



The Arc NEWS

New London County

FALL 2018

IN PARTNERSHIP FOR FULL EQUALITY

A Message from The President of The Board of Directors



Linda Rhodes

We have big plans! Will you help us build our future?

Two years ago, we sat together to create a Strategic Plan and came up with the powerful mission "In partnership for full equality." In just two years, thanks to each of you, we rebuilt every service platform, becoming more inclusive and more creative in delivering what people with IDD and their families need today.

The Arc NLC's Board of Directors next tasked the agency's CEO with finding a leading Strategic Planning facilitator. You have received surveys asking for your input.

Soon, we will meet in small groups. Please help us to create yet another visionary Plan! Our priorities? With service quality scores of 100%, how best to maintain excellence? **What will people with IDD and their families need tomorrow? How will employees feel valued, empowered?** How best to build our micro-businesses, demonstrating that every person can be fully employed at minimum wage while partner-businesses profit? *The Arc is a powerful national civil rights movement. We need YOUR creativity to maintain excellence!*

Soon, we will meet in small groups. Please help us to create yet another visionary Plan!

STRIDES! Don't miss our 41st Walk, Run and Roll October 7 for **Community Life & Advocacy**. Register at www.thearcnlc.org. *P.S.— Our Annual Appeal mails soon. Please be generous! <*

A Message from The Chief Executive Officer of The Arc

CT Heard You! Direct Support Professionals get hard-earned reward

You called. You emailed. You showed up. Democracy! **After ten years of fighting, our DSPs will see increased wages January 1.** Please thank your hard-working legislators in SECT!

Struggles continue. AJIDD tells us schools are failing youth with IDD. Since the 1980s, classroom integration declined annually. **The Arc's FINDS Survey reveals 50% of youth with IDD do not graduate, hindering self-sufficiency.**

Nationwide, 80% of adults with IDD live with family. **CT's waiting list tops 2,000.** Opposing family supports only leads to greater dependence. **On learning the dire facts, nearly 75% of families vote!**

Thanks to a Harvard Business School Connecticut Alumni scholarship, I completed HBS's Summer Nonprofit Executive Education Program, and we **continue to work with Harvard on our new Strategic Plan. We need your help too!**

It doesn't make sense to oppose family supports when doing so leads only to greater dependency.

Our Annual Appeal mails soon. **Please help!** P.S. — Don't miss our **41st Cactus Jack Strides Road Race** October 7 at Camp Harkness. Register online or call: 860.889.4435 x 116. <



Kathleen Stauffer

New Data Reveals the US is Failing to Support People with IDD

This May, The Arc of the United States released **the Family & Individual Needs for Disability Supports (FINDS) Community Report 2017**, compiling the experiences of over 3,000 families and caregivers who provide supports to a family member with IDD. The report provides information on the economic implications, logistical challenges, and major gaps that exist in caregiving infrastructure, and **highlights the significant challenges faced by people with IDD and their caregivers:**

- Access to affordable and accessible housing in a setting with adequate supports remains an issue.
- 50% of individuals with IDD leave high school without a high school diploma—a crucial component of being considered in a competitive job market.
- Only a minority of individuals with IDD are employed, and on average work only 13 hours per week.
- 75% of caregivers report being **more aware of policy issues** concerning people with IDD and actively participate in activities to change policy; however, 95% report **difficulty balancing family responsibilities, fulfilling professional obligations, and meeting their own personal needs.**

“The FINDS report should serve as a rallying cry to advocates nationwide who recognize **people with disabilities and their families deserve better,**” says Peter V. Berns, CEO of The Arc. “In every aspect of life – from education, to employment, to planning for a stable future – **we as a society are failing in our support of caregivers of people with disabilities and falling short of our obligation to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities.** This should ignite action to address the gaps that stop us from achieving full inclusion of people with disabilities in the community throughout their lifetime.” <

Real Work for Real Pay:

