



The Arc® NEWS

New London County

TheArcNLC.org


A Message from The President of The Board of Directors



Linda Rhodes

"It's so nice to meet you!"

New Board President brings education, leadership experience

After more than nine years on the Board, it's wonderful to serve as your new Board President. Helping young people attain their goals is so rewarding, yet given the funding landscape, it's also a challenge. **My background as a speech language pathologist and public school administrative leader puts this agency's mission close to my heart.**

Helping young people attain their goals is so rewarding, and yet given the funding landscape, it's also a challenge. The Arc New London County has partnered with schools and people with I/DD for more than

six decades. In September 2015 The Arc's Board, participants, Leadership Team and staff embarked on a strategic discernment journey. **"In partnership for full equality"** became our guiding mission, and results speak for themselves: **three exciting microbusinesses; responsive day and residential options; a Volunteer Corps donating \$20,000 in service hours to our community.**

This year, we reopen those important conversations. **How best to partner for full equality?** How best to build on our past strategic efforts?

Helping young people attain their goals is so rewarding, and yet given the funding landscape, it's also a challenge.

Stay tuned – your input is valued. We will be asking you to share!

STRIDES! Don't miss our 40th Walk, Run and Roll on October 1 for **Community Life & Advocacy**. Register at TheArcNLC.org. PS – Our Annual Appeal mails soon. Please be generous! ♡

A Message from The Chief Executive Officer of The Arc

The State That Went Backward Connecticut pulls plug on vulnerable people

I write this on the first Furlough Day ever imposed on nonprofits in Connecticut. **Once among the top five states in supporting vulnerable people and families, Connecticut – among America's richest states – has fallen to the bottom percentile.**

If it is not bad enough that nonprofits like The Arc New London County provide better quality services at one-half to one-fifth the cost that Connecticut can provide them itself, **the state added insult to injury by refusing to pay The Arc and its employees anything at all on July 26, and families were upset to discover The Arc's Community Life & Advocacy program was canceled in July.** We understand.

Did you know The Arc

NLC raises most CL&A monies via Strides, the Film Festival and other community fundraisers? The state pays not a penny.

Budget rescissions left us no choice but to pull together and share the sacrifice. **Thanks to all who called, emailed, rallied. Advocacy matters!**

Families were upset to discover The Arc's Community Life & Advocacy program was canceled in July.

Our Annual Appeal mails shortly. **Please help!** P.S. – Don't miss our **40th Cactus Jack Strides Road Race** October 1 at Camp Harkness. For information, please call 860.889.4435 x 116. ♡



Kathleen Stauffer

Disability Advocates Rally at State Capitol to Pass Budget



Although the Connecticut General Assembly met behind closed doors on July 18 to try—in vain—to finalize the state budget, all were aware of the hundreds right outside those doors, who’d come **to implore legislators to pass a budget that supported people with disabilities** and helped those most in need. In a **“SOS—Save our Services” rally** arranged by The Arc Connecticut, people from agencies including The Arc NLC, Connecticut Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance, MARC, Our Families Can’t Wait, and The Arc of Southington

“There is no stronger function we have in the state of Connecticut than to take care of those who need the most help.”

—Senator Len Fasano

to name a few, traveled to Hartford to make their voices heard. The group first had an orientation at the Legislative Office Building on how to approach a legislator, then marched to the Capitol where they gave testimony, held a vigil and engaged in civil disobedience. **Liz, an Arc NLC Shooting Stars participant, provided testimony**, and like most of The Arc NLC participants, was really happy to be part of the day’s activities. “I let ‘em have it,” she said with a big grin.

