

Challenger

A NEWSLETTER THAT CONNECTS, ENGAGES AND INFORMS

Celebrating 25 Years of The Arc March!



The first walk was held in 1997, called "The Buddy Walk."

Walking for Awareness and Respect

Marching for a Cause

Marching Strong for 25 years!

In 2006, a new name and logo was announced! "The Arc March."

Celebrating the Abilities in All of Us

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From the Director's Desk

Hello Arc Friends and Family!

Happy February! With the themes and celebrations February brings, it is a perfect time to present a draft of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Our mission lives in the work of DEI. Every day we break down barriers for individuals with disabilities so they can have equal access to social and employment opportunities. We help them integrate into the community and advocate for themselves to eliminate biases or discrimination about their true abilities. But we haven't yet looked at ourselves and assured that as an agency we are embracing diversity as a staff and board.



Theresa Lewis

The Arc has drafted our first Diversity statement. It will be a part of our newly revised Agency Values which are now more inclusive of not only the participants we serve, but their families, our staff and board, and the communities we impact.

Diversity Statement:

*Everyone adds to the tapestry of their community.
Diversity challenges us to understand others,
grow stronger together, increase our cultural responsiveness,
and broaden our perspectives in meeting the needs
of our organization and community.*

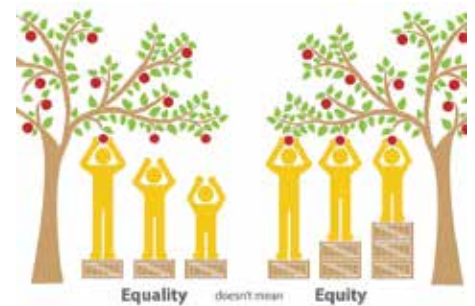
This statement is our first step in creating a more inclusive culture for our staff and board so we can "walk the walk", just like we do each day with those we serve. Investing in DEI helps every employee and volunteer to show up each day without fear of being their true selves. This fosters higher degrees of engagement, productivity, and innovation that will help The Arc thrive for another 70 years.

We are excited to begin this work and welcome your feedback on our DEI initiatives in support of our new Strategic Plan.

DIVERSITY



EQUITY



INCLUSION



With much appreciation,

Theresa Lewis
Executive Director



Advocacy Corner

Advocacy can mean many things to many people. One of the most important parts of advocating is understanding how to be a great self-advocate.

What does it mean to be a self-advocate?

Being a self-advocate first requires you to know each word in the phrase. “Self” is who you are as a whole person. How you think, feel, look, identify. Everything that makes up you. Advocate or advocacy is the act of supporting a cause or policy. Being a self-advocate means you have the right to express how you are feeling and make decisions for yourself without fear, control from others, or stress. Everyone can and should be a self-advocate.

Where can you practice self-advocacy?

There are many places to be a self-advocate. Many people advocate every day and don't realize they are doing it. Some examples of places and situations are listed below.

- **Doctor's Office** – As the patient, you should talk with your doctor about the medications you are taking and ask why each medication is important. This allows you to become educated on your medical needs and make the best decision for yourself.
- **Living Arrangements** – As an adult, you have the right to make decisions on where you would like to live. Touring living options allows you to decide what place would be best for you.
- **School** – As the student, you have the right and should be attending your IEP meeting. Your IEP is the plan for the supports you need to be successful throughout the school year. This means having a say in what happens in your school day, your goals, and accommodations.

The most important part of self-advocating is to start. Each time you advocate for yourself, the process becomes easier. For more resources on self-advocacy visit the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) <https://ncil.org/> or Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE USA) <https://www.sabeusa.org/>.

Save the date...

The Arc's Night at the Ballpark

Saturday, July 23rd at 6:35 PM

Veterans Memorial Stadium

More information and ticket sales will be available in May.



9-8-8 New Suicide Prevention Hotline

In July 2022, a new federal law will go into effect to support individuals experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis or related emergency. 9-8-8 will be a nationwide prevention and suicide awareness hotline as an alternative to 9-1-1. This change will remove additional strain on law enforcement and will direct the caller to a 24-hour, 7 day a week call center with trained mental health professionals who have access to mobile crisis units. This new law will help to create equitable responses for all Americans healthcare needs and will allow individuals to remain in their home.



