



# HERALD

## A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director



Lauren Panarella

The Arc of Somerset County has enjoyed a year of success in providing outstanding services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We enter the 2008-2009 fiscal year with a strong commitment to our Vision. (See page 12.) Our strategic plan reflects this commitment and assures that all of our services and advocacy initiatives are aligned with our Mission to help individuals with disabilities and their families realize their dreams.

Over the past year, we provided services to more than 1,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We have assisted them in establishing living arrangements, learning new skills, obtaining employment, and interacting with residents in their communities. We could not have accomplished this without the 375 employees who demonstrate their creativity, dedication, and caring every day. Nor could we have accomplished this without the 500 volunteers who have so generously supported our recreational activities, renovated and redecored our facilities, and planned—as well as

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## Congratulations to Winners of Special Olympics NJ



Amy Blomgren and Barbara Cornelius enjoy victory!

Congratulations to the many athletes from The Arc of Somerset County who participated in Special Olympics New Jersey beginning with the pre-qualifying games on May 3 at Basile Field in Bridgewater. Those who went on to compete in the statewide finals, from June 6 to 8 at the College of New Jersey in Ewing, include the medal winners mentioned below.

- **Ardley Group Home in Hillsborough:** Evelyn Ramundo (2nd place for softball throw and 3rd place for 50-meter dash), and Elliot Zuckerman (1st place for softball throw)
- **Cambridge Group Home in Bridgewater:** Veronica Cooper (gold medals for 50- and 100-meter dashes) and Donna Goble (bronze medal for 50-meter dash and ribbon for softball throw)
- **Cedar Grove Group Home in Branchburg:** Anthony Raczynski (bronze medal for softball throw)
- **Commons Apartments in Bridgewater:** Felice Burton (silver medal for 50-meter walk), William Coleman (silver medal for 100-meter walk), and Kyle Mueller (silver medal for 25-meter walk)
- **Franklin Group Home in Franklin:** Paul Bisson, Roland Petrella (bronze medals for 100-meter run and softball throw), and John Rusignuolo (gold medals for 100-meter walk and softball throw)
- **Griggstown Group Home in Griggstown:** Donald Belcher (ribbons for 50- and 100-meter walks), Joseph Owsik (5th place for 50-meter walk and 6th place for 100-meter walk), and Charles Souder (ribbons for 50- and 100-meter walks)
- **Mobus Group Home in North Plainfield:** Donna McHugh (two gold medals for walking and softball)

See Special Olympics on page 6

## A Message from Edmond A. Brown, President

Dear Friends,

This has been a successful year, indeed! I wish to thank all of our stakeholders for the level of commitment and dedication that continues to drive us forward. As you may know, this has been a year of considerable change within the ranks of our organization. Veteran employees and board members have left The Arc of Somerset County to begin a new chapter in their lives. I'd like to acknowledge these individuals for their outstanding service, and share a few words with you about the future.

Bill Mackay, Past President and board member for almost a decade, has brought tremendous value to The Arc. A Renaissance Man of quick



Edmond A. Brown

wit and many talents, Bill has led and served with passion, a keen intellect, and uncommon devotion. As he leaves the board this year, we wish Bill success with writing his memoirs. We will keep him in our hearts.

Into her second term, Lisa Dudzik has served on the board and Development Committee with energy, creativity, and distinction. Lisa has played an integral role in developing and executing strategies for some of our most successful fundraising activities. The good news is that, although Lisa is leaving the board, she will resume her duties as a key member of the Development Committee.

See President on page 2

## 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.

### THE ARC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President/Treasurer.....Edmond A. Brown  
1st VP/Secretary.....Eric Mandelbaum  
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Associate  
Executive Director.....Christopher Corvino

### STAFF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

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Development.....Alfie DeMoss  
Early Intervention  
Program.....Jennifer Orlick  
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Services.....Christopher Corvino  
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Nursing Services.....Elaine Giannascoli  
PACT.....Jeanne Guarnieri  
Residential Services.....Chris Gunning  
Safety &  
Maintenance.....Gabe Trepiccione, CFM

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*President, continued from page 1*

With specialties in Neurodevelopment Disabilities, Pediatric Developmental Behavioral Health, and Pediatrics, Dr. Kapila Seshadri's technical expertise has been invaluable to the board and agency. Since 2005, it has been our privilege to work with Dr. Seshadri, and we wish her continued success in her distinguished career.

