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Stepping Stones Celebrates the Season

All Month Long

The month of December was full of fun for The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School. The December festivities began when Mr. Matt from Turtle Dance Music stopped by for an out of this world performance on Tuesday, December 10th.

The school gymnasium was filled with laughter and music as Mr. Matt invited members of the audience to participate in musical experiments and fun.



Then, on Tuesday, December 11th the students ventured to the Papermill Playhouse for a performance of Peter Pan followed by lunch. On Thursday, December 12th Santa dropped by the school's annual holiday celebration. Everyone enjoyed holiday snacks, a performance by Music Mary, dancing, and mingling while they waited their turn to see Santa and receive a special holiday gift.

Finally, on Wednesday, December 18th the Papermill Playhouse's Children's Theater Troop sang Frozen songs in the school's gymnasium. Popular favorites included Let it Go! After the performance, the Paper Mill crew spent time mingling with the students.

The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School is a Department of Education Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities serving children ages 3-10. Located in Roseland, NJ, the school is designed to meet the developmental and educational needs of children with cognitive impairments such as Down syndrome and other students with similar educational and developmental needs.

For more information, view the Stepping Stones School website [here](#). To request a tour and assistance with

an out-of-district placement, contact Sue Brand at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1271 or sbrand@arcsex.org.

The Arc of Essex County hopes everyone had a wonderful holiday season and we wish you all the best in 2020.

Self Advocates Take a Glass Blowing Class

with the Healthy Lifestyles Project

The Arc of Essex County's Self Advocacy group joined the New Jersey Self Advocacy Project on Wednesday, December 4th at the Morris County School of Glass as part of its #HealthyLifestylesProject! The group learned all about glass blowing while making glass vases and orbs!

The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey and receives funding through a grant awarded by the Horizon Foundation for New Jersey. The program aims to provide people with intellectual and developmental disabilities with functional education about the importance of healthy choices related to diet, exercise, and stress management.



Save the Date! 2020 Building Tomorrows

Run/Walk Returns April 25

Mark your calendars! On Saturday, April 25, 2020 The Arc of Essex County will host its 22nd Annual Building Tomorrows event at The Clipper Pavilion in South Mountain Recreation Complex in West Orange! The event will once again feature a 5K Run, Fundraising Walk, and Family Fun Fest with games, activities, food, and fun for the whole family.

All proceeds will directly benefit The Arc of Essex County's

Save the Date



April 25, 2020

South Mountain
Recreation Complex
West Orange, NJ

April 25, 2020

South Mountain
Recreation Complex
West Orange, NJ



WWW.RUNORWALK.ORG

services that support nearly 1,500 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. If you have never been to an Arc of Essex County event, this is the one to attend! The Run/Walk is a day where program participants, families, friends, staff, and volunteers come together to continue The Arc's mission of enabling people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live full and independent lives.

Don't want to run or walk alone? Looking for an opportunity for team building activities while supporting a great cause? Create a team with friends, family, or coworkers. Enjoy a day out and support a great cause. Additional event details as well as online registration will be available in early 2020 at www.runorwalk.org.

If you or your organization are interested in forming a corporate walk team or joining an event planning committee, contact Heather Comstock, Senior Director of Development and Communication, by emailing hcomstock