

The Challenge

A newsletter that connects, engages and informs



The Arc
East Central Iowa

Fall 2017 • Volume 65 • Issue 4

The Gift of a Friend Annual Campaign

"It's okay... he's breathing now." I would quickly realize these words were coming from my husband as he spoke to a 911 operator. Our son Adam had stayed home from school that day with what seemed like flu symptoms. What we realized, however, is that our son was having a seizure. After briefly stabilizing Adam he would experience a second seizure.

A week later while at the hospital, my husband Dale and I would soon learn our son had epilepsy. After three and a half years as parents to a happy and healthy toddler, this day would mark the beginning of a dramatic change in Adam's development and life as we knew it.

Adam was diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, a form of severe epilepsy that strikes between the ages of three and five. In addition to experiencing frequent seizures, it also results in intellectual disabilities. Raising Adam would require assistance from family and a large circle of friends including schools and community service providers like The Arc.

Our family's relationship with The Arc began in December of 2005 with respite services. We started slowly, building up trust that others could care for our son. We had been made aware of The Arc's after school enrichment program when we faced an unexpected need for after school care. Here Adam would be with children his same age and be able to socialize and participate in age appropriate activities. This program bridges the gap for many working parents. For us this was a lifesaver. Without it one of us would have had to stop working.

We soon learned having a friend like The Arc would help us care for our son. It would become a partnership that would allow Dale and I to continue working knowing that Adam was happy and receiving quality care. As parents of a child with disabilities like Adam's there is a struggle to find a balance between the ongoing care required and individual time to find normalcy in life; time for careers, time to maintain health, time to manage a household and time to step away and recharge.

We ask you to consider a tax deductible gift to The Arc so that families like ours will always have a place to turn when the unexpected happens. Your gift of \$1000, \$100 or any amount you can give, will keep these vital services in place now and into the future. Our family has been blessed to be part of The Arc family for over 10 years. We can't begin to thank the many generous donors who have supported the mission of The Arc over the years.

"The Arc is a catalyst in the community for parents of special needs children to connect by providing events throughout the year that promote families meeting families, sharing their stories, supporting one another and realizing we are not alone" Dale shared.

Our family was dealt an unexpected blow, but The Arc provided invaluable community services that kept us together. We value knowing that when we drop our child off he will be safe. We value that The Arc not only provides service to our son, but through family and community outreach, we have learned many things about being a parent to a special needs child.



We know how much agencies like The Arc have been impacted by changes to Medicaid. This has resulted in unbudgeted expenses coupled with delayed reimbursements. An investment in The Arc is an investment in a fiscally sound organization with a history of standing by ready to serve. Please consider a gift today so that families like ours will always have a friend like The Arc for generations to come.

~ Sara and Dale Todd

P.S Your tax deductible donation can sustain critical programs for families like the Todds. If you make your donation by December 31st your gift will be matched dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$5000, through the gift of a friend.

Please consider making a tax deductible donation to The Arc so that families, such as the Todds, will be able to have a friend for years to come. Please mail your donation to:

The Arc of East Central Iowa
680 2nd Street SE Suite 200 • Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Attn: The Gift of a Friend Annual Campaign
or donate online at www.arceci.org



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From the Interim Director's Desk

In April of 2016 we began the journey of working with MCO to oversee Medicaid services. The road was rocky but we persevered and adjusted. On October 31st we were informed that one of the MCOs, Amerihealth Caritas was not renewing their contract with the state of Iowa and their current contract would expire on November 30th. This unexpected change is trying for both clients and families, as well as our agency. As of December 1st there will only be two MCOs serving Medicaid clients in Iowa. The state is in the process of accepting bids from other providers, but they will not be in place until July of 2019. All Amerihealth clients will be transitioned to United Healthcare with a provision allowing clients to move to Amerigroup upon request. In a very short time a great deal of client information will have to be exchanged to make this transition possible. We will continue to work very closely with the Iowa Association of Community Providers to advocate on our behalf, and on behalf of those we serve. We will also be working closely with the two remaining MCOs to do our part to avoid any possible service interruptions or billing issues.



Kyle Schramp

Over the last several years I have had the privilege of working with several families to learn about their journey in caring for a child with a disability. I have learned how The Arc has played a role in keeping families together, allowing parents to maintain their careers and enriching the lives of those we serve. This year "The Gift of a Friend" is the theme for our annual campaign. Can you be the "Friend" who makes a tax deductible donation to continue our mission of caring for those in our community with intellectual and developmental disabilities? We hope we can count on you.