I also wish to acknowledge the exceptional contributions of Jeanne Radich who leaves her position as Director of Human Resources after 15 years of stellar service. As a result of Jeanne's zeal for implementing "best practices" in HR management, our department has one of the most comprehensive benefits packages of all Arc organizations in New Jersey. We extend our best wishes to Jeanne.

I look to the future with great optimism. New talent has joined the agency, and we have a Strategic Plan—a blueprint—for achieving critical goals and objectives. The biggest challenge we face this year is marshalling the financial resources to deliver quality programs and services to Somerset County residents who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. With no increase in the FY 2009 state budget to keep pace with the rising costs of providing optimal care, we must turn to you for support. As you review your plans for this year, please keep The Arc of Somerset County and its programs in your thoughts.

Warmest regards,

*Edmond A. Brown*  
President

## sanofi-aventis Volunteers Prepare Camp Jotoni for Guests

Nearly 90 volunteers from the Information Technology Department of sanofi-aventis in Bridgewater spent June 6 sprucing up Camp Jotoni in Warren before its formal opening on June 29. Led by Executive Associate Veronique DeBock, the volunteers cleared brush, installed a fence, planted flowers, cleaned cabins, and prepped and painted the dining hall. In addition to applying elbow grease and ingenuity, sanofi-aventis donated \$1,500 to offset the cost of supplies.

This is the second consecutive year that sanofi-aventis helped prepare Camp Jotoni for 200 campers—individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities ages 5 through adult.

"Thank you from the entire Arc community, especially parents," said Lauren Panarella, Executive Director. "As a result of your generosity, campers will be able to practice their social and motor skills while playing, swimming, and developing lifelong friendships."





## The Arc of Somerset County Honors Its Business Partners

The Arc of Somerset County held its second Business Partnership Awards Ceremony on April 25 at the Holiday Inn in Somerset. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the companies that employ consumers to work at their sites. More than 200 adults with disabilities from The Arc of Somerset County provide New Jersey companies with reliable and cost-effective services.



From left to right are Dr. Garry Gewant and Dr. Joe Petrosino of the Somerset County Vocational and Technical High School, Executive Director Lauren Panarella, Somerset County Freeholder Jack M. Ciattarelli, and Christopher Corvino, Associate Executive Director.

Those who received a Certificate of Appreciation include: AMC Theatres, American Jewelry Supply, Bernards Township Library, Brandywine Senior Living, Bridgewater Wholesalers Inc.®, The Courier News, EWA, Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, Kings Super Markets, Kohl's, Mara Shipping Inc., Montgomery High School, NJ Water Supply Authority, Ortho-McNeil™, Pathmark, Pitney Bowes, Shop-Rite, Somerset Medical Center, Stop&Shop, Target, Ten-pin Bowling, WAL★MART®, and Wegmans®.



Consumers and Job Coaches enjoy the awards program. From left to right are Clifford Leon, Cheryl Freeza, Adam Walck, Job Coach Alison Malnak, Barbara Pauli, and Ben Holbert.



Ben Holbert, an employee at Target, greets Executive Director Lauren Panarella.

For those wondering whether to hire individuals with disabilities, Manager Tim Curran from Pathmark in North Plainfield called it a sound business decision. "Consumers deliver a top-quality performance!" he enthused. "Not only do Job Coaches do an excellent job of preparing consumers with training, but they support the employer and consumer throughout the duration of the employment contract."

It's easy to be kind when you love your job, according to consumer Adam Walck, a magazine fulfillment agent for EWA in Green Brook. His boss, Manager Gary Weidman, was impressed by how quickly Adam mastered his responsibilities. "Once Adam understood what was expected of him, he took the ball and ran with it! He is always punctual, efficient, and has a positive attitude."



Wegmans Managers Katie Altenburg and Evan Coy accept their awards.

Christopher Corvino, Associate Executive Director, is grateful to all of the employers for giving Arc consumers an opportunity to earn a living, be part of their larger community, and receive satisfaction from a job well done. "Thank you for recognizing The Arc as an effective business partner," he said.



## Sharon McClellan Promoted To Director of Support Services

Effective April 20, Sharon McClellan, formerly Social Worker for the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center and Home Interventionist for PACT (Parents and Children Together), was promoted to Director of Support Services. “Sharon’s varied experiences and educational background

will be a tremendous asset to the Support Services Department,” said an enthusiastic Lauren Panarella, Executive Director.

