

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Derecho...I am sure this has impacted you in some way. I hope you are safe, unharmed and exercising caution as you deal with the aftermath. A derecho storm was new to me, but something I will ever forget. I remember reading the severe thunderstorm warning to my daughter and thinking I have never seen one that was so widespread and serious about threat to life and property. I was convinced moving to the basement was duly warranted. There we sat and waited it out, watching and hearing winds like I had never experienced. It was like we were cast in the Wizard of Oz and we ended up in an alternate place. Fallen trees on cars and rooftops, shingles, debris, playsets, trampolines, patio furniture, and many other untethered items were strewn about. Despite the despair, it wasn't long before neighbors were checking on each other, followed soon by the sound of chainsaws that faded to generators as nightfall came upon us. The stars that night were big and bright.



We are truly thankful that The Arc office building in downtown sustained only very minor damage with power and internet being restored by Wednesday. With limited communication for several days we did our best to check in on staff and clients and direct them to known resources. It will take time, but once again we will rebound and rebuild. We Iowans are tough people, we don't just sit back and wait, we take action.

With our focus diverted to Derecho, forgetting we are still under the blanket of COVID-19, was not an option. After almost five months with no staff contracting COVID-19, we had our first two reports of daycare staff with positive test results. As a result, we followed the guidance of the Department of Human Services and closed our daycare from August 11th until August 24th. This allowed the recommended 14 days to prevent further spread and to do additional cleaning prior to welcoming back staff and families. Any clients that were deemed to have been in close contact were notified and provided guidance. We appreciate this closure created an extra burden for some, but we simply felt we needed to error on the side of caution. I am happy to report both staff are doing well with no further reports of positive cases.

It is my hope that 2020 has no more surprises in store for us. Be safe!

Sincerely,
Kyle Schramp
Acting Executive Director

PROGRAM UPDATES

Project SEARCH – Project SEARCH is gearing up for their next cohort, originally scheduled to begin September 8th. The building and classroom that Project SEARCH is housed in at St. Luke’s Hospital sustained damage from last week’s Derecho and we are working closely with the team at St. Luke’s to determine if we will be



able to start on time, or if there will be a slight delay due to the damage. Stephanie Beary will be in contact with the interns and their interdisciplinary teams as soon as more information is known. We are excited for this new class to begin as soon as possible. All COVID-19 precautionary measures (health screening and mask wearing) will remain in place.

Supported Employment – We continue to provide job coaching to individuals that have been able to work throughout the pandemic and now the Derecho. Some consumers have been put on hold by their employers as their organizations work to rebuild after the storm and our job coaches standby ready to resume services as soon as they are needed. We are so proud of our consumers who continue to work despite all of the challenges and barriers 2020 has thrown their way. Job Development/Assessment Services have been impacted by the Derecho and we hope to resume those services as soon as we can.

Daycare and Adult Enrichment – Our summer daycare hours would typically be coming to an end this month; however, all schools in the Cedar Rapids School District sustained damage from the Derecho and the start of the school year has been delayed. With that, our daycare program is working diligently to round up staff in order to maintain the extended hours as long as we can. We will be in touch with each family to identify needs and communicate availability as soon as we have more information. We appreciate everyone’s understanding and patience as we navigate these uncharted waters.

Service Center – We recently reopened our Service Center (Groups/Getaways) in Linn County and we are eager to see some familiar faces in those activities. We have spots available in most groups so please reach out to your Service and Support Coordinator to inquire. The weeknight groups will remain at the 5:30 start time until school is back in session and/or the daycare’s hours go back to normal.

DayHab – Our DayHab program is housed at Veteran’s Memorial Building, which sustained damage from the Derecho, so our DayHab program is once again on hold – but only temporarily! We hope to be back up and running next week so we are working on plans for this. The DayHab staff will be in contact with the participants and their interdisciplinary teams with more information soon. Our virtual DayHab program has also been on hold due to the power outage and we hope for this to restart soon as well.

In Home Services – Our in home services team continues to provide services at the discretion of the consumer/family and identified needs, while carrying out the precautionary measures necessary to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. If you have unmet needs from the recent Derecho, please reach out to your Service and Support

Coordinator for assistance and a list of resources. We are here to help and want to ensure everyone's health and safety!

SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS

***Do you know someone who goes Above & Beyond?
Do you know someone who is a great advocate?
Do you know someone who represents one of the
categories below?***



Let them know by [submitting](#) your nomination today.

Nominations are due August 31st.

- Bill Sackter Self Determination/Self Advocate of the Year
- Business Supporter of the Year
- Community Advocate of the Year
- Direct Service Professional of the Year
- Employer of the Year
- Media Excellence
- Meritorious Service Award
- Outstanding Community Service
- Para Educator of the Year
- Professional of the Year
- Super Sibling of the Year
- Teacher/Educator of the Year
- Volunteer of the Year
- Volunteer Group of the Year

SUBMIT A NOMINATION

2020 - YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

It's no secret that 2020 is a major election year. We are voting for a President, Legislatures, Representatives and many more officials in all areas of the government from the federal level down to your local town. The Arc of East Central wants to help get you ready to vote because we believe your voice matters. What that will look like is a series of e-blasts

on major topics such as how to register to vote, how to obtain an absentee ballot, how to find where you vote at, your rights when it comes to voting and more. We will also have webinars, virtual presentations, and information on our website.

If there is a certain topic or questions you have that you would like us to address, please reach out to Lexi at LCoberly@arceci.org or calling 319-365-0487 ext. 1024. In the meantime stay tuned as we work hard to roll this series out to you from now until Election Day on Nov. 3, 2020.



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with disabilities in
our community.*

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