“We’re here today because the legislature hasn’t passed a budget,” said Edwin “Win” Evarts, the executive director of The Arc Connecticut. **“The result of this policy decision is there is a loss of services and program closures.”** Rep. Mike Demicco of Farmington applauded those present for converging on the Capitol. “You brought a human face to the budget problem,” Demicco said. “Keep up the good work.” 🍌

Real Work for Real Pay: An Arc NLC micro-enterprise update



The Arc NLC’s four micro-enterprises all grew a little closer to self-sustainability this year—from a **\$10,000 donation from the Dominion Foundation** to offset the costs of a commercial bakery oven to the new partnership with **Sure Bright Commercial Cleaning of Norwich**, who’ve recently added five members of The Arc’s Employment Transition Center to their professional team

(upper left). The Lawn and Landscape business (lower right) was able to operate with **two crews** this year, increasing both revenue and training opportunities thanks to last fall’s equipment grant from the **Edward and Mary Lord Foundation**. And the ever-popular **Farm Stand at 1671 Center Groton Rd (Rt. 117) in Ledyard** is in full swing, open M-F 8:30-1:45pm, W-F 4-6pm, and Sat 9-5pm. A grant from the **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut** will soon **double produce volume**. And a pilot CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) project was highly successful—shares sold out almost overnight! 🍌



Culinary program employee Billy shows Nancy Bulkeley from the Dominion Foundation and Arc NLC CEO Kathleen Stauffer how to measure ingredients for cookies.



Chelsea Groton Bank Hosts Annual Picnic; Honors The Arc NLC



Chelsea Groton Bank has hosted a picnic for The Arc NLC every year **for over 20 years!** This year's picnic at Camp Harkness on June 3rd was spectacular. CGB Employees **donated, cooked and served all the food, and everyone played games** and enjoyed the beautiful weather. The Arc NLC was also named the recipient of the **Chelsea Groton Bank 2017 Acts of Kindness Initiative** on behalf of Peter Panichas, Jr. and Karen Sheffield in memory of her brother Gilbert Sheffield. We are so thankful and honored to share this wonderful partnership. 🍌

Employee Matching Gifts

—a great way to support The Arc NLC and double the impact of your donation!

Your gift to The Arc NLC could be matched dollar for dollar by your employer! **Many companies sponsor matching gift programs** and will match any charitable contributions or volunteer hours made by their employees, retirees and/or employees' spouses. Check to see if your employer is participating in this program, and sign up today. **Just a few dollars a month can make a world of difference** in the life of someone with I/DD all year round.



For more information, please contact **Denise Tift, Director of Community Outreach**, at (860) 889-4435 x 116. 🍌

"I really miss my friends, and the things we do in the community."

—What a month with no CL&A services feels like

Each month, Community Life & Advocacy puts out an activity calendar full of events, support groups, and volunteer opportunities. **But this July, for the first time in memory, there was no calendar, and there were no events.**

Because of the state budget impasse, CL&A had to curtail programs for the month, leaving 170 people with I/DD without access to familiar routines, friends, and life skills opportunities. "It

really makes me upset," says Tiffany (I). "I miss doing my volunteer activities." Elena (center) agrees. "I want to see friends and socialize after work, and now I can't." **CL&A, The Arc NLC's oldest program, receives no state or federal funds and relies on fundraising and donations from area foundations to provide a wide array of support and recreation services—including door-to-door transportation—to people from all over southeastern Connecticut.** The budget impasse, however, means that The Arc must use all available resources for essential services. Life Skills Instructor Jenna Marchenkoff (above, r), of the In-Home Supports program, sees firsthand what a month of no programming means. **"For many of our participants, CL&A is the only opportunity to interact with others, establish relationships, learn new skills, be out in the community. It also puts a huge strain on working parents who depend on this program."**



Bill, who was featured in the last newsletter, says his weekends are "pretty lonely" without his Volunteer Corps activities.

The CL&A team managed to keep the Volunteer Corps and Special Olympics going for August, but it's been a rough summer. 🍌

“Sometimes it’s not just about you, or me.”