Employed at The Arc of Somerset County since 2003, Sharon’s previous positions include Outreach Coordinator, Developmental Disabilities Service Coordinator, Director of Quality Assurance, and Facilities Inspector for the State Department of Mental Retardation in Connecticut.

Congratulations Sharon.

## Caregivers Enjoy a Day of Pampering

On May 10, The Arc of Somerset County held its first annual Caring for Mothers and Others event at the Holiday Inn in Somerset. Designed to provide a day of respite for caregivers of children with disabilities, this free day-long event offered an array of helpful and healing information and activities ranging from nutritional counseling and massage to facial makeovers and astrological charts. More than a dozen Arc staff members and friends donated their talents and skills to provide parents with a day of relaxation and fun.

“Everyone seemed so pleased to have a day focused solely on themselves,” said Sharon McClellan, Director of Support

Services. “Being a parent or guardian can be very stressful, especially if you have a child with disabilities. Many parents are so overwhelmed with caring for loved ones 24/7—in addition to work and home responsibilities—that self-care is usually placed on a back burner.”

“We felt the need to provide parents and guardians with a day of respite—an opportunity to do things they would probably never do for themselves,” she added.

A professionally staffed daycare center fed and entertained the children of attendees, while the adults relaxed and enjoyed pampering, a buffet lunch, and musical entertainment. Jan Collins of Enhanced Wellbeing and Bodywork in Bound Brook provided helpful tips on alleviating stress and thinking positively.

Caregivers were encouraged to develop mindfulness—to be present in the moment, paying attention to how they feel, and tending to their own needs so that they can remain positive and proactive. Among the stress relievers mentioned were yoga, stretching, meditation, deep breathing, visualization, and affirmations.

“You can read about self-care endlessly, but Caring for Mothers and Others allowed participants to experience it firsthand,” Sharon said. “I would like to thank our dedicated and creative volunteers for sharing their time on a Saturday, particularly on Mother’s Day weekend. We look forward to seeing more parents and guardians next year.”



Caregivers enjoy a day of respite.

## The Lou Baldino Legacy Recreation Fund

The Arc of Somerset County established The Lou Baldino Legacy Recreation Fund—in honor of Lou Baldino, Associate Executive Director of The Arc of Warren County and former Executive Director of The Arc of Somerset County—to enhance the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities through recreational and fitness-related activities.

To qualify for funding, activities may:

- Engage consumers in exercise or movement.
- Offer vacations that have a health, fitness, or exercise component.
- Educate and encourage consumers to participate in health, fitness and exercise programs.

Members of The Arc of Somerset County who would like to apply are invited to contact Lauren Panarella, Executive Director, at 908-725-8544, ext. 604.





## Fifth and Sixth Graders Receive Sensitivity Training

On April 29, Amy Burns, Assistant Manager of Employment Services, provided sensitivity training regarding people with disabilities to more than 200 students in the fifth and sixth grades at Apshawa and Paradise Knoll Elementary Schools in West Milford. Rewarded by the students' rapt attention, Amy explained the nature of disabilities, particularly those that are developmental, physical, cognitive, and learning-related.



*Fifth graders at Apshawa Elementary School*

To demonstrate, Amy had students participate in learning exercises, such as folding a towel without using their hands, writing their names to read properly when held up to a mirror, and wearing goggles covered with chapstick while reading and writing.

She encouraged students to refrain from making fun of anyone, particularly those who are different, and to treat everyone with kindness. Amy knows firsthand about disabilities, having lost a leg two years ago.

"During the first presentation, it seemed to me that disclosing my prosthetic leg would show students that not all disabilities are visible and that they could occur at any time during your life," Amy recalled.

The students peppered Amy with questions she found amusing: "Can you still take a shower? Swim? Jump?" she said. "Now I never take my own health for granted," Amy told the students. One impressed boy said that if he could, like Amy, he would love to work with individuals who have disabilities.

Amy enjoyed her interactions with the students so much that she plans

to return to the schools and provide sensitivity training again next year. Her presentation was provided in conjunction with "Peace Week" in the West Milford Public School district, to meet statewide requirements for providing anti-bullying and violence prevention initiatives in elementary schools. Peace-related themes included diversity, tolerance, and conflict resolution.