I remember as a child thinking time moved so slow. A week seemed like forever and a month was hardly imaginable. However, as I have aged, it seems months fly by like weeks and years fly by like months. Here we are again approaching the holidays, a time of year that brings family and friends together to share friendship and honor traditions. Many memories of yesteryear are rehashed and new memories are added that will be recalled in years to come. For most of us friends and family are centric to our lives though the good times and bad. Take time during the holidays, to make sure they know how important they are to you.

It has been my privilege to serve as the Interim Executive Director over the last seven months. I would like to thank the staff for their continued focus on our mission during this time. I am excited to welcome Anne Armknecht as our new Executive Director. Anne brings passion and experience that will move us into the future.

Here's to memories new and old. Happy Holidays!

Kyle P. Schramp

Kyle Schramp
Interim Executive Director

21st Annual Arc March
March 17th • Lindale Mall
SAVE THE DATE!

Achieve with us.
Walk with me



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From Our New Executive Director, Anne Armknecht



I am both humbled and honored to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of The Arc of East Central Iowa. I bring to you over 30 years of nonprofit work in Iowa. Your mission and values are dear to my heart. In the weeks and months ahead I look forward to becoming acquainted with all of you as we work together to confront challenges, provide the highest quality services possible, and plan proactively for the future. I want to thank the Board of Directors and staff for allowing me the opportunity to join this wonderful organization. Together we will work to create a positive and welcoming future for all we serve. You will begin to hear from me periodically with updates and information. But more importantly I want to hear from YOU! Please feel free to contact me at any time. And thank you all for being a part of the success of The Arc of East Central Iowa.

Regards,
Anne

Please Welcome Our New Board Members!

At our annual meeting in September, three new members for our Board of Directors were elected. We look forward to the contributions they will make and welcome their diverse fields of expertise. Their passion will surely be felt in the months to come, and if you see a few new faces at our events please make sure to say hello!



Stacy Baye - Cedar Rapids Police Department

Why are you interested in The Arc?

Growing up my family was heavily involved at my brothers school for children with special needs, Special Olympics, and any other function he was involved in. He opened my eyes to his way of life, and all the wonderful people in it. Without those experiences in my adolescence I would not be the person I am today. Ever since moving to Cedar Rapids eleven years ago a part of me has felt as though it was missing. I am eager to return to that warm, welcoming community!

Steve Carter - Dr. Pepper Snapple Group

Why are you interested in The Arc?

I am really excited and am looking forward to serving on the board. For the last few years, my family has been involved with the summer softball program and I have met some really great folks along the way. Being involved with the softball program along with my wife, Brenda volunteering at Lindale Mall for the "Wrapping for a Cause" fundraiser, I am looking forward to continuing to volunteer in these programs and others to support The Arc's mission.



Kody Slife - Summit Pointe Senior Living

Why are you interested in The Arc?

I am interested in The Arc because I have received services from The Arc since 2008. I've loved group getaways, my favorites are overnights; & respite/SCL at least once a week meeting with my Arc "buddy". These have helped me get out into the public, make new friends & go different places. Because of these experiences, I'm more confident, not as shy & I'm able to talk to people more comfortably in different situations.

I'm grateful to be on the board of directors because I think it will be very interesting & I'd like to be a part of this team to help others.



What's Happening

On Thursday, October 19th, some of our staff and Day Hab consumers went to Noelridge Park on the northeast side of Cedar Rapids, to partake in the Variety - The Children's Charity of Iowa Star Playground ribbon cutting ceremony. This 9,600 square foot fully inclusive playground is nothing short of amazing for all families to enjoy. The playground has a rubber surface for safety and a variety of features that allows children of all abilities play with others and develop their skills. The ramps are wide enough for wheelchairs to access, a variety of swings for everyone to enjoy, shaded canopies, sweet music to be played on it and so much more. The Star playground cost \$475,000 and with help of many donors that money was raised and the playground is now open to be used. Our consumers are excited for the field trips they can take there when the weather gets warmer. The Arc of East Central Iowa would like to thank the City of Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids Park and Recreation Department, Variety - The Children's Charity of Iowa and the many donors that made this dream of a playground reality for all to enjoy for years to come.