Kevin wants to be an actor, and a Governor . . . and help people too

Kevin’s in a quandary. So many decisions: Should he continue to be on The Arc NLC’s Special Olympics softball team . . . or pursue his dream of being an actor and model? “There just isn’t enough time in a day.” Kevin sighs. He’s enjoying a rare free moment before starting his day as a member of the Lawn and Landscape crew. **“I love being outdoors, and Tim [his job coach] is teaching me a lot. But I want to do other things too.”** He’s taking acting classes at night. “We do improv, practice auditions for commercials, stuff like that. I love the

“I think it’s important to try new things and learn different skills.”

entertainment field. My friend and I even made a YouTube video that I directed.”

Kevin’s lived in the area all his life. **“I was bullied in school for a while,” he says. “But my friends stood up for me.** Then I went to NFA (Norwich Free Academy) and was in the *Spread the Word* video and now that same kid is jealous of me.” Kevin lives with his mom now, but he has plans. **“I’m pretty independent. Right now I’m helping her with some of the bills—like the cable bill—and I do laundry and cook—I really like**



that.” In fact, Kevin had been part of The Arc’s Culinary program before he switched to the Lawn crew. **“I like being at The Arc. They have so many different programs** and Bonnie (The Director of Business and Transition at the Employment Transition Center) is amazing. I want to be on the cleaning crew next.

I think it’s important to try new things and learn different skills.”

Kevin manages to squeeze in time with friends, and participates in many of Community Life

& Advocacy activities, including the birthday socials, bowling, and trips to museums and regional events, where he socializes with his friends. Kevin also mastered the Comcast sponsored digital literacy class, and used his new skills to set up his mom’s Facebook account for



her. “She’s getting pretty good at it now.” How did this past July’s lack of CL&A programs due to budget cuts change his life? Kevin grows pensive. **“You know, I called Governor Malloy a bunch of times, but they’d turned off his voice mail. If I could talk to him I’d tell him that I know he loves his family, but to think about other people too.** Sometimes it’s not just about you, or me. I love my family too, and I want him to know that what they’re doing [by not passing the budget] is hurting people like me, and our families, and other people like homeless people. I worry about homeless people.”

“I want the Governor to care about people. I know he’s nice but now he’s hurting The Arc and other places like this. I want him to go forward and to do his job. If he doesn’t want to . . . well, then I will!”

Kevin and everyone else in the CL&A program loves “Chef Greg’s” famous macaroni and cheese. Greg shares his secret recipe on page 7. 🍝

Our Community Partners Make Dreams Come True

Without the help of these generous foundations and organizations, many of the services we provide to people with I/DD would not exist.

The Arc NLC's Farm Stand received \$200 from the **Ledyard Garden Club** for much-needed tools and seedlings. The **Eastern CT Association of Realtors** provided \$750 needed to repair a well pump for irrigating the Farm Stand garden. The **aquaponics facility** will be expanded this year thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the **Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut**, more than doubling production of specialty greens and herbs. Friends at the **Dominion Foundation** and **DEPCOM Power** invested in The Arc NLC's **cookie micro-enterprise** with two \$10,000 grants to offset the cost of a commercial bakery oven.

Digital Literacy got a great boost from the **Comcast Foundation**, which awarded The Arc NLC a 2-year, \$20,000 grant for Internet safety and computer literacy courses at the **Employment Transition Center** in Groton. Comcast also created a PSA and a 4-minute video presentation, **Comcast Introduces The Arc**. Visit it at youtube.com/results?search_query=comcast+the+arc.

Many agencies stepped up to keep **Community Life & Advocacy** alive. Generous donations included \$4,000 from the **Gernon Trust**, \$3,000 from the **Savings Institute Foundation**, \$1,000 from the **Eastern Savings Bank Foundation** and \$600 from the **AHEPA Foundation**. And of course the **Knights of Columbus** always make sure CL&A receives funds from the annual **Tootsie Roll Drive**; this season The Arc NLC received \$500 from post 7054 and \$993 from Local Council 13.