Principal Stephen T. Wisniewski, West Milford Township Public Schools and Paradise Knoll School in Oak Ridge, thanked Amy for enriching their Peace Week celebration. "Our students left this program with a greater understanding and increased compassion for people with any number of disabilities," he said. "Her initiative made a difference at our school."

## Jerry Davis Students Raise Caterpillars into Butterflies



*Alex Wildgoose*

Springtime brought fun, excitement and adventure to students at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center as they explored themes from the new science curriculum, including "Bugs, Worms, and Frogs." The highlight of this lesson was feeding and caring for caterpillars, which, within 10 days, emerged as butterflies. "The

children were so excited, watching the butterflies flutter around their garden habitat," said Laura Liebel, Director, Childhood

Services. During a special ceremony outside in the playground, Jerry Davis had the children set their butterflies free.

Jerry Davis purchased its new innovative science curriculum with money raised at the Tea with Honey fundraiser in February. The curriculum employs a broad range of interactive, hands-on activities and projects to teach scientific principles that ensure kindergarten-readiness for all graduating children. Teachers were impressed with how well the students assimilated the academic and experiential materials. "What a joy it was to see the children experience the miracles of science and nature!" said Laura.

## Far Hill Students Raise \$456 for Jerry Davis

From October through May, fifth-grade students from the Far Hills Country Day School visited the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center twice a month to assist in daycare and preschool classes. On their last day in May, students presented Jerry Davis with a check for \$456, which they raised by completing household chores.

Everyone at Jerry Davis was touched by the students' commitment and generosity, having spent months emptying dishwashers, setting tables, cleaning rooms, and,

at one house, feeding chickens, said Laura Liebel, Director, Childhood Services.

"We really get to know the fifth-grade students who come from Far Hills every year," Laura added. "Some of them end up returning to Jerry Davis as adult volunteers and contributors. They are so grateful for their experiences here, and the skills they develop as responsible, empathetic citizens." Thank you, students, for your friendship and commitment.



*Jerry Davis student Shawn Fisher is flanked by Far Hills students.*



*Special Olympics, continued from page 1*

- **South Street Apartments in Manville:** Barbara Blair (1st place for 25- and 50-meter walks) and Barbara Cornelius (3rd place for 50-meter walk and 5th place for 100-meter walk)
- **Stevens Lane in Martinsville:** Lori Ellis and Marylou Servidio (2nd place for 100-meter wheelchair race and 1st place for 25-meter wheelchair race)
- **Supported Living Apartments in Manville:** Sharon Booker (ribbon for 100-meter walk and 3rd place for 50-meter walk), Rosemary Dailey (ribbon for bocce ball), Andrea Yarnall (2nd place for back-stroke swimming and 5th place for freestyle swimming), and Victor Yarnall (1st place for bench press, dead lift, squat, and overall lifting)
- **Union Avenue Apartments in Bridgewater:** Tracey Crockett (gold medals for 50- and 100-meter dashes), Elvina Grimes (bronze medal for 50-meter dash and ribbon for softball throw), Victoria Mihal (two gold medals for track), Clifford Pierre (ribbon for softball throw), and Ann Marie Whalen (gold medal for softball and silver medal for track)
- **Warren Group Home in Warren:** William Tom Boney (5th place for 50- and 100-meter walks) and Charles Huber (gold medal for 50-meter walk)

On June 6, opening ceremonies of Special Olympics New Jersey were held at the Trenton Thunder Stadium. County champions participated in a torch run and parade of athletes, culminating in center field. The police standing on the sidelines shook the hands of athletes as they passed.

"Everyone looks forward to the Special Olympics all year," said Laura Smith, Assistant Director of Residential Services. "When athletes are not competing in special events, they enjoy the carnival, games, food, and other giveaways. Participants get so excited!"

"For newcomers to The Arc community, these team-building and goal-setting activities are a new and inspiring experience," she adds. Congratulations to participants and winners alike. You are an inspiration to us all.





## Residential Services Creates High-Quality Home Life: Safe Housing, Community Involvement, Recreation

Professionals in Residential Services are enthusiastic about receiving three Community Development Block Grants from Bridgewater and Franklin Townships to construct sidewalks and emergency egress doors at the Union Avenue Apartments, as well as to improve accessibility at the Franklin and Claremont Group Homes. "Safety is one of our primary concerns," said Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services. "The egress doors will enable us to wheel beds directly out of the bedrooms, and evacuate all 16 residents within 3 minutes of an emergency."