If you are in need of help, please continue to call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at **1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK)** or connect with a team member through online chat at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/> until July 16th, 2022. Additional information can be found on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website <https://www.fcc.gov/suicide-prevention-hotline>.

Our services team was asked, “What has recently brought you joy?”

“I would just like to share that being able to do direct care work with 3 individuals on my caseload over the past several months has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have been able to have in the 16 years I’ve been employed with The Arc. I’ve become close friends with all 3. They have been wonderful in their ability to share more about themselves with me than I’ve ever known. I truly have a more profound understanding of who they are and what their needs are. It has given me a much better understanding of why I love and cherish my job at The Arc.”
~ Gary Olson, SSC

“Something that has brought me joy is being on site with the participants at the Daycare Enrichment Program. I’ve had to cover due to various reasons, but every day that I was down there I was greeted with such excitement and smiles that I could hear in their voices it just made my day. I love being able to hang out with the different classrooms and laugh with them. I also get to see firsthand the great stuff our staff are doing while on site at both the daycare and at Service Center. Site based staff are small in numbers, but mighty in their passion for the people that we serve. Each day they are met with different challenges from needs of participants, to weather, to covering more participants because we’re shorthanded that day. They go with the flow and continue to do the best that they can in that moment.” ~ Tara Cornelius, Program Manager

“We were able to send our full time DSPs and most of our site-based DSPs to MANDT Training in January! The feedback from the training was positive and they are already implementing strategies they learned to more effectively work with the individuals we serve. Plus, our SSCs have provided over 80 hours of direct care in January.”
~ Whitney Alber, Sr. Program Manager

“Although we are down staff at Day Hab, our current staff have shown tremendous commitment and flexibility to continue meeting the needs of all of our participants. We also really appreciate the SSCs and other administrative staff that have been coming over and helping out as needed.”
~ Leah Moser, Sr. Program Manager

“Supported employment is rocking! We are taking people off the waiting list and running with those we can. We recently assisted an individual in getting hired at Prometric and another as a tax assistant. We will have Customized Discovery beginning very soon. Jobs are available, and with all the available talent and skills we have in our individuals, supported employment has been going well!”
~ Tora Phelps, Employment Specialist

“I had an individual who admitted she was feeling very isolated and it was making her angry and depressed. We talked about things she could do and discussed looking for day or social programs. The Case Manager and I told her we would be reaching out to schedule appointments for her to tour. She took it upon herself and made the appointments. We were both very impressed with her.” ~ Patience Aaron, SSC

“I witnessed an individual today get her first job. She was hired on the spot! She had the biggest smile on her face the whole time she was doing new hire paperwork. I told her I was very proud of her and she said that her mom will be so proud of her too. When we arrived at her house, we told her mom about her interview and job offer. Her mom gave her a hug and kissed her on the cheek and told her how proud she was of her. This is when I almost teared up. Yes, I am a crier! Then her mother told me several times thank you for helping her find a job. Before I left, the individual gave me a hug, I melted and smiled all day.”
~ Elizabeth Hoagland, Employment Specialist

“I accompanied an individual to an appointment at UIHC, which can be overwhelming at the best of times. When we arrived, we quickly were notified that due to Covid-19 restrictions, I was not going to be able to go into the appointment with her. She became slightly more anxious, but we were able to work through her anxiety and create a plan of how to successfully navigate the appointment on her own. She was able to successfully attend the appointment without staff, communicate effectively with the doctor and ask for assistance to contact me after the appointment. I was extremely proud of her for being able to manage her increased anxiety, assist with problem-solving and create a plan that she was comfortable with, empowering her to follow through with the appointment without staff assistance! This was a pretty big win!” ~ Jenna Maere, SSC

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. *Nov. 2021 - Jan. 2022.*

Membership

Arc Angel

Dennis & Rebecca McCollough

Arc Builder

Teri Gibson, Mark Ogden & Iris Muchmore, Michael Neuerburg, Keith Wright

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Charles Becker, Brad & Jody Bridgewater, Adam Brown, Frances Hatfield, Randy Krejci, Shelly Strellner, Richard & Carole Swanson, Jeffrey & Kathy Thorsteinson, Dale & Sara Todd, Arianne Waseen, Jeffrey & Julie Wenzel

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Volunteers Hours - 189.5

Patience Aaron, Madalynn Adams, Brayden Alber, Addyson Alber, Whitney Alber, Olivia Beary, Stephanie Beary, Amy Belice, Adam Brown, Ella Cadenhead, Tara Cornelius, Jeff Corrigan, Jody Donaldson, Jamison Ewoldt, Terese Fisher, Bailey Freese, Allis Freese, Thomas Freund, Teri Gibson, Nathan Haas, Brad Hauge, Eric Heitland, Elizabeth Hoagland, Annabelle Hoagland, Kyla Holm, Monica Jacobsen, Tucker Jacobsen, Piper Jacobsen, Darrin Keller, Cheryl Kiburz, Heidi Kinder, Tori Knight, Kristen Krambeer, Madison

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Thank You

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Kara Done, Hayes Drilling Inc., Jim & Sharon Johannsen, Jenora Malamphy, Blake Meczowski, Jon Roder

Ruth Palmer - Karen Bachman

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Participant Spotlight



Sean Harschnek

I am soon to be 38 years old and live in Cedar Rapids. I have one sister and brother-in-law and one brother and sister-in-law.

Pictured above is me with my brother at his wedding before the pandemic. I danced the night away! Music, dancing, and singing are some of my favorite activities.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic my workplace allowed me an extended leave to not only protect myself but also my grandmother (soon to be 100) who lives with me and my parents. I learned how to zoom with friends and family and I connected with them every week.

I discovered my parents had some skill at Wii bowling. And of course, we all love our movie nights, I pick good ones. Musicals, comedies, romances, sports, and inspirational are among my favorites.

Upon returning to work I was able to keep my same schedule. I am very happy at work. I am proud of my 4 years at Kwik Star.

I love my weekly outings with long time staff member Gary. I enjoy the one on one. Going to the Y, the library, and walking at the mall are a few of the things I look forward to.

I have many great memories of events and activities through The Arc. The overnights, adult night outs, The Arc March, movie night, game night, fishing, on and on. Fun times with friends.

As I often say, **“Living the dream.”**



The Kiwanis Miracle League at Prospect Meadows is making baseball possible for kids with disabilities in the metro area and surrounding counties. Just inside the entrance to the new park will be the place where miracles are made. Hundreds of kids with disabilities are invited to choose up teams and have some fun.

Parents and relatives of our players will also have a great time cheering on their kids as they round the bases and head for home.

To register your loved one to play or for more information visit www.ProspectMeadows.com/Miracle-League or email KiwanisMiracleLeague@ProspectMeadows.com.



Thursday, March 3rd, 2022
5:30 – 7:00 PM · Via Zoom

Project SEARCH is a nationally recognized program that prepares young adults with disabilities for success in community employment. The Arc is the only agency in this area that offers this program. Come learn how young adults with disabilities can become involved in this unique employment internship training program that provides job experience and teaches independence, confidence, self-esteem and job skills.
For adults age 18-30.

To register or for more information please contact:

Stephanie Beary
at sbeary@arceci.org

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, Scattagories, 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)
- Kinex
- Padlocks with keys
- Sensory items (water tubes, soft plastic gel-filled shapes)
- TVs (flat screen at least 32 inches)
- Weaving & jewelry making kits
- Winter Sleds

Clothes

- Teenage-sized shorts and jogging pants and swimsuits (boys & girls - draw strings or elastic)

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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



Join us as we walk together to raise awareness about intellectual and developmental disabilities at the **25th Annual Arc March!**

March 12th, 2022

Washington High School Gym

8:00 AM - Activities Begin | 9:30 AM - Walk Starts



Walk with us

Go to www.arceci.org for details on this event or to make a donation!

Register by February 20th to get a t-shirt. **GET REGISTERED TODAY!**

• **CELEBRATING THE ABILITIES IN ALL OF US!** •