The Arc's Norwich facility received \$995 from the **Ledyard Rotary** to install a much needed Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Also of great benefit was a **new 9-passenger wheelchair van** funded by the Federal Transportation Administration and administered by **CT DOT** and the **Southeastern Council of Governments (SECCOG)**. *Thank you all!*

The Arc New London County in the Spotlight

Denise Tift is now Director of **Community Outreach**. She's been with The Arc NLC since 2005, most recently as the Director of Community Life & Advocacy.

New **Human Resources Director Jay Connolly** is a recent Manhattan transplant, having served 17 years as VP of Human Resources for the Visiting Nurses' Association of New York.

Long-time Board member **Linda Rhodes** became **The Arc NLC's new Board president**, taking over from **Enrico "Rick" DeMatto**.

New officers were announced at the **July 27th Annual Meeting**, honoring long-time employees and new community partners, including **Joe Orlando** and **Sharon Lent** of **ShopRite**, pictured below with Rick (l) and CEO **Kathleen Stauffer** (2nd from r). **State Rep. Kathleen McCarty** was also honored for her unflagging support of the agency and advocacy for people with I/DD.



NPR asks families how they're coping with the budget crisis



NPR Business reporter Harriet Jones (r) interviews **Barbara**, caregiver for her brother **John**, an Arc NLC participant. The "Marketplace" segment examined the effects of the state budget crisis on families of people with I/DD. **Employee furloughs and reduced services have put families like John and Barbara in extremely precarious positions.**



The Arc Through My Eyes

By Cheryl Pedro

In this issue of **The Arc News**, columnist **Cheryl Pedro** interviews Job Coach **Tim Bates**.

Cheryl: How long have you been working with the Lawn and Landscape crew at The Arc?

Tim: This year will be my third year.

Cheryl: How many crew members are there?

Tim: Right now four, but we get a high school kid during the fall and winter.

Cheryl: What's the easiest job in landscaping?

Tim: There are no easy jobs! It's all hard work—lots of sweating, dirt, ticks . . .



Cheryl and Tim

Cheryl: Okay, so what's the hardest job?

Tim: Trimming Hedges—we have to be really precise. Also, mulching is hard because there again, we have to put it exactly where it should go.

Cheryl: What kinds of jobs are you guys doing now?

Tim: Lots of things—mowing, mulching, ripping out trees, pruning re-doing flower beds.

Cheryl: How's your crew?

Tim: They work really hard and steady—everyone's always busy!

Cheryl: What do you like to do outside of work?

Tim: Ride my motorcycle in the countryside.

Cheryl: Where's your favorite place to eat?

Tim: Captain Scott's in New London—the crew and I just went there this week after our job at the United Way.

Cheryl: Yum! 🍷

It's the Strides Road Race's 40th Year! Help us celebrate—sign up to run!

It's hard to believe that the **Jack O'Keefe/Cactus Jack Memorial Strides Road Race** is 40 years

old. This year, be a part of history and sign up for this fun—and important—event, to be held **October 1st**.

Incredible food, cash prizes, and a beautiful

venue (**Camp Harkens in Waterford**)—what's not to love? Runners, walkers and rollers of all ages and abilities are welcome. Races kick off at 9:30am. All proceeds benefit **The Arc NLC's Community Life & Advocacy program**.



PLEASE CONSIDER BEING AN EVENT SPONSOR—the rewards are amazing! Company names and logos will appear on commemorative T-shirts, in the Race program, on social media, and in online and hard-copy ads mailed to **over 5,000 businesses and families**.

Race Sponsorship Levels

Strides Official T-Shirt Sponsor	\$3,000
Platinum Sponsor	\$1,000
Gold Sponsorship	\$500
Silver Sponsorship	\$250
Bronze Sponsorship	\$100

Register or sponsor online at **www.thearcnlc.org** or contact Denise Tift at 860-889-4435 x 116 or DTift@TheArcNLC.org for information and registration/sponsorship forms. See you there!