Additionally, Residential Services received funding from the State of New Jersey for renovations at the following group homes.

- **Ardley in Hillsborough:** Widen the bathroom for wheelchair accessibility, refinish the dining room floor, replace the driveway and sidewalk, install Belgian block curbing, and replace rotted trim.
- **Cambridge in Bridgewater:** Install new air conditioning, vinyl siding, and gutters.
- **Cedar Grove in Branchburg:** Replace the driveway, kitchen floor, and cabinets.
- **Claremont in Franklin Park:** Replace the carpet and sidewalk, and renovate the bathroom.
- **Griggstown:** Remove trees.
- **Mobus in North Plainfield:** Replace the roof.
- **Rocky Hill:** Widen the sidewalk for emergency evacuation.
- **Steinmetz in Hillsborough:** Replace the driveway and dining room floor.
- **Warren:** Replace the driveway, kitchen cabinets, siding, and bay windows.

### CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

In addition to safe and accessible housing, Residential Services provides residents with personal and professional development opportunities to enrich their lives. "We give residents choices," said Stella Guludene, Assistant Director, Residential Ser-

vices. "Residents can participate in employment programs, compete in the Special Olympics, join a support group, become advocates, attend socials, or simply choose to stay home."

The Arc of Somerset County has the capacity to house 115 people in 14 group homes, 3 supervised apartments, and 8 supported living apartments. A respite group home is available for short stays, usually in an emergency.

Presently, 8,000 individuals with disabilities are on a waiting list for residential services in New Jersey. Nearly half of them are considered high priority because their parents or guardians are aging, and, within time, will no longer be able to care for them. Some of these parents are in their 80s.

Caring for adults with disabilities can be physically strenuous, particularly when they require assistance with daily routines such as bathing, dressing, and eating. Many distressed parents, who fear their children may become institutionalized after they are gone, are lobbying for more residential services in New Jersey.

"Placements in group homes and supervised or supported living apartments are made through referrals from case managers for the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities," explained Chris. The Arc of Somerset County joins parents in advocating for increased housing, and to eliminate the waiting list as quickly as possible.

At The Arc of Somerset County, individuals with disabilities get to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. "Our high-quality home life is designed to help residents feel happy and content with life," Stella noted. "The smiles on their faces say it all."



*New siding and driveway in Warren*



*New kitchen cabinets in Warren*



### Arc Resident Honored by NJACP

Sharon Booker, a recipient of Residential Services, was honored by the New Jersey Association of Community Providers at the 9th annual STARS Awards Dinner on June 9 at the Westin Princeton at Forrestal Village in Princeton, NJ. A Cafeteria Worker at the Somerset County Medical Center in Somerville, Sharon was honored for embracing the opportunity to retain a job, pay taxes, and lead a high-quality, meaningful life. Her accomplishments demonstrate the degree to which Arc residents contribute to the community.

Congratulations Sharon!

## Excursion Club Takes Residents into the Community

Every Friday evening, Residential Services hosts a social, such as dancing at the Valley Park Adult Training Center in Hillsborough. On Wednesday nights, residents enjoy bingo at VFW Post 2290 Hall in Manville. But the Excursion Club of The Arc of Somerset County aims to take recreation further by getting residents out into the community to have a good time.

"Getting our folks out into the community is important to maintaining a well-balanced lifestyle, even if it's just to go out for ice cream," said Chris Gunning, Director of Residential Services.

On the schedule for July is a day at the beach in Point Pleasant, and a picnic at Colonial Park in Franklin Township. "Some of our residents have never been to the beach before," said Stella Guludene, Assistant Director, Residential Services. "They are so excited about going!"

In 2006, to launch the Excursion Club, Residential Services employees met with consumers at the Valley Park Adult Training Center to ask about the places they would most like to visit. On the residents' wish list were nearly 100 dream destinations, including the Philadelphia Zoo, Camden Aquarium, Statue of Liberty, Circle Line Boat Cruise, and Englishtown. "We have not been able to get to all of these destinations," said Chris, "but intend to get to them eventually."

For those who can afford to travel, Residential Services makes arrangements with Guided Tours, a professionally supervised travel and vacation service based in Pennsylvania. "Our

residents have traveled to Florida, Disneyworld, and Memphis," said Stella.

