A PARTNERSHIP TO REALIZE DREAMS JOIN THE 2008 ARC ANGEL GALA ON NOVEMBER 14

The honoree at the 2008 Arc Angel Gala, scheduled for Friday, November 14, at the Fiddler's Elbow Country Club in Far Hills, will be TRIMLINE Medical Products Corporation. A highly valued business partner, TRIMLINE has provided nearly a decade of employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Musician Brittany Maier, who played at Carnegie Hall on September 15, will be giving a special performance. Blind at birth and diagnosed with autism, Ms. Maier was dubbed by *The New York Daily News* as "perhaps the leading female musical savant in the world." Don't miss her inspiring performance!

The emcee for the event will be Somerset County Freeholder Jack M. Ciattarelli. The band The Exceptions will provide music for dancing.

To date, supporters for the 2008 Arc Angel Gala include: **Chairman Circle**—B. W. Bosenberg & Company Inc.; **Benefactor**—CIT Group, Inc. and TRIMLINE Medical Products Corporation; and **Arc Angel Circle Members**—Amper, Politziner & Mattia; Burgdorff Realtors; Chubb & Sons; Somerset County Freeholder Jack M. Ciattarelli; John & Carol Fanning; Henry Schein, Inc.; Kaplow & Co. Insurance; Richard Lockwood; Eric & Jacqui Mandelbaum; The MDE Group, Inc.; Fred & Roe Patterson; Skylands Community Bank; Viking Termite & Pest Control, Inc.; and Wellcraft Construction Company. Said Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development, "We look forward to seeing you there!"

To sponsor the Gala and/or purchase tickets, please contact Alfie DeMoss at 908-725-8544, ext. 613.

FUN-FILLED BENEFIT FOR CHILDREN "TEA WITH HONEY" SET FOR FEBRUARY 8, 2009

The 10th annual "Tea With Honey" fundraiser is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. on February 8, 2009, at the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge. Every year, Tea With Honey raises funds to provide services to children and their families through the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, the PACT (Parents and Children Together) Program, and Camp Jotoni. Tickets are \$35 each for children and \$65 for adults. Lunch and entertainment will be followed by a silent auction.

The benefit's raffle winner will receive a \$1,000 gift certificate to the spectacular Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York, a 265-room Victorian castle built on Lake Mohonk amidst acres of pristine forest and winding trails 90 minutes north of Manhattan. Along with a luxurious spa, the Mohonk Mountain House offers golf, tennis, carriage rides, boating, fishing, and cross-country skiing. Raffle tickets sell for only \$20 each or three for \$50.

For tickets and information, please contact Tara Abbott, Assistant Director of Development at 908-725-8544, ext. 610.

Become a Member of The Arc of Somerset County

The Arc of Somerset County is always looking for new members to help with advocacy efforts. "Numbers count in making our voices heard," said Tara Abbott, Assistant Director of Development. "Adding your voice to others makes legislators listen more carefully when establishing public policy that benefits people with disabilities and their families."

To become a member of The Arc of Somerset County, please contact Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development at 908-725-8544, ext. 613.



least tolerated) in our homes, schoolyards, and movie theatres.

Why is that? Could it be that people are oblivious to the fundamental disregard for the rights and wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities in most parts of the world? Could it be that people are unaware that three- to five-percent of our population have intellectual and developmental disabilities? Could it be that people underestimate the power of words to cause as much—if not more—harm than actions?

Or could it simply be that people have forgotten the foundation of our great country and the basic premise that all individuals have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

“Tropic Thunder” offers a cheap thrill at the expense of human beings who are often the most isolated and least able to defend themselves. If more people understood the adverse impact of this film on the disability community, they would not find it funny at all and would share their views with senior members of the film community.

Best regards,

Lauren Panarella
Executive Director

An article by Lauren Panarella, entitled, “Tropic Thunder is Disturbing,” appeared in *The Bernardsville News* on August 28.

Advocacy Corner

Together with The Arc of New Jersey and local chapters statewide, The Arc of Somerset County has championed the following advocacy issues:

- **Community Residential Waiting List for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities:** Today 8,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in New Jersey are on a waiting list to receive residential services. The Arc of New Jersey’s “10 Percent Solution” proposed a \$12.5 million allocation to the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the FY 2009 state budget, plus federal matching funds, to provide residential services to individuals in need. This budget item was approved.
- **Medicaid Co-pay:** The Arc of New Jersey waged a vigorous and successful campaign against a state budget initiative to impose co-payments for Medicaid beneficiaries. This topic is no longer under consideration.



- **Cost of Providing Care:** Although The Arc of New Jersey fought valiantly for a 3.6 percent increase in the state budget to help mitigate increasing costs of providing care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, there was no increase in the FY 2009 budget.

- **Ask the Advocate Day:**

The Arc of Somerset County Family Support Services hosted a workshop this past spring to address quality-of-life issues for families of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Topics included Medicaid co-pays, hourly wages of Direct Support Professionals and public transportation.

- **Tropic Thunder:** The Arc of Somerset County published an Op-Ed article in several local newspapers to repudiate the offensive language used in the film, *Tropic Thunder*, to characterize individuals with developmental disabilities. (See *Executive Director’s Message*, page 1.)



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