**A Lovely Day - Our 2021 Annual Campaign**

**Brayden Pisarik** is a lot of things. He’s a son and a brother in a loving family. He’s an avid Hawkeye fan and a young man who knows a lot about cars. He’s a great example of perseverance and hard work and has a great sense of humor. Brayden is also a valued member of our Arc family. He is a shining example of the wonderful people who come through our doors each day. They make the world a better place and every day a lovely day with their shining disposition and spirit.

*Here is Brayden’s story…*

In 2004, Karla Pisarik was just past the halfway milestone of her pregnancy with her second child when she unexpectedly went into labor. Brayden Pisarik was born at 23 weeks, 4 days gestation and weighed in at a mere 1 pound, 6 ounces. He was rushed to the NICU at St. Luke’s where he stayed for 4½ months until he was strong enough to go home. While the Pisariks will never know why Karla went into early labor, they knew Brayden would be at risk for lifelong complications and special needs due to dangerous brain bleeds, low birth weight and the many other complications that come with such an early birth.

When Brayden was 2½ he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy and later was also diagnosed with epilepsy. In addition to the numerous appointments and therapies Brayden was receiving, the Pisariks also became “regulars” at Witwer Children’s Therapy, and it was there where Brayden’s therapist connected them to The Arc of East Central Iowa.

The Arc was a game changer for The Pisariks! Brayden’s parents found much-needed support through respite programs, day care and summer programs. His parents became friends with a community of families who helped them through the winding path of caring for a child with a disability.

Brayden is almost 17 years old now and he attends Prairie High School. As Brayden and his family have reflected on their time using The Arc’s programs and services, they realized Brayden has participated in every program he’s been eligible for at The Arc. If you mention Brayden’s name to any of The Arc staff, everyone instantly reacts with a smile and a laugh. Brayden brings absolute joy everywhere he goes and his presence just ensures you’re guaranteed to have a wonderful and lovely day.

Brayden’s family definitely has some favorite memories of their time with The Arc. Karla reflects, “The lifelong friendships with staff have been so valuable. The Arc March and Kernels games have been favorite outings. Our other two kids loved winning the “Super Siblings” award. One very special memory is when Brayden (all on his own) decided he was going to donate his Xbox and games to The Arc because he got a new one at home. He was SO proud! His decision to give something so valuable, shows how important his Arc community is to him.”

We invite you to join us this holiday season in support of Brayden and all the amazing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in our community by making a tax-deductible donation to The Arc. Your gift will stay right here at The Arc of East Central Iowa and will help sustain critical services for those we serve. Your gift will help individuals reach their full potential and provide many future lovely days ahead, not only for them but for everyone that they touch with their amazing spirits.

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**Don’t wait... make your donation today!**

**Help support the Lovely Day Campaign.**

**Please mail your donation to:**

The Arc of East Central Iowa  
680 2nd Street SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401  
Attn: A Lovely Day Annual Campaign

or donate online at [www.arceci.org](http://www.arceci.org)
Hello Arc Friends and Family!

Give Thanks! November is a wonderful time of the year – the beginning of the holiday season and a time of reflection, celebration, and being thankful. Reflecting on our Strategic Plan progress, there is much to celebrate. We have advanced significantly in many areas. Our advocacy work is strong, making new connections and partnerships in the community to further the impact and scope of our work. We have invested in our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) by providing them wage increases, will be aligning them into new categories for better recruitment and retention, and giving them better supports. To improve our financial stability and sustainability, we are applying for all available COVID relief funding, writing more grants to support programming, and have set the stage for strong Community Partner and Annual Appeal campaigns. And finally, we are moving forward with plans to expand and innovate by extending our reach to address the unmet need for childcare in our community by partnering with the College Community School District to support parents and caregivers of a child with a disability.

All of this work has been advanced by a committed, dedicated, and enthusiastic Arc team – and through the support of YOU and our community. As we move forward into this holiday season, give thanks to the people who make all of this possible. You can also give thanks by supporting what we do, advocating on behalf of those we serve, or giving your time to help us fulfill our mission.

We are thankful for our Arc community and wish each of you a very special Thanksgiving Holiday!

With appreciation,

Theresa Lewis
Executive Director

From the Director’s Desk

VOTE FOR US!

We are a 2022
The Gazette Gives Back recipient.

Your vote gives us FREE advertising space in The Gazette!

Simply go online to place your vote.

TheGazette.com/GivesBack

Voting is open November 25th – December 31st.
Update from Day Hab

Day Hab had a fun week celebrating Halloween last month! The staff prepared games and fun activities for everyone to participate in. All groups decorated pumpkins and had the admin staff vote on which one was the most creative. It was a fun-filled week! Day Hab participants continue to volunteer by delivering Meals on Wheels every day. In addition, participants have started delivering the Tidbits Newspaper on a weekly basis. We are doing our best at getting out in the community to engage in various activities including checking out holiday displays at local stores, getting outside and walking before the weather gets too cold, playing games at local coffee shops, and partnering with the Eastern Iowa Arts Academy for art classes twice a month. Despite COVID still hanging around, our participants are rocking wearing masks and happy to be able to be out in the community involved in activities.