"With all of the responsibilities of work and home life, it's important for residents to have outside recreation as well," Chris said. "Residents really appreciate these trips, and don't take small pleasures for granted."



Seated, from left to right, are Barbara Sarno and Crystal Dabonski. Standing are Nurse Cheryl Wendell, Donald Belcher, Joe Owsik, Manager Glen Wisner, and Charlie Souder.

## Employment Services Earns Record Revenues

**DID YOU KNOW...** that, this year, Employment Services earned revenues of more than \$214,000—an all-time high? Congratulations to consumers and staff members at the Branchburg, Gannett, Jill Court, and Valley Park facilities!

**DID YOU KNOW...** that the TRIMLINE team has expanded to include additional members at the Gannett, Valley Park, and Branchburg facilities? Daily assembly of the tube and connector sets used to produce blood pressure cuffs has doubled

from 11,000 to 22,000—closing in on the goal of 25,000 per day. Annual projections are expected to reach 6 million!

**DID YOU KNOW...** that consumers at all of our production and training centers are busily engaged with projects that are ongoing?

**DID YOU KNOW...** that we are always looking for work for our production centers? For help with projects, please contact Britt Blomgren, Contract Sales Manager, at 908-707-0920 or [brittb@thearcofsomerset.org](mailto: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.



From left to right, Employment Services staff members Trina Trent, Britt Blomgren, Cheryl Brantley, and Charlotte Hayden.



## Annual Membership Meeting, Awards Ceremony, and Exhibit

On June 16, more than 140 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, board members, staff, and guests participated in the Annual Membership Meeting, Awards Ceremony, and Exhibit at Bridgewater Manor. An impressive exhibit showcasing the accomplishments of each department at The Arc of Somerset County was followed by a business meeting, elections, and awards ceremony.



Elected were new and returning board members: Edmond Brown, President and Treasurer, Eric Mandelbaum, 1st Vice President and Secretary, Eileen Bradbury, 2nd Vice President, Fran Maher, Nominating Committee Chair, and Members Tom Brooks, Carol Fanning, Dallas Hetherington, Belinda Malave, Evelyn Morris, Brian O'Malley, Fred Patterson, Scott Ritter, Tarun Shah, and Ron Slahetka. With gratitude for their dedicated service, a fond farewell was extended to those who retired from the board: Lisa Dudzik, Bill Mackay, and Kapila Seshadri, MD.

Guest speaker Tom Baffuto, Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey, was optimistic that the state budget for the 2009 fiscal year will include funding for residential services for individuals with disabilities on the NJ Community Residential Waiting List, while funding for other programs and services is expected to remain flat.

### 2008 HONOREES ACCEPT AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Among the award recipients were: *Richard Menashe, MD*, Health Care Professional of the Year, *Mara Shipping*, Employer

of the Year, *Kirsten Marri*, Professional of the Year, *Patrice Sikora*, Volunteer of the Year, and *Fucillo & Warren Funeral Home*, Distinguished Community Service Award.

Top fundraisers for the 2008 "Step Up for The Arc" Walkathon included: *Barbara*

*Cornelius* and *Dawn Prag*, Top Individual Consumer Fundraisers, *Eric Mandelbaum*, Top Individual Fundraiser, *The Kuzian Family*, Top Family Team, and *Free and Accepted Masons: District 12*, Top Community Team.

Volunteer acknowledgments were presented to the *Free and Accepted Masons: Union Lodge 19* for their ongoing support of the Walkathon, and to the *Lions Club of Warren Township*, *Tibotec Therapeutics*, and *sanofi-aventis*

for their continuous and invaluable support of Camp Jotoni.

Congratulations and thank you to all honorees.



*Dr. Richard Menashe receives award from Executive Director Lauren Panarella.*



*Accepting the "Employee of the Year" award is Kirsten Marri (center), shown with Brian O'Malley and Donna McHugh.*



## Christopher Corvino Promoted To Associate Executive Director

Effective April 27, Christopher Corvino, was promoted to Associate Executive Director. "Christopher's excellent leadership and strategic skills have benefited not only Employment Services, but the agency as a whole," said Lauren Panarella, Executive Director. "While serving as Associate Executive Director, Christopher will also serve as Director of Employment Services until a replacement has been hired."

An employee of The Arc of Somerset County since April 2007, Christopher is now working with all departments to achieve strategic objectives, develop resources, build service programs, and ensure the highest quality of service for individuals with disabilities and their families.

