

## Arc of Somerset County celebrates volunteerism at Arc Angel Gala

Loading Photo Gallery

**The Messenger-Gazette** By **The Messenger-Gazette**

on November 19, 2014 at 10:48 AM, updated November 19, 2014 at 2:31 PM

The Arc of Somerset County celebrated their 42nd Arc Angel Gala "Celebrating Volunteerism" on Friday, Nov. 14, at Fiddler's Elbow Country Club in Bedminster.

The evening began with Assemblyman Jack Citarelli who recognized three Somerset County High School students who were honored with the "The Angels Among Us" award, which celebrates the volunteer accomplishments of high school seniors who make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

Among the three recipients were Leanna Caswell, a senior at Watchung Hills Regional High School in Warren who was honored for her active role in the High School's Peer Outreach elective course, where mainstream students work collectively with their special needs peers on a daily basis, as well as her work as a special needs swim instructor.

Laura Clarke, also a student of Watchung Hills Regional High School was awarded for her over 250 volunteer hours at a preschool and as a therapeutic equine instructor for students with special needs.

Laura Cavanaugh, a senior at Immaculata High School was honored for successfully exceeded more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service working with HAPHA (Higher Achievement Programs for Handicapped Adults) and many other smaller groups that serve the special needs community.

"It is such an honor to have these three High School students receive this recognition for their volunteer work with the special needs community in our county", says Lauren Panarella, executive director of The Arc of Somerset County. "It is The Arc of Somerset County's hope that through public recognition of their efforts, these students will be further inspired to incorporate the spirit of volunteerism into their evolving personal and professional lives."

The "Halo Award" for advocacy went to Evelyn Ramundo, an active member of The Arc of Somerset County community since 2003. Evelyn received the Halo Award for her role in the New Jersey Self Advocacy project where she has held a leadership position for several years and most recently lead the "Advocates for Change" group who met with New Jersey State Legislators on important disability issues where she gave testimony during an assembly budget hearing on March 18 and again on March 20, for Disability Awareness Month.

"Evelyn has been an active voice for hundreds of individuals who are unable to advocate for themselves", says Lauren Panarella. "We are so very proud of her tenacity and ability to be such a great role model for the people we serve."

Three very prominent corporate supporters of The Arc of Somerset County were honored for "The Arc Angel Award." L'Oreal, Henkel Corporation and Janssen have collectively played a vital role in the success of The Arc and more importantly have positively impacted the children, adolescents and adults who participate in The Arc's various programs. All three companies have dedicated hundreds of hours over the course of the past five years in efforts that have enhanced the mission of The Arc and have created long lasting friendships within the organization.

Lauren Panarella adds: "Volunteerism plays a vital role in the success of The Arc of Somerset County. L'Oreal, Henkel and Janssen have leveraged their company's commitment to community service which has positively impacted the over 1,000 individuals and families we serve. For this we are grateful and honored to recognize them with the 2014 Arc Angel Award."

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

The Arc of Somerset County programs include the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families, the Early Intervention Program, Camp Jotoni, the PACT program (Parents And Children Together), four employment services programs, and twenty-seven residential programs throughout Somerset County.

For more information on how to support The Arc of Somerset County, or for volunteer opportunities, contact the Development Department at 908-725-8544, ext. 610.

Photo credit by Laura Zeigler: In order as they appear

Photo 1: Assemblyman Citarelli, Laura Clarke, Laura Cavanaugh, Leanna Caswell

Photo 2: Raymond Roach, Grainger, Nicole Zukowski, L'Oreal, Lauren Panarella, The Arc of Somerset County, Susan Ur, L'Oreal, Jill Darby, L'Oreal, Grayson Slater, L'Oreal, Chris Drudy, L'Oreal

Photo 3: Lauren Panarella, The Arc, Charles Paul, Henkel, JoAnn Artfitch, Henkel, Assemblyman Jack Citarelli

Please also include Photo # 4 Janssen Photo: Order as they appear:

Lauren Panarella, The Arc, Peg Forrestal, Mary Pat Beavers, Chris Perricone, Ella Blue, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Assemblyman Jack Cittarelli.

© 2014 NJ.com. All rights reserved.

Three prominent corporate supporters of The Arc of Somerset County were honored for "The Arc Angel Award." L'Oreal, Henkel Corp. and Janssen Pharmaceuticals have played a vital role in the success of The Arc and, more importantly, have positively impacted the children, adolescents and adults who participate in various programs. All three companies have dedicated hundreds of hours over the past five years in efforts that have enhanced the mission of The Arc and have created lasting friendships within the organization.



From left: Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli, Laura Clarke, Laura Cavanaugh, Leanna Caswell and Lauren Panarella of The Arc of Somerset County. (Photo: Photo courtesy Lauren Zeigler)

"Volunteerism plays a vital role in the success of The Arc of Somerset County," Panarella said. "L'Oreal, Henkel and Janssen have leveraged their company's commitment to community service, which has positively impacted the more than 1,000 individuals and families we serve. For this we are grateful and honored to recognize them with the 2014 Arc Angel Award."

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

The Arc of Somerset County programs include the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families, the Early Intervention Program, Camp Jotoni, the PACT program (Parents And Children Together), four employment services programs and 27 residential programs throughout Somerset County.


For more information on how to support The Arc of Somerset County, or for volunteer opportunities, call the Development Department at 908-725-8544, ext. 610.

Read or Share this story: <http://mycj.co/1qW2New>

**MAKE NEW FRIENDS IN THE FINEST SENIOR RESIDENCE**

This award-winning building is  
**PERFECT!**

Plenty of amenities & activities!



Luxury 1-BR,  
I.R., Bath  
and Kitchen

**Available  
Immediately**