We still have the flexibility to provide virtual Day Hab for the time being, and we have 14 participants taking advantage of this. They have shown a tremendous amount of growth in their social skills and ability to connect with their peers through our virtual platform. The participants plan their themes and crafts for each week in advance, and our admin team puts together individual boxes that are mailed out to each participant in preparation of their Day Hab activities for the month. We miss seeing everyone in person, but are so thankful to be able to continue providing this option in the meantime.

We want to take a moment to thank all of our amazing Day Hab staff for the work they do, both in person and virtually, to continue providing fun, safe and engaging activities for our participants to expand their skills and integrate into the community! If you are interested in working in our Day Hab program with our adult participants, helping them develop and maintain life skills and participate meaningfully in the community please reach out to Jill McDowell at jmcdowell@arceci.org. We have multiple full-time, Monday-Friday positions available and we would love for you to be a part of our team!

Satisfacton Survey Results

In September, we sent a satisfaction survey out to our participants and their parents/guardians to assess how we are doing in the areas of advocacy, communication, and service delivery. We received 55 respondents and here are some highlights:

• 100% reported that they are treated with dignity and respect by all Arc staff
• 100% are satisfied or very satisfied with the relationship they have with their SSC
• 89% are satisfied or very satisfied with the level of care provided by DSP(s)
• 86% are satisfied or very satisfied with our In-Home Services (hourly SCL, respite, and home based habilitation services)
• 100% are satisfied or very satisfied with our Daycare Enrichment program
• 81% are satisfied or very satisfied with our Service Center (Groups and Getaways)
• 94% reported being satisfied or very satisfied with our Day Hab program
• 100% are satisfied or very satisfied with our Supported Employment Services

The most common suggestion we had for improvement was to hire more staff to be able to meet everyone’s needs. Our team is working diligently and creatively to recruit more staff as well as more effectively use the staff we currently have. In addition, our Service and Support Coordinators (SSCs) have stepped up and are helping in direct care while still managing all of their other day-to-day responsibilities. Thank you, SSCs! You are wonderful!
Thank You 2021 Community Partners

The support of local businesses is an integral piece in The Arc’s ability to carry out programs and services to as many participants as possible. We are incredibly grateful to the many businesses in the Cedar Rapids area who not only helped us fulfill our mission in 2021, but also underwrote the costs of putting on our Arc March, golf outing and our bike ride. It takes a village of support to make The Arc run and our business friends are vital to our success in all aspects of what we do!

It’s bigger than just financial support too! Our Community Partners’ fund programs that provide caregivers with peace of mind so they can work and contribute to our economy. It’s an important and impactful cycle that has a positive financial impact on Cedar Rapids. Every program, every initiative, every outing relies on the financial support of local businesses and the ripple effect is incredible!

If your company would like to be a Community Sponsor for 2022, or would like more information about our Community Partner program, please contact Jenny Bosking at jbosking@arceci.org or 319-365-0487 ext. 1024 to learn more.
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. Aug. - Oct. 2021.

Thank You

General Donations

Volunteers

Hours - 263

Membership

Arc Angel
Suzanne Revers

Arc Builder
Judy Landt, Jim LeMaster, Suzanne Myers

Arc Friend

Arc Advocate

Memorials

Matt Baumann
Tom & Jackie Ausborn, Lesley Baize, Heather Berta, Catholic Evangelization Outreach, Dawn & Brent Cobb, Matthew & Leslie Dake, MaryGrace Eson, Randall Fagle, Linda Reade & Mike Feganshaw, Kris Gobeli, Leah Hoyle, Paul & Cheryl Kiburz, Ovalinnovations, Dana Oxley, Regis Middle School, Amy Reasner & Wilford Stone, Larke Thurum, Brian & Shelly Turner

Dave Flory
Karen Bachman

Robert Nowachek
Karen Bachman

Sara Smith
Ryan Smith

David Strang
Ann Strang

Congratulations to all our twelve raffle basket winners and many. MANY thanks to all who participated in our raffle this year, from donors to our ticket purchasers.

We loved seeing Izzy’s joy when she received her adaptive tricycle that was donated by Goldfinch Cyclery. We hope she has many hours of ride time with her new set of wheels!
Participant Spotlight

Jodi Folsom
I am 27 years old and live in Cedar Rapids with my mom, dad and two dogs. Bodhi is our big dog and he is 7 years old. Twiggy is our little dog and she is 15 years old.

I have a big sister named Hillary. She just got married to Matt and I was her maid of honor. It was so much fun! I also have an older brother named Alex. He lives in Iowa City.

Favorite Arc Activity:
EVERYTHING! I go to Day Hab every day to see my friends.

Favorite Things To Do:
I love to play SkipBo and when I’m outside I like to take my dogs to the park with my parents to walk. I also like music and dancing. I especially love going to the movies with my mom and dad.

Favorite Foods:
My favorite things to eat are my mom’s spagetti and pizza. I’m really not picky but these are my favorites!

The picture above is from my sister’s wedding. I danced all night and didn’t even sit down!

Advocacy

7 for 70
As we begin to prepare for the celebration of our 70th Anniversary in 2023, we are implementing a new initiative called 7 for 70. We presented the initiative to our board in October and are asking for all of you to join in as well.

Write down the names of 7 people in our community you can talk to about The Arc, focus on one thing you are passionate about with our organization, and spend 7 minutes talking with each person on your list. Let’s change the world and spread the message of inclusion one person at a time.

If you need assistance with starting conversations, items to help in your conversations or advocacy ideas, please contact our Advocacy Program Coordinator, Kristen Krambeer kkrambeer@arceci.org.

Gifting
As we approach the season of rest, reflection, and family we wanted to thank all of those who have taken the time to give wonderful gifts over the years to The Arc. Your kindness has helped our organization provide much needed services and support to our participants. You have changed the lives of many and we appreciate your dedication to our mission. If you are thinking of The Arc this year and would like to provide a holiday gift, please check out our Wish List to the right or on our website, www.arceci.org. We also have a Charity List on AmazonSmile.

Please contact our Advocacy Program Coordinator, Kristen Krambeer at kkrambeer@arceci.org for any questions.

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
- Can opener - heavy duty
- Dish soap
- Paper plates & towels
- Pitchers with lids
- Plastic spoons & forks
- Sponges & scrub brushes
- Ziploc bags (gallon, quart, sandwich)
- Ziploc FREEZER bags (gallon)

Snack & Cooking Activity Items
- 100% juice
- Cake mixes
- Canned fruit & vegetables
- Disposable cake pans (9x13 foil pans w/ lids)
- Dried fruit
- Frosting for cakes
- Fruit snacks / Granola bars
- Pan non-stick spray
- Pretzels
- Re-usable cake pans (9 x 13)
- Snack crackers
- (Ritz, Graham, Club, Oyster, Saltine)
- Tortilla chips & salsa

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

Office Supplies
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C & D)
- Glue - bottles & sticks
- Hot glue gun refills
- Ink pens (blue and black ink)
- Markers (washable) / Sharpies/Dry Erase
- Pocket folders (durable)
- Sticky tack
- Tape (Masking, Duct, double-sided)

Program Needs
- Adult coloring books
- Bean bag chairs or bean refills
- Board games for teens/adults (Life, Clue, Scattergories, Pay Day, Heads Up, etc.)
- Books on CD for kids & teens
- Bubbles
- Coloring/activity books
- Construction paper (8.5x11-various colors)
- Digital kitchen timers
- DVDs (newer G/PG)
- Kinenx
- Padlocks with keys
- Sensory items (water tubes, soft plastic gel-filled shapes)
- TVs (flat screen at least 32 inches)
- Weaving & jewelry making kits

Clothes
- Teenage-sized shorts and jogging pants and swimsuits (boys & girls – draw strings or elastic)
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
1-877-272-2270
www.thearc.org
Identify The Arc of East Central Iowa and we will receive 90% of proceeds. Program administered by Melwood Co. in cooperation with The Arc of the US

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.

Clean 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.

Need help finding the money to support a family member with special needs? Consider a Special Needs Trust. Contact M. Van Thillo, Registered Representative, to learn more.

Valuing every person, every day, for over 40 years
Providing supported community living services for adults with intellectual disabilities

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The Arc of East Central Iowa
680 2nd Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Phone: 319–365–0487
Fax: 319–365–9938
www.arceci.org

Mission Statement
The Arc of East Central Iowa empowers people with intellectual and developmental 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

What Our Families Love About The Arc!

- Basically everything. The willingness to help our son in any way they can. Granted, with COVID, it has been more difficult to get all the services that he needs but they try with all they have. (Matt Hoskins, parent)

- Joseph just celebrated his 24th birthday. We have been clients of The Arc for 22–23 years. Over the years we have had the opportunity to meet many new caregivers. Many of which have been college students. It is always a joy when you share in the life of a young adult. We have had students who would work with Joseph for 1–3 years. Graduate from college and move on. We have attended 2 weddings and Joseph was a groomsman for one wedding. To this day Joe is blessed to have 3 respite/SCL workers be a part of his life for more than 12 years. These relationships keep us in The Arc family. (Jill Ryder, parent)

- I feel better knowing that my son is developing his own friendships with peers and with staff. He is not a person who is able to call a friend and spend the afternoon with them, so the social opportunities given to him/me by his attendance at the programs he likes is so so important. Especially now that his siblings have grown and moved away and our household is smaller, and he is slowing down. (Amy Belice, parent)

- I love using The Arc for my son’s services from bowling to Day Hab and SCL. Everyone that works with him is amazing. (Dawn McArtor, parent)

- I love the field trips, making new friends and the staff are always very nice! (Carly, SDP participant)

- As a parent I love The Arc’s Summer Day program because it keeps her engaged in activities with her new friends and out and about in the community! The staff are always so warm and friendly. They genuinely care about each person and make sure they feel welcomed. She has attended The Arc’s Summer Day since she was in kindergarten and she is now a sophomore. She is excited every year to attend and it has been a blessing for our family to help with summer care for Carly. (Dawn Janssen, parent)