The Arc's Holiday Party

Sunday, December 10th, 2017
1:00-3:00 pm

Hallagan Center - Mercy Medical Center

Santa, Hot Cocoa Bar, Cookie Decorating,
Crafts, Games, Face Painting, Mr. Shucks
Balloon Twisting, Photo Booth, and more!

Fun for the whole family!

Please RSVP with number attending
no later than Monday, December 5th
to Lexi at lcoberly@arceci.org or
(319)365-0487 ext.1024

This event is being
made possible through
generous support from



Thank you for all of your continued generous contributions to The Arc. We will continue to recognize volunteers, donations and members in the quarterly editions of The Challenger newsletter. August - October 2017

Volunteers *Hours - 213.75*

Dianne Austad, Matt Baumann, Jeff Corrigan, Melissa Cullum, Janie Dawson, Jody Donaldson, Luvoria Duckett, Stephanie Erbe, Brian Fagan, Julie Gasway, Brad Hauge, Ann Hearn, Mark Hudson, Sara Kane, Darren Keller, Spencer Kennedy, Cheryl Kiburz, Joanie Louis, Christopher Meier, Mark Mitchell, Ellen Mouw, Karen Nemecek, Ben Rogers, Kristin Schaefer, Philip Schramp, Laura Sellers, Cindy Smothers, Tyler Smothers, Erica Smothers, Melissa Tandy, Sara Todd, Frank Varvaris, David Wenzel, Blake Wilkinson

Membership

Arc Advocate

Terry & Johanna Abernathy, Teri Billick, Scott & Judy Carnes, George & Sandy David, Dale & Judy Fitzgibbons, Richard & Linda Harvey, Frances Hatfield, Patricia Hines, Tom & Therese Husnik, Robert Jansen, Darren Keller, David & Karen Kroeger, Daniel & Joan Manternach, Dawn McArtor, Robert Mowry, Steve & Linda Ponder, Al & Crystal Randall, William & Merilee Rosberg, Jeff & Kristin Schaefer, Loren & Lois Schmitz, Philip & Kyle Schramp, Pam Shultz, Chester & Janet Sullivan, Frank & Mary Swiderski, Joseph & Sandra Taylor, Tom Wiegand,

Greg & Kelly Wilkinson, Rick & Lois Yoerger

Arc Friend

Brad & Jody Bridgewater, Pam Imerman, Annette Kenney, James & Dorothy Klosterbuer, Kevin & Kim Steele, Sharon Wilcox

Arc Builder

Steve Drake, Bob & Stephanie Grovert, Tom & Sonja Penaluna, Brian & Suzanne Revers

Thank You

General Donations

Kathleen & Thomas Aller, Jacob Haar, Highway Equipment, Joseph & Ann Jeffries, KZIA, Jim LeMaster, Patricia Maher (Wal-Mart Foundation), Mary Lou & William McCartan, Wanda McCready, James Meek, George Morrison, Michael & Mary Parrish

In Honor of

Bike Ride for Aaliyah Moore

Richard or Donna Butikofer, Ray & Mary Collins, Gary & Deborah Cordell, Robert & Judith Lehman, Steven & Cindy Ribble, Terrie & Scott Seibert, Dale & Sara Todd