The Arc NLC’s micro-enterprise update

Thanks to generous donors, great staff, and participants who are eager and dedicated trainees and employees, The Arc NLC’s **four micro-enterprises have grown exponentially** this year. Our crew is delivering *The Resident* newspaper; the Lawn and Landscape crew has taken on additional commercial clients and expanded into wintertime cleanups, and the Farm Stand/Aquaponics program is expanding its Community Supported Agriculture program. And the **cookie production team**



Angela, Olivia and Job Coach Rose (center) preparing dough on in the new kitchen.

purchased a commercial oven and moved into ShopRite’s New London bakery. In

addition to ShopRite’s donation of installation costs, the purchase was made possible

through the generosity of the **Chelsea Groton Foundation, the Dominion Foundation, Depcom, and a Greenwich Porsche/Harvard Business School Alumni** Community Partners Innovation grant. Currently The Arc NLC is

making about 450 cookies a day and doing the packaging at ShopRite, and the crew is **getting ready to ramp up production.** Participant employees and their Job Coach currently work daily at the store. What The Arc NLC

team appreciates most, is that the expansion is a perfect example of what The Arc NLC does best. “The Arc NLC’s mission is to give **people with IDD a chance to be an integral part of their community,**” notes Bonnie Jones, Director of Employment Services. “Working at ShopRite is what community involvement is all about.” <



Yolanda and Angela in front of the new oven, which can bake over 500 cookies.

Farm Stand and Culinary Program Host Candidates for Governor

This spring, gubernatorial candidates Oz Griebel and Ned Lamont visited The Arc NLC to see our micro-enterprises “in action.” Oz Griebel learned about cookie making from participant employees on February 12 at ETC’s culinary program in Groton, and Ned Lamont toured the Farm Stand and Aquaponics facility on June 21.



Ned Lamont greets Lawn Crew member Kevin at the Farm Stand

Director of Outreach Denise Tift had arranged the visits.

“They were both really great experiences, for the candidates and our folks. At ETC, the cookie crew just took over, and had Mr. Griebel making cookies with them. The crew was enthusiastic about explaining all aspects of the business, and I know he was impressed.”



Oz Griebel and culinary arts employee trainees, with Arc NLC CEO Kathleen Stauffer behind them.

Ned Lamont complimented both the Farm Stand operation and the aquaponics facility, and also witnessed the Lawn crew training on the Zero-Turn mower. “Both candidates came to see the micro-enterprises, but they learned so much

more—about the passion our employees have about their jobs, and their commitment to these businesses.”

Planned Giving Leave a Legacy: Consider Setting Up a Trust

Longtime supporters Arlean and Martin Bednar recently honored The Arc NLC with a trust to streamline their charitable giving to the agency. “Gifts of appreciated stock, either directly or placed within a personal ‘charitable trust,’ allow us to support The Arc NLC with pre tax dollars,” explained Martin Bednar. “It’s a great way to help the agency.” For information on how planned giving can work for you, please contact Denise Tift, Director of Community Outreach, at (860) 889-4435 x 116. <



Norwich Rose Arts Festival Praises the Volunteer Corps

After a 20-year absence, the Rose Arts Festival in Norwich is making a comeback, and The Arc NLC’s Volunteer Corps was out in full force to help make its second year a success. Community Life & Advocacy and Volunteer Corps Coordinator Debbie Densmore couldn’t be prouder. “We knew this was going to be a really important event for Norwich.

Everyone got up at 4:30 to be there at 6am and they just jumped right in. That crew is so amazing—they didn’t wait to be told what to do, they just asked what was needed and did it.”



Steve and Kevin help a vendor set up her booth. Dean, who’s new to the Volunteer Corps, loved assisting the vendors. “It makes me feel good to be helping people.”

Dana Dowdell, Festival Volunteer Director, was impressed. “When I arrived, the volunteers were already helping our vendors unload and set up. I don’t think they ever stopped moving the entire day. We are so appreciative of their efforts—they really contributed to the Festival’s success.”

The Festival included a road race, which was no problem for the Corps, who regularly volunteers at races with thousands of entrants, so they immediately snapped into “race control” mode, guiding runners, helping at the water stop, and assisting with traffic within the festival grounds.