Congratulations Christopher.

## DSPs Build a Career Path

Congratulations to the following employees for being chosen to participate in the Career Path—College of Direct Support Coursework for direct support professionals (DSPs): *Abdul Gabisi, George Joseph, Thomas Piravmthottiyil, Mary Tilson, and Glenn Wisner*. “Thank you for supporting this pilot project of the NJ Direct Support Professional Workforce Development Coalition,” said Karen Ennis, Director of Continuous Improvement. “We look forward to working and growing with every one of you!”

We also recognize Career Path Mentors *Cheryl Brantley* of Employment Services in Branchburg, *Elizabeth Kinyanjui* of the Ardsley Group Home, *Alison Malnak* of Supported Employment, *Nellie Ontieno* of the Stevens Lane Group Home, *Colleen Quinn* of Employment Services at Jill Court, and *Alexandria Simmons-Rhodes* of the Old Stirling Group Home for completing their level-one coursework, which included more than 40 lessons and tests. As a result, the Career Path Mentors will

receive a title upgrade and an increase in compensation. Additional title upgrades and increases in compensation are offered when each level of coursework is completed.

Recently, the College of Direct Support added classes designed to enhance frontline management skills.

Funded by a grant from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Career Path Process provides DSPs with additional training, opportunities for increased compensation, and other incentives to remain in direct care. Reducing the high turnover rate of DSPs is essential to people with disabilities and their families in ensuring consistency of care and an increase in dependable caregiving relationships.

To the DSPs who are building a Career Path, Karen said, “We are genuinely blessed to have you on our team.” Those who would like to participate are invited to call Karen Ennis at 908-725-8544, ext. 612. All are welcome.



## A Fond Farewell to Jeanne Radich, Former Director of Human Resources

In April, Jeanne Radich left her position as Director of Human Resources after 15 years of dedicated service. Before her promotion to this post, Jeanne served as Assistant Director of Human Resources and Acting Director of Operations.

Thanks to Jeanne's high professional standards, The Arc of Somerset County has one of the most comprehensive benefits packages of all Arc organizations in New Jersey. “Jeanne has always been an invaluable resource,” said Lauren Panarella. “Thank you, Jeanne, for your thoughtful and outstanding service. We will miss you, and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.”

## Toni Gamble Appointed Director of Human Resources

Toni Gamble has been appointed Director of Human Resources effective May 12. “These past few weeks have been a wonderful experience for me,” Toni said. “Everyone has been so warm and welcoming. And there are no words for how good it feels to know that the work we do, in assisting employees, helps them better serve those in The Arc community.”

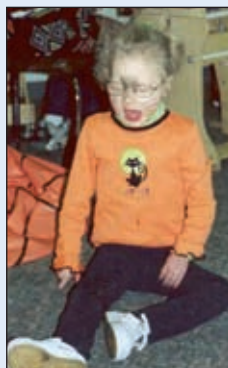
Toni comes to The Arc of Somerset County with a Professional in Human Resources certification and more than 10 years of experience in profit and not-for-profit organizations. Welcome Toni!



## Cherishing the Memories of Loved Ones

The Arc of Somerset County honors the lives of those who have recently passed.

**Megan P. Cooke** of Bridgewater (1998 to 2008), former student of the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, is survived by her parents, Peter and Carol Cooke, brothers, Christian and Ryan, and grandparents. In memory of Megan, Claudia E. Bolcik made a kind donation to Jerry Davis.



**Cheryl McLennan** (1957 to 2008), resident of the Mobus Group Home in North Plainfield, is survived by her father, John McLennan. Previously, Cheryl lived at the Glencrest Group Home in Branchburg. Among her places of employment were Penny Pinchers in Somerville, and the Martinsville and Branchburg Adult Training Centers. Known for being helpful at home and in the community, Cheryl loved to socialize, travel, and explore new activities.

Megan and Cheryl were much loved, and will be dearly missed.





## Book Sale Benefits Camp Jotoni

The Warren Lion's Club held its first annual book sale on Mother's Day weekend, drawing donations of more than 15,000 books and raising nearly \$2,500 for Camp Jotoni in Warren. The proceeds were used to purchase paint, lumber, and supplies to overhaul facilities, build fences, restore nature trails, and prune trees in time for the camp to open on June 29.

