FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Happy New Year Arc Family.

Welcome 2021! We are excited for the hope and possibilities this new year brings. While the pandemic is still in full-swing, vaccine distribution hopefully means we will be celebrating with you again in person in the near future.

The new year also brings a fresh focus for The Arc. We have a Strategic Plan for 2021-2022 which will steer us in the directions of efficiency, effectiveness, advocacy, expansion, growth, and innovation. With this ever changing environment, adaptability and flexibility for our agency is crucial. We need to act now to protect and manage today, while at the same time adjusting and preparing for the future. The immediate focus for our Strategic Plan is stabilizing our financial position and maintaining a net profit margin. This is even more important for The Arc due to pandemic safety precautions and restrictions affecting service delivery. Our action areas are to: research and secure special funding to cover lost revenue and additional expenses; operate a fund development program with a long-term plan for fundraising, donor relations, and planned giving; and better meet the needs of all people who want our services. To date, we have secured almost $24,000 in local United Way and Region funding in addition to federal COVID-19 relief funding, have hired a new Development & Communications Director to plan our fundraising efforts (read about her later in this newsletter!), and have formed a workgroup to re-envision how we recruit, retain, and utilize our DSPs.

Over the next several months I will highlight other areas of our Strategic Plan and keep you posted on our progress. If you would like to view our Strategic Plan in full, you can find it on our website, The Arc's Strategic Plan. As always, we appreciate and thank you for your partnership during these challenging times. The Arc will continue to be creative in delivering services and meeting the needs of our communities. Your safety and well-being are our top priority!

Stay safe, healthy, and warm this winter season.

Sincerely,
Theresa Lewis
Executive Director

COVID-19 UPDATE
We can finally say that 2020 is behind us. 2021 offers hope and a chance to once again gather with friends and family and resume other norms we have so dearly missed. First, we must remain focused on following the advice of public health experts who warn us that we still have some very challenging days ahead of us. Every 33 seconds someone in the US dies from COVID-19. We all need to keep up the good fight and stay strong.

The Arc remains committed to taking all necessary precautions so that we can provide services in the safest way possible. We continue to require masks for all staff and clients, monitor symptoms daily, manage social distancing, and disinfect our program areas on a regular basis. Our inventory of PPE including masks, gowns, gloves, faceguards, disinfectants and thermometers is plentiful. We have a COVID team that meets weekly to discuss any needs or issues that might arise and work closely with public health departments to stay abreast of the latest developments. We diligently monitor any reports of COVID symptoms and follow the recommendations of public health agencies to determine when quarantine and potential program closures are warranted. We take seriously the responsibility of providing a safe environment for our staff and clients so that tomorrow brings us closer to beating this pandemic.

With vaccines now being administered, hope is on the horizon. We know it takes 70-90% of the population to reach herd immunity to choke out this virus. Please join us in helping to bring an end to this pandemic.

---

**PROJECT SEARCH HIGHLIGHT**

Project SEARCH is a work skills training program at UnityPoint - St. Luke’s Hospital. The program is unique because it combines classroom instruction with workplace internships to prepare young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities for competitive employment.

We are in our 7th year of the program. Our most recent group of interns started the program in September 2020. The interns spent the first 3 weeks of the program completing hospital orientation, learning to navigate the hospital, participating in a skills assessment day, team building activities, interview practice and communication skills. After 3 weeks of all day classroom instruction they were anxious and excited to start their first of 3 internships that they will complete this program year.

In addition to classroom instruction, the interns spend a bulk of their day in their internships. Each internship is 10 weeks in length and they work 20 hours per week; the interns will gain over 200 hours of work experience in each internship.

The hospital offers a wide variety of internship opportunities for the interns to gain work experience. Interns are able to gain work experience in departments such as: Linen Services, Dietary Department, Human Resources, In-Patient/Out Patient Therapy Gym, Radiology/Imaging, Sterile Processing Department and the Birth Care Department.
To learn more about this program please join us via Zoom for our Project SEARCH Information Night on February 23rd at 5:00 PM. Please see below for registering.

**UPCOMING WEBINARS**

**COVID-19 Vaccine**  
**Thursday, January 21, 2021**  
**6:00 PM**  
*Via Zoom*

Current Arc families are welcome to join us for a virtual presentation about the vaccine and distribution timeline with Dr. Scott Nau.

To register or for more information please contact your Service & Support Coordinator.

**Project SEARCH Information Night**  
**Tuesday, February 23, 2021**  
**5:00 PM**  
*Via Zoom*  
*Will also be recorded for later viewing.*

Learn how young adults with disabilities can become involved in this unique employment internship training program. For adults age 18-30.

To register or for more information please contact:  
Stephanie Beary at sbeary@arceci.org.

**Guardianship & Conservatorship**  
**Thursday, February 25, 2021**  
**6:00 PM**  
*Via Zoom*

Please join us as David Wenzel, an attorney from Lynch Dallas, P.C., covers the basics of guardianships and conservatorships and how to go about the process.

Please register using the button below.  
If you have any questions you may contact Whitney Alber at walber@arceci.org.
HYVEE'S "MY HEART" REUSABLE BAGS

We have been selected as the beneficiary of the Hy-Vee Reusable Bag Program that supports local non-profits! Each time a $2.50 red "My Heart" Reusable Bag is purchased at the Hy-Vee Drugstore at 1520 6th Street SW, Cedar Rapids during the month of January we will receive a $1 donation!

Can't make it to that particular location? Not a problem... just purchase a $2.50 red "My Heart" Reusable Bag at ANY Hy-Vee store and follow the instructions on the attached Giving Tag to direct the $1 donation to The Arc of East Central Iowa anytime throughout the year!

The $2.50 red "My Heart" Reusable Bags are available at all Hy-Vee locations. Look for them at various registers and on the reusable bag rack. If you can't find them, just ask an employee where they are. They'll be happy to show you!

TOY HACK

For the last two years The Arc has partnered with Dr. Hal Evensen, Professor, Engineering Physic, and his team of volunteers and students at the University of Wisconsin Platteville with what they call the 'Toy Hack'.

Hal and friends go out and get donations to then purchase toys that they can “hack” and make more accessible for individuals with disabilities by putting in a switch attachment for easy use. They then reach out to area providers and schools to help them get in touch with clients in need. These toys become gifts to the family!

THANK YOU to the 'Toy Hack' crew for thinking of our clients and for all of the special gifts they received this year!

ARC MARCH - SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars and save the date!
The 24th annual Arc March is....
May 8th, 2021

GOLF TOURNAMENT - SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars and save the date!

The 31th annual Golf Tournament will be on....
June 18th, 2021
At Hunter's Ridge Golf Course

THE ARC ONLINE STORE

THANK YOU!

We just want to say thank you to everyone who made a purchase this year through our first ever online store fundraiser!

We hope everyone enjoys their Arc items and we look forward to offering more next year!

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

We would like to say Thank You to everyone who supported our 2020 Friends Helping Friends Challenge. Your support and friendship means so much to us, our clients, and their families. We would not be able to continue our mission without your support!

THANK YOU!

THE ARC RECEIVED THEISEN'S GRANT

The Arc received a Theisen’s More for Your Community Grant in 2020 which helped us purchase and grow additional fresh produce and whole grains for our daycare programs.

Thank you Theisen’s for your generosity!

WELCOME TO THE ARC!

Hi, I’m Jenny Bosking and I am the new Development & Communications Director. My husband, Steve, and I are the proud parents of two grown
children, Gunnar and Anna. In my free time, I love spending time with family and friends, volunteering, entertaining, baking, traveling and rooting for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

I am eager to get to know all the families and friends associated with The Arc of East Central Iowa. Please feel free to send me an email at jbosking@arceci.org or a note, we can schedule a Zoom meeting or just give me a call at 319-365-0487 ext. 1024. I want to learn your stories, how The Arc has supported you, your favorite memories and the programs that have been the most impactful for your family. Then I will be best-prepared to share the work of The Arc with the greater Cedar Rapids community. I am thrilled to be joining The Arc family!

Hi, I’m Kelby Gittings and I am a new Service & Support Coordinator. In my free time I enjoy building scale models and playing table top games. I look forward to taking on this new position and meeting my new clients!

Hi, I’m Nikolai Cairy and I am the new Employment Specialist. I’m here to help and make great impacts on people and help them succeed. I’m very happy to be a part of the team. I like to help make everyone have a great day and I always like to stay positive.

WE ARE HIRING

Looking for a new job or just want to make some extra cash? We are looking for more wonderful, compassionate people to join our team! We are currently looking for a System Coordinator, Employment Specialist, Job Coach, full-time and part-time Direct Service Providers!

If you're interested in a job where you can make a difference please check out our job opportunities and apply online today!

DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is an early literacy program that delivers one free, age appropriate book per month to children ages 0 to 5 in Cedar Rapids (zip codes 52401-6 and 52411) and Marion. The Library Foundation covers the costs of books and postage, an average of $25 per child per year. This FREE service provides 60 books for your child, all age-appropriate during the five years. To enroll, click here: www.crlibrary.org/imagination-library (if you are a resident of Marion, you can enroll here as well!).