“We’d participated at Norwich Cleanup Day in May with Bully Busters, and they let us know about this event.” Debbie knew that it would be a perfect fit for the Volunteer Corps. “The Festival Committee is looking to turn this into the defining event that it was in the past—and the volunteers are really excited to be a part of that.” <



The Arc NLC is now managing the “Local Creations” Consignment Shop at the Groton Senior Center!

Stop by and see us! • Artisanal items from local craftspeople • The Arc NLC merchandise • Baked goods, and MORE. For more information call Ricky Wezner at (860) 710-1969.

“I’ll be 77 next year, but I don’t feel it.”

Mary isn’t letting retirement slow her down

Mary’s especially happy today— Jason is here for a visit. Last month Mary moved from an Arc-supported home in Norwich to a smaller, quieter one in Colchester. Mary’s been supported by The Arc NLC for over 30 years; before that, she’d spent most of her life at the Mansfield Training School.

A 1978 lawsuit filed on behalf of residents at Mansfield began to change the philosophy of caring for people with IDD in institutions in the US, and in 1988 Mary chose to move to one of The Arc NLC’s homes. “Imagine,” says Chief Operations Officer Laurie Herring, “being a 16

“When you meet Mary, you meet a survivor.”

**—Laurie Herring,
The Arc NLC COO**

year old girl, and you’re driven to the gates of Mansfield and left in the care of strangers and

have no further contact with your family. You’re ripped out of your home, you have no choice about where you live, or who you live with.

After Mary moved into a group home setting, she began to develop relationships and make decisions—and what’s amazing is that she retained her sense of humor, and her dignity. When you meet Mary, you meet a survivor.”



Mary c. 1990 with her friend William.

“I really like it at my new house. Even though I miss my old house manager Jason.” Mary gives his hand a squeeze. “It’s so peaceful here, and everybody gets along. My new housemates are nice. I help with the

housecleaning and the cooking.” Jason agrees. “Mary makes a great salad.”

“But you know that spaghetti is my favorite,” she reminds him. “After all, I’m Italian. But the sauce can get a little messy.” Mary’s extremely particular about her appearance and has a great sense of

style. Last year she decided to revert back to her natural hair color.

“It’s important to look your best, and also to have good accessories.”

Throughout her life after Mansfield, Mary’s consistently made decisions about what she wants to do. She recently told the team, for

instance, that it was time to retire from her job in the bakery where she’d worked for 20 years, and joined the Ross Adult Day Center in Norwich. On the back porch at her new home, she provides a lively hula-hoop demonstration. “I’ll be 77 next year, but I sure don’t feel it.”



Mary and Jason, her former House Manager, on her new back porch.

Mary shares her new home with four house-mates. “I love my new house manager Jacques—he’s really nice. A little shy though.” Jacques laughs. “I am a little on the quiet side.” He became house manager the same month Mary moved in. “So we’re getting used to our house together.”



For her 70th birthday, Mary’s housemates gave her a cake with a photo of her at age 16

The Arc NLC’s Board of Directors strongly believes that people should be able to age in place in their homes. “It’s always been Mary’s decisions that we’ve followed,” says Laurie Herring. “Mary makes choices about how she wants to live her life, and it’s our job to make sure that those things happen for her.” <

Note: For a twist on Mary’s spaghetti dinner, see p. 7.

Our Community Partners Make Dreams Come True

Without the help of these generous foundations and organizations, many of the services The Arc NLC provides to people with IDD would not exist.

The **United Way of Southeastern Connecticut** awarded Community Life & Advocacy \$47,500 in continuation funding for 2019.

The **Harvard Business School** and **Greenwich Porsche** Community Partners \$20,000 "Turbo" innovation grant **assisted with the purchase of a commercial oven** for the Employment Transition Center's cookie micro-enterprise.

Combined \$18,000 and \$12,000 grants from the **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut** and **The Arc@Work/Walmart Foundation** allowed for the creation of a **full-time Job Development component** at the Employment Transition Center.

ETC's Lawn and Landscape Crew received a new heavy-duty push mower **from Lowe's of Waterford**, just in time for fall cleanup.