"Many book buyers had no idea Camp Jotoni was here," remarked Lions Club member and volunteer Debbie Weisman of Warren. "Many visitors commented that this 17-acre site was, indeed, an oasis for people with disabilities."

Camp Jotoni gives children and adults with disabilities an opportunity to experience the peaceful and restorative woodlands of Warren, while joining friends in games and activities that develop their social and motor skills. Parents receive a respite, knowing their family members will be cared for 24/7.

This year, campers will be delighted when they find fiction and nonfiction paperbacks, among those donated for the sale, stacked in their cabins.

For information about day and overnight programs, please contact Karina Alvarado at 908-725-2266. Thank you to the Warren Lion's Club and all of the volunteers who made the book sale such a success.



## Save the Date!

### Take Me Out To the Ballgame! Somerset County Patriots Game on August 16

Sponsors are needed to host The Arc of Somerset County's Night at the Ballpark on Saturday, August 16, when the Somerset Patriots challenge the York Revolution in Bridgewater. Help bring the magic of baseball to children and families while hitting a home run for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. For sponsorship information and tickets, please contact Tara Abbott, Assistant Director of Development at 908-725-8544, ext. 610.

### A Night to Remember! The 2008 Arc Angel Gala on November 14



Brittany Maier

provided nearly a decade of employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The honoree at The 2008 Arc Angel Gala, scheduled for Friday, November 14, 2008, at the Fiddler's Elbow Country Club in Far Hills, will be TRIMLINE Medical Products Corporation. Highly valued business partners, co-founders Richard F. Jacobson, President, and Paul Von der Heyden, Executive Vice President, have

A special Gala performance will be provided by Brittany Maier, dubbed by *The New York Daily News* as "perhaps the leading female musical savant in the world." Blind at birth and diagnosed with autism, Ms. Maier performs for TV- and live-audiences worldwide.

The evening will also feature a silent auction and dancing with music provided by the band, The Exceptions.

To date, the Gala has received pledges of support from: Action Tree Service, The Arc of New Jersey, Barry's Appliance & TV, Joseph Bombard, CIT, Clancey Realty Group, William C. & Jean I. Ellis, Family Magazine, John & Carol Fanning, Furs by Guarino Inc., Hallak Cleaners, James F. Hurley Insurance Agency Corp., Jones Apparel Group, Kaplow & Co. Insurance, Maschio's Food Services, Kirk & Judi Meighan, Oxford Communications, Priority Medical Care, Somerset County Freeholder Jack M. Ciattarelli, Somerset Hills Veterinary Services, Somerset Hills YMCA, Summit Associates, Inc., TRIMLINE Medical Products Corporation, and Vollers Excavating & Construction, Inc. Said Alfie DeMoss, Director of Development, "We hope you will join us!"

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



TRIMLINE executives Paul Von der Heyden and Richard F. Jacobson

*Executive Director, continued from page 1*

implemented—fundraising and caregiving events. Thanks, also, to the generous donors who have made it possible for us to reach out to people who have loved ones with disabilities, and help them access the services they need. For this, we are truly grateful.

You have heard the adage, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Well, it takes our entire Arc community to achieve the level of success we have enjoyed this year. This community includes consumers, families,

friends, volunteers, donors, local businesses and organizations, civic organizations and leaders, Board of Directors, and employees.

I am honored to be a part of this outstanding organization and look forward to the continued success of The Arc of Somerset County.

Best regards,

*Lauren Panarella*

Executive Director

## Vision

- We will provide the leadership to create an inclusive community of caring so outstanding its echo will reverberate throughout human services of all kinds for years to come.
- Participants in our community include individuals with a disability, their families\*, staff, volunteers and all of our friends and supporters in the larger community of Somerset County.
- The guiding principles of our vision will be:
  - Education – lifelong learning for all participants
  - Caring – respect and compassion among all of us: always leading from the heart
  - Hope – advocacy and encouragement
  - Opportunity - transcending disability by recognizing and developing the capabilities of each and every participant

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

## Online Fundraising for “Step Up for The Arc” Continues

On May 17, more than 270 family, friends, and local business leaders turned out for the “Step Up for The Arc” Walkathon at Duke Island Park in Bridgewater. Online fundraising for the event will continue through August 15. To read the full story, stay tuned to the next issue of the *Herald*.

## 2009 Entertainment Coupon Books Go on Sale September 1

Call Barbara Lutzky at 908-725-8544, ext. 600



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