We're doing a Fall Cleanup of our Mailing List

If you or your organization gets duplicate newsletters, **PLEASE let us know**. Just email **info@thearcnlc.org** or call **(860) 889-4435 x 103** and tell us who to take off (or new names to put on). You'll be helping us enormously—we'll be able to conserve our funds . . . and save paper!



Community Life & Advocacy participants and staff unanimously nominated “Chef Greg’s” Mac & Cheese as their official favorite recipe. **Greg McMahon, who’s been with The Arc NLC since 1994, is the Special Olympics Coordinator and cooks for the majority of CL&A’s birthday socials.** His macaroni and cheese is everyone’s hands-down favorite. Kevin, featured on p.3, calls it “fantastic.”

Chef Greg’s Famous Mac & Cheese

Ingredients:

1/2 pound elbow macaroni
4 tblsp unsalted butter – cut into bits
1 Dash Tabasco sauce
1 can evaporated milk – (12 ounce)
1 pound sharp cheddar cheese – grated
2 large eggs – beaten
1 tsp dry mustard, dissolved in 1 tsp water
2 tsp Salt, Pepper, Toasted Bread Crumbs
1 cup fresh bread crumbs
1 pinch salt
1 1/2tblsp unsalted butter – melted

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350.
Boil the macaroni until just barely done in salted water. Drain and toss with the butter in a large, ovenproof mixing bowl. Mix the Tabasco into the evaporated milk. Reserving about 1/3 cup, stir the milk into the macaroni, then add 3/4 of the cheese, the eggs and the mustard. When well combined, season to taste with salt and pepper and set the bowl in the oven. Every five minutes, remove it briefly to stir in some of the reserved cheese, adding more evaporated milk as necessary to keep the mixture moist and smooth. When all the cheese has been incorporated and the mixture is nicely hot and creamy (which should take 20 minutes all told), crumble Ritz crackers over it and serve at once. Serves 6. 🍴



2nd Annual Arc NLC Film Festival Draws Record Crowd People with I/DD Making a Difference in Spotlight

Over 160 people attended the 2nd Annual Arc Film Festival fundraiser on April 27, held at the **Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center**, and co-sponsored by the Museum and **Comcast**. Thanks to a highly successful silent auction, the hospitality and culinary expertise of the MPMR staff, as well as great film choices, the event raised **over \$15,000 for The Arc NLC’s Community Life & Advocacy program**, which receives no state or federal funding and offers recreational social life skills, employment training, civic participation, and self-advocacy/support activities to over 170 people with I/DD.



The evening included a sumptuous array of fine food, wine and beer, and a silent auction with a large variety of high-quality merchandise and gift certificates. “Studio” sponsors included The Day and Chelsea Groton Bank.



Liz and Daniel enjoy their moment on the red carpet.

Films were introduced by **Stacy Morataya-Pilkington** (above left, with Eric and Kevin), a dedicated parent of a young person with developmental disabilities. **Brian Scott-Smith** was emcee. Films included this year (and last year’s) favorite, *Bumblebees*— as well as *Love and Independence in East Providence*— and *Comcast Introduces The Arc*, a video produced by **Comcast** ([youtube.com/results?search_query=comcast+the+arc](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=comcast+the+arc)), who also produced a PSA for the agency and interviewed **CEO Kathleen Stauffer** for *Newsmakers*, which aired on August 28th (comcastnewsmakers.com/state/Connecticut). 🍴



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The Arc NEWS

Everyone of All Ages & Abilities WELCOME!



Starting Gun Times

NEW!
5K & 10K
9:30 am

**Family Fun Run,
Walk & Roll**
11:00 am

All races start & finish
at Camp Harkness

**Sunday,
October 1, 2017**

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Waterford, CT 06385

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Thursday April 26, 2018 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center
110 Pequot Trail, Mashantucket, CT 06336

**Celebrating
People
with
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Disabilities**

a collection of short films about
and featuring people with I/DD
to change your life