The **Eastern CT Chamber of Commerce Leadership Team** raised over \$13,500 to purchase and construct an **equipment shed for the Lawn and Landscape micro-enterprise** as part of their selected community project.

The **Knights of Columbus** in Taftville raised \$190 for CL&A from their annual Tootsie Roll Drive.

CHEFA (Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Association) provided \$25,590 in capital improvement funds for **repairs and a new entrance** at the Sachem Street facility. **Comcast** and **Norwich Public Utilities'** participation in the **Neighborhood Assistance Act** will result in a \$66,000 gift to install **energy-efficient windows** at the Sachem Street facility.

In-Home Services received \$634 from the **Chelsea Groton Foundation** for **recliners for their sensory room**.

The **Michael Vincent Sage Foundation** awarded an **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)** to the Employment Transition Center.

Pfizer Connecticut Labs and the **Town of Old Lyme** awarded \$2,500 and \$750, respectively, to CL&A's Empowerment/Enrichment program.

The Arc New London County in the Spotlight

Annual Meeting Highlights Agency Achievements, Honors Foundation and Community Heroes

The Arc NLC celebrated 66 years of working "in partnership for full equality" at its annual meeting, held June 19th at the Mohegan Park Pavilion in Norwich.



Jeff and Kathryn Lord accept their Community Service award.

Sen. Heather Somers was presented an Award of Appreciation for her tireless work on behalf of people with IDD and their families in Connecticut, and her advocacy for fair wages for the several hundred direct support professionals employed by The Arc NLC.



L to R: The Arc NLC Board President Linda Rhodes, Sen. Heather Somers, and The ARC NLC CEO Kathleen Stauffer.

Also honored were **Barry Shead of The Savings Institute Foundation**, and **Kathryn and Jeff Lord of The Edward and Mary Lord Foundation**, for their commitment and support of The Arc NLC's employment and empowerment programs.

Board President Linda Rhodes and CEO Kathleen Stauffer

introduced new inductees into the **1952 Society**, in recognition of supporters who have donated over \$1,952 in honor of the year The Arc NLC was founded, and presented service awards to staff who reached employment milestones.





The Arc Through My Eyes

By Cheryl Pedro

In this issue of **The Arc News**, columnist **Cheryl Pedro** interviews **Crystal Levine** at the **Employment Transition Center (ETC)**.

Cheryl: *What do you do here at The Arc?*

Crystal: I'm a Job Coach for the day program, and I run an after-school self-advocacy program for young people called SPARCS. We talk about life events, learn to improve social skills, and work on lots of projects together.

Cheryl: *What do you like about working here?*

Crystal: [laughs]: What don't I like! When I come in here, I could be having a bad day, and you guys are waiting for me, happy to see me . . . and when I'm not here you miss me and ask me where I've been. I've met some of the coolest people here.

Cheryl: *Tell me about your family.*

Crystal: I have 2 daughters, and I get a lot of ideas working here for fun things I can do with them.



Cheryl and Crystal

Cheryl: *Do you have any hobbies?*

Crystal: You bet! I like to stay busy. The girls and I go on nature walks, and my whole family are huge readers. Do you remember all the horse books I brought in?

Cheryl: *Yes, I love them!*

Crystal: My girls love horses too.

Cheryl: *Do you like the UConn Huskies?*

Crystal: Yes! [Cheryl gives Crystal a high five.] The women are the best.

Cheryl: *Why do you like being a Job Coach?*

Crystal: I like to do fun things and help people in the community in the company of amazing human beings. I try to make sure that this is the best part of your day—and it's the best part of my day too. We're both really lucky!

Cheryl: *We sure are!* <

October is for Running

Sign up for the **Strides Road Race** today!



Can you believe that this marks the **41st year** of our **Jack O'Keefe/Cactus Jack Memorial Strides Road Race**? If you've never run in this race, make sure this is your year! It's a fun-filled day at beautiful **Camp Harkness in Waterford on October 7, 2018**—timed by **SNERRO** for competitive runners (and there are many) yet low-key and pressure-free for the rest of us!

The **5k and 10k races kick off at 9:30 a.m.** and there's a fun run/walk/roll at 11am. **Outback Steak House** is once again our Title Sponsor, providing incredibly delicious food. **Register at www.thearcnlc.org.**

We depend on the kindness of our sponsors to help us continue this great event, which supports our **Community Life & Advocacy program. CL&A is the only program of its kind in the area, serves over 180 people yearly, and depends entirely on private and foundation donations.** Strides Sponsorships range from Bronze (\$100) to Platinum (\$1,000) and provide lots of good publicity—**company names and logos appear on commemorative T-shirts; in the Race Program Book; and in pre- and post-race advertisements.**

In addition, all sponsors are recognized in a display thank-you advertisement in **The Day** newspaper; in this newsletter—both on our web page and mailed to over 4,000 businesses and families; at **TheArcNLC.org**, on **The Arc's Facebook** page (over 1,000 followers) and via **Twitter**. For more information on how **YOU** can sponsor this longtime fundraising event, **contact Denise Tift, Director of Community Outreach, at (860) 889-4435 x 116 or dtift@thearcnlc.org.** <

Mary's Fusilli with Spinach and Asiago Cheese

Mary's favorite dish is spaghetti, but "I have to have it cut pretty small these days, to protect my new teeth!" So in honor of Mary and stubby pasta, here's an easy recipe for fusilli that's great for both the tomato and spinach-filled summer months and the cooler early autumn evenings.

Ingredients:

1 pound fusilli pasta
1/4 cup olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1 (9-ounce) bag fresh spinach, roughly chopped
8 ounces (1/2 pint) cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cup (about 3 1/2-ounces) grated Asiago
1/2 cup grated Parmesan
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preparation:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain pasta reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid.

Meanwhile, warm olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the spinach and tomatoes and cook until the spinach wilts, about 2 more minutes. Add the cooked pasta and toss. Add the cheeses, salt, pepper, and the pasta cooking liquid and stir to combine. Transfer the pasta to a serving plate and serve. <



Third Annual Film Festival raises over \$22,000 Critically acclaimed films help break stereotypes of disability

The Arc NLC's Annual Film Festival keeps getting better and better, according to the over 130 people who attended the 3rd annual festival, held once again at the **Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center**.

Prior to introducing the films, Master of Ceremonies Brian Scott-Smith hosted three short "interviews" with The Arc NLC's CEO **Kathleen Stauffer**, parent and supporter **Stacy Morataya-Pilkington**, and participant **Shannon. Megan**, who's a member of the **Community Life & Advocacy** program, welcomed everyone and spoke about what The Arc NLC means to her.

The Interviewer, Can I Call You?, Andrew, and What I Like About Myself, all focused on the **challenges people with IDD face on a daily basis** and how they face life head on, with determination, courage, and understanding from people who care about them.

Generous sponsors, a **silent and live auction** and sumptuous h'ors d'oeuvres provided by MPMRC's catering department rounded out the evening and helped the **event raise more than \$22,000 for The Arc NLC's Community Life & Advocacy program**, which provides recreational, social, employment preparation and civic participation activities to over 180 people with IDD throughout the region.

Festival Sponsors and auction donors included **Comcast, The Day, Chelsea Groton Bank, The Rotary Club of Norwich, Atlantic City Linen, Foxwoods Resort Casino, and Stacy Morataya-Pilkington.** <





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New London County

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The Arc NEWS

Everyone of All Ages & Abilities WELCOME!



The Arc
New London County

CACTUS JACK
FOUNDATION

Starting Gun Times

5K & 10K
9:30 am

Sunday,
October 7, 2018

Family Fun Run,
Walk & Roll
11:00 am

Camp Harkness
301 Great Neck Road
Waterford, CT 06385

All races start & finish
at Camp Harkness

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Thursday April 18, 2019 5:30 - 8:00 pm
Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center
110 Pequot Trail, Mashantucket, CT 06336

Celebrating
People
with
Developmental
Disabilities



a collection of short films about
and featuring people with IDD
to change your life