Memorials

Jerry Barker

John & Dianne Austad, Lorene Cervenka, Chaim & Cathy

Velenchik Joy, Kathleen Paulu, Jay Shuldiner, Russell Steven

Isabelle Chadim

Kenneth & Ruth Melby

Don Donahoe

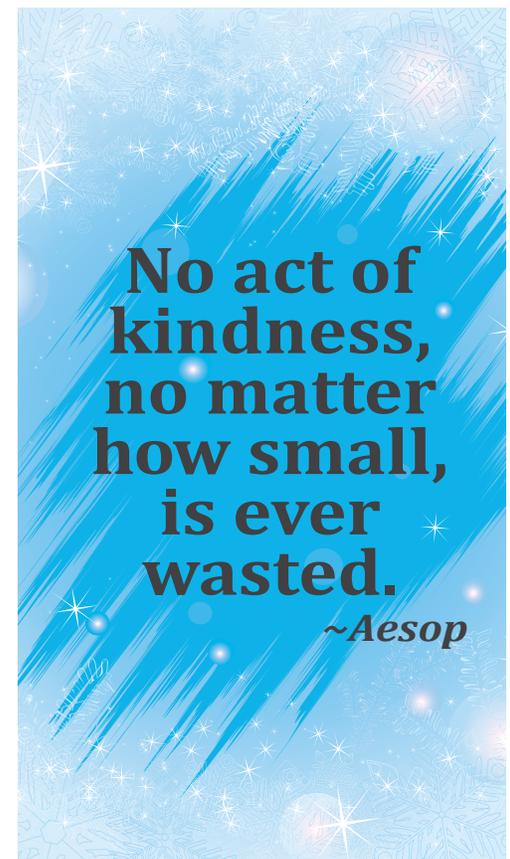
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Sara Smith

Ryan Smith

Birdies for Charity Donors

Matthew Carroll, Mark Hanawalt, Dan Hawthorne, Polly Horton, Todd Kerska, Carol Klocke, Bert McClintock, Bill McNeil, Dustin Moser, Dale Rettenmeier, Kristin Schaefer, Tom Slattery, Matt Taylor, Steve Voigt, Keely Wagner, Blake Wilkinson, Larry Witzel



Consumer Spotlight



Kamiera Dunn Benford

Hi, my name is Kamiera. I'm 13 years old and I live in Cedar Rapids. I have two sisters, Bre Asia who is 8 years old, and Marleah who is 2 years old. I love Tinkerbelle, Donald Duck, and Dora. My dog's name is Buddah.

My Favorite Arc Activity:

I love coming to The Arc for music and movie nights.

My Favorite Outside Activity:

I love shopping at Walmart and going to visit family in Minnesota.

My Favorite Hobby:

I enjoy collecting dolls especially princess dolls.

My Favorite Foods:

My favorite foods are rice, tacos, chicken nuggets, cheeseburgers, pizza, donuts, and silk milk!

I love going to school and The Arc because of all the fun stuff I get to do. I love playing with my dog, Buddah and dancing to music.

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Holiday Schedule

The Arc offices will be closed the following days for the upcoming holidays.

Thanksgiving

November 23rd & 24th

Christmas

December 25th & 26th

New Years

January 1st & 2nd

* The Arc Daycare WILL BE OPEN January 2nd.

We hope everyone has a happy and safe holiday season!

Happy Holidays

Wish List

From every day items to special requests. We are always in need of items to keep our office and programs running. Donations can be dropped off at The Arc's main office anytime. Thank you for your support!

Kitchen Needs

- Paper Towels / Paper Plates
- Ziploc Bags (Gallon & Sandwich Size)
- Plastic Spoons & Forks / Plastic Wrap
- Scrubbers For Washing Dishes

Snack/Cooking Activity Items

- 100% Juice
- Snack Crackers (Whole Wheat)
- Cake Pans
- Blender

General Supplies

- Baby Wipes
- Kleenex
- Dish Soap
- Bleach
- Hand Sanitizer, Soap, Soap Refills
- Garbage Bags

Office Supplies

- Sharpies
- Masking Tape
- White Construction Paper

Program Needs

- Batteries (AA, C and D)
- Dolls / Barbies / Transformers
- Star Wars & Marvel Toys
- Coloring/Activity Books (Super Hero/Contemporary)
- Board Games For Teens (Scattergories, Pay Day, Life, Clue)
- CD's (Kid Music, Nursery Rhymes)
- Karaoke CDs (w/ Vocals)
- Legos (Ages 8+) / Kinex
- Whiffle Ball & Bat Set
- Dramatic Play Sets (Kitchen, Grocery Store, Tools, etc.)
- Bingo Prizes (Assortment)
- Bubbles
- Sensory Items (Water Tubes, Soft Plastic Gel Filled Shapes)
- Books On CD For Kids & Teens
- Weighted Blankets
- Newer DVDs (G or PG)
- Paint For Crafts

Clothes

- Towels (Bath or Beach)
- Teenage Sized Shorts/Swimsuits (Boys & Girls - Draw Strings or Elastic)
- Dress Up Clothes (Various Sizes)

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More information please call 319-365-0487

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Mission Statement

The Arc of East Central Iowa empowers people with intellectual and related disabilities to engage in lifelong opportunities to live, learn, work and play with dignity, freedom and full inclusion in their communities.

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