Why Advocacy Matters

Simply put, advocacy gives meaning to causes so that action can be defined to drive change. If we unite our voices, we can educate and gain support. Once we understand a cause, our support can change what is, into what should be.

At the core of The Arc on the local, state and national level is advocacy. Our mission requires that we speak up for those who can’t, and to protect their rights to live fully and with inclusion in their communities. For over 70 years The Arc has advocated for the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. It requires time and perseverance, it requires education, and it requires building partnerships.

Advocacy seeks to ensure that all people in society are able to: Have their voice heard on issues that are important to them. Protect and promote their rights. Have their views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about their lives.

History has shown that advocacy matters. Susan B Anthony's efforts were instrumental in women getting the right to vote in 1920, Martin Luther King led a non-violent movement advocating for civil rights in the 50s and 60s, environmental advocates lead to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 and the movement for LGBT rights brought about the legalization of same sex marriage in 2015.

A cause in dire need of advocacy is the shortage of Direct Support Professionals (DSPS). These individuals provide mental health and disability support and services. Because of their efforts, many Iowans are living, learning and working in their communities. The Arc of East Central Iowa's largest source of revenue is Medicaid reimbursement for the services we provide to our clients. Reimbursement rates are fixed, with no scheduled increases. In fact several rates have not been increased since 2015. Trying to pay competitive wages on reimbursement rates established six years ago against increasing expenses simply doesn’t work. As a result turnover rates have doubled since 2015 resulting in more time and expense for recruiting, and clients waiting longer for services. The Iowa Association of Community Providers has made addressing the DSP workforce shortage and increasing DSP wages the #1 legislative priority for 2021. We hope we can count on your support to contact your legislators and support this much needed cause.

A current example of grassroots advocacy is Adalyn’s Law. Through the tireless advocacy of Adalyn’s mother, there is now a bill before the Iowa legislature known as House File 33. It addresses the lack of public restroom accessibility for persons with disabilities. It seeks to require adult changing stations to properly and safely assist older children and adults requiring toileting assistance and a safer environment for those providing care. The passage of HF33 would restore dignity and increase community inclusion for these adults and allow them to more freely participate in their community. To learn more about Adalyn’s Law go to https://legiscan.com/IA/bill/HF33/2021.

We encourage you to look around your community and find the causes that matter to you and get involved. You will grow in ways you might not have imagined.

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Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has...

~Margaret Mead
Greetings Arc Friends and Family!

February is a month full of activities and home to a host of awareness days and celebrations. During this month we reflect on women’s history and Black history, and just like the history of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities, the advances in equity and inclusion would not have been possible without passionate advocates working tirelessly and selflessly to create change.

Advocacy plays a key role in our Strategic Plan. Our agency was founded in 1953 by a group of advocates who loved their children and wanted them to have the same opportunities as children without disabilities. Our roots are deep in diversity, inclusion, and equity and while we have made great strides over the past several decades, there is more work to be done. We plan to facilitate change that benefits clients and families, members, and the ongoing services of The Arc. And we again want to be THE community leader in grassroots advocacy for individuals with disabilities and their families. But how do we accomplish this? First, we need an advocacy strategy that focuses on key legislation and facilitates change in alignment with our mission. We need to identify our passions and develop a vision, goal, and objectives for how to create change. We also need to partner locally, statewide, and nationally to have collective power with our messages and strengthen our impact. And that means we need YOU.

If advocacy is something you are passionate about, I welcome you to attend our Advocacy Kick-Off (via Zoom) on Monday, February 25th from 5:30-6:30 PM - to register, email me at tlewis@arceci.org. This will start our discussion about the change we want to create and how we can further our advocacy work in the communities we serve. Advocacy takes many shapes and forms, and we appreciate the efforts that occur each day to make the world a better place for people with IDD.

Thank you for allowing The Arc of ECI to support you!

Theresa Lewis
Executive Director

Summer Program - Enrollment Starts in March

The Arc has summer programming for your child and teen! Sign up for summer programming starts in March. *Think warm thoughts and start your summer off right!*

**Summer Day Program** - The Arc provides Summer Day programming in Linn county (Cedar Rapids). This program run for various weeks/times during the summer months and is designed as a group respite/break for parents. For more information or to request an application please contact: Tara Cornelius at tcornelius@arceci.org or 319-365-0487 ext. 1044.
What’s Happening

Service Center Update

After having limited group options for Linn County clients, we started to see attendance from the remaining groups and daylongs improve in December. We can serve more and we encourage families to take much needed respite and have their loved ones join us for our fun activities. We also offered virtual group activities in December made possible through a grant which has helped us find creative ways to engage our clients in programming. Through this grant, we were able to purchase Scholastic and National Geographic programs to provide more activities to clients on site. The participants are enjoying the more interactive options that these two subscriptions provide.

We have also been doing virtual fieldtrips, different games and activities. At a recent Rec Night, we explored the Animal Kingdom with Discovery Life and enjoyed a night of card games.

Andrew Cejka-Emig, who attends Service Center activities regularly, said that his favorite part of coming to groups was “getting to hang out with the nice staff and playing games.”

We hope to get out in the community again soon, but until then, we’ll keep looking for new ways to explore from The Arc.

In-Home Services Update

The Arc of East Central Iowa continues to provide Individual Respite and Supported Community Living (SCL) to all ages.

Calvin and his staff Halie meet up to three times a week to work on his SCL goals. They enjoy going grocery shopping, thrift shopping, budgeting, and connecting with Linn County resources. Ensuring they social distance, wear masks, and wash their hands routinely has assisted in goal progress!

Meet Ashlyn and her staff Izzy! Izzy has worked for The Arc for 7 months. During Individual Respite, they do a lot of Frozen themed yoga videos, baking, Barbies, go on walks, play sports, and get Starbucks. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission, Izzy!

We have open positions for our Before and After School Daycare Program and Summer Program. We are looking for highly motivated individuals who want to play a key role in fulfilling our mission of making a difference in the lives of those with intellectual and related disabilities. The desired candidate has experience working with people with intellectual and related disabilities.

Duties include but are not limited to:

• providing direct supervision
• adherence to clients care plan including personal needs
• ongoing communication with clients, caregivers, and service team
• timely and accurate documentation of services provided.

Must be at least 18 years of age. Candidates should possess effective problem solving skills, leadership and strong written/verbal communication skills.

Hours: Before/After School Mon - Fri 6 AM - 8:30 AM and 2 PM - 6 PM and Summer Mon - Fri 6:30 AM - 6:30 PM.

Pay is $10.50 - $12.25 per hour.

To apply, go to www.arceci.org/jobs/
The Power of Community Partners

The wonderful support of local business sponsors over the past several years has helped us continue the expansion of services for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the community. Last year, The Arc served over 700 individuals through its In-home Services, Groups Program, Daycare Services, and Adult Services. The sponsorship of local businesses that commit their financial contributions help The Arc to fulfill its mission to empower 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.

Local businesses show their commitment to the community by supporting our mission to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities when they need it most. Our sponsors are associated with one of the longest standing non-profits serving those with disabilities in the area. The Arc of East Central Iowa is grateful to have so many strong community partners. Through these partnerships our mission to support our consumers & their families’ has become a reality.

The Arc is very thoughtful about how financial resources are utilized. It takes non-government funding to research and implement new programs and to meet the growing needs of the individuals served by The Arc. The Arc is committed to continuing to research new programs to meet the unmet opportunities. Sponsorships have allowed The Arc to bring more valued services to the community and are humbled by the ongoing support to us. Many thanks to our generous 2020 sponsors listed below. As we look ahead and plan for the future, The Arc looks forward to your continued partnership and support to help us reach new heights. If your company would like to be included as a 2021 sponsor or if you would like additional information regarding our many sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jenny Bosking at bosking@arceci.org or 319-365-0487 ext. 1024 by March 1st. We would love to talk with you about how we can highlight your business as you support families with disabilities in your community.

Presenting Sponsor
United Fire Group

Champion Sponsors
Bowker Mechanical Contractors, LLC
New Leader Manufacturing

Advocate Sponsors
GreenState Credit Union
Veridian Credit Union

Guardian Sponsors
Central Iowa Power Cooperative
CRANDIC
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Schimberg Co.
Simmons Perrine Moyer Bergman PLC
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UnityPoint Health - St. Luke’s Hospital
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Grants
COVID-19 Cares Art
East Central Region
Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation
Iowa DD Council
Iowa DHS
Linn County Witwer Trust
State of Iowa
United Way
United Way of East Central Iowa
US Bank Foundation
US HHS Cares Act

Thank you!
Volunteers Hours - 71
Nick Alber, Brayden Alber, Amy Belice, Jeff Corrigan, Melissa Cullum, Jody Donaldson, Steve Duke, Terese Fisher, Teri Gibson, Nate Haas, Brad Hauge, Darrin Keller, Heidi Kinder, Vaughn Lewis, Jordan Mason, Brandon Mason, Carole Meade, Michele Means, Ben Mulholland, Scott Nau, Jackie Nau, Michael, Neuerburg, Jake Ostendorp, Kristin Schaefer, Erica Smothers, Shelly Strellner, Melissa Tandy, Sara Tod, Blake Wilkinson

You Make a Difference

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. December 2020 – January 2021.

Volunteers

Sara Todd, Blake Wilkinson
Smothers, Shelly Strellner, Melissa Tandy,
Nau, Jackie Nau, Michael, Neuerburg,
Michele Means, Ben Mulholland, Scott Nau, Michael, Neuerburg,

Thank You

General Donations
Alliant Energy Foundation, Tina Arbore, Bill & Karen Bachman, Andrew Bellagamba, Michael Benson, Dustin Bricker, Carepro Health Services, Cargil, Deborah Cordell, Crescent-Janko Masonic Foundation, David Ficken, John Deere, General Mills, Patricia Ghebe, Green State Credit Union, Pam Harnack, Andrew Helle, Steven Johnson, Jeffrey Keslar, Sleiman Kherbaqui, Heidi Kinder, Barbara McMickle, Jesse Mitchell, Craig Morrison, Joseph Nachazel, Bryce Plathe, Phillip & Christine Rezin, Kiel Rickels, Deloris Russo, James Smothers, Kelby Strother, Sandra Strunk-Sosalla, Tammy Lee Thompson

Memorials
Donald Kness
James & Geraldine Pettit

Jerry Reck
Nancy Miller
Sara Smith
Ryan Smith

United Way
Thank you to those below and the anonymous donors who designated their 2020 United Way donations to The Arc of East Central Iowa.

Membership
Arc Angel
Bill & Cheryl Lehman & Family
Arc Builder
David & Rhonda Schulz, Keith Wright
Arc Friend
Richard & Carole Swanson, Dianne & John Austad, Beverly Dorch, Shelly Strellner, Jeffrey & Julie Wenzel
Arc Advocate
Jake & Amanda Weaver, Benjamin Mulholland, James & Jodi Balvanz, Terry & Linda Brecht, Don & Karen Frost, Dave & Diane Graham, Stephanie Graham, David & Karen Kroeger, Theresa Lewis, Greg & Kelly Wilkinson, Nancy Buenger Rife, Dennis & Joyce Schwebek

2020 Friends Helping Friends Challenge

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our 2020 Annual Campaign!


2020 Friends Helping Friends Challenge

**Consumer Spotlight**

**Amanda Strohecker**

I am 29 years old and live in Marion. I am an only child. **Woohoo!** I have 3 cats named Thing 1, Thing 2 and Taz. I like to collect snow globes and pictures of my family and friends.

**My Favorite Hobby:**

I love to color and paint. I really love paint by numbers.

**My Favorite Arc Activities:**

I loved it when we could go swimming at the YMCA. I also like to hang out with my friends at The Arc, color, and go for walks.

**My Favorite Outside Activities:**

Shopping!

**My Favorite Food:**

Pizza!

**My Current Job:**

My current job is a courtesy clerk at the Marion Hy-Vee. I have worked there since October of 2017.

**What I Like Most About My Job:**

I like helping people and seeing lots of people from my old school.

I absolutely love going to Florida. We have lots of friends down there and we eat really good food on the beach.

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**Snowman Donuts**

_A great no-bake treat!_

**Ingredients:**

- 1 box or bag mini powdered donuts
- Mini chocolate chips
- Orange starbursts

**Instructions:**

1. Remove wrappers from orange starbursts and cut in half to make two triangles. Use your fingers to form triangles into noses.

2. Place mini chocolate chips point side down into a mini powdered donut to make eyes and mouth. Press a starburst nose into the center. Repeat with remaining donuts.

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**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 or shop our Charity List on AmazonSmile. Thank you for your support!

**Kitchen Needs**

- Aluminum foil / Plastic Wrap
- Can opener - heavy duty
- Digital kitchen timers
- Dish soap
- Paper bowls, plates, towels
- Plastic spoons and forks
- Ziploc bags (gallon, quart, sandwich size)
- Ziploc FREEZER bags (gallon)

**Snack & Cooking Activity Items**

- 100% juice
- Cookie sheets / Muffin tins
- Disposable cake pans (9×13 foil pans w/ lids)
- Frosting for cakes
- Fruit snacks / Granola bars
- Pan non-stick spray
- Re-usable cake pans (9 x 13)
- Snack crackers (Ritz, Graham, Club, Oyster, Saltine)

**General Supplies**

- Baby wipes (unscented/sensitive)
- Disinfectant spray/wipes
- Hand sanitizer & refills
- Hand soap & refills
- Kleenex/Tissues

**Office Supplies**

- Batteries (AAA, AA, C & D)
- Calculators
- Double-sided tape
- Dry erase markers/erasers
- Eraser and eraser tops
- File Folders (regular and hanging)
- Ink pens (blue and black ink)
- Masking/Duct tape
- Pocket Dictionaries
- Pocket folders (durable)
- Sharpies / Markers (washable)
- Sticky tack

**Program Needs**

- Adult coloring books
- Bean bag chairs or bean refills
- Board games for teens/adults (*Life*, *Clue*, *Scattegories*, *Pay Day*, *Heads Up*, etc.)
- Books on CD for kids & teens
- Books
- Coloring/activity books
- Construction paper (8.5x11- various colors)
- Crayola crayons / Colored pencils
- Dice / Kinex
- DVDs (newer G/PG)
- Master Pieces NFL Matching Game
- Padlocks with keys
- Sensory items (water tubes, soft plastic gel-filled shapes)
- Transformers
- TVs (flat screen at least 32 inches)
- Water Bottles (Reusable)
- Weaving & jewelry making kits

**Clothes**

- Teenage-sized shorts and jogging pants and swimsuits (boys & girls – draw strings or elastic)
- Towels (bath & beach)
Choose The Arc of East Central Iowa as your beneficiary when shopping on smile.amazon.com. At no cost to you, Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase price to The Arc of East Central Iowa. Shop for yourself and support The Arc of East Central Iowa at the same time!

DONATE A CAR
CHANGE A LIFE

Cleaneing Your Closets
Support the Arc

Use the following number to donate in support of The Arc of East Central Iowa
Arc # 1957 - 252 Blairs Ferry Rd NE, Cedar Rapids
More information please call 319-365-0487
No appointment needed when contributing to a Non-profit.

Want a job where you’ll make a difference?

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) assists with activities of daily living, encourages attitudes and behaviors, assist individuals to lead a self-directed life, and contribute to the community. A DSP also acts as an advocate, in communicating their needs, self-expression, and goals.

Want to advertise on this page?
Please contact us at 319-365-0487 for more details!

Large & Small Ads Available
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.

Make a Difference
Donate at www.arceci.org

Save the Dates!
Celebrate with us to raise awareness about intellectual and related disabilities at the 24th Annual Arc March!

May 8th, 2021
Lindale Mall

Details coming soon!
• CELEBRATING THE ABILITIES IN ALL OF US! •

30th Annual Golf Tournament
Thursday, June 17th
Hunters Ridge Golf Course • Marion, Iowa

Stay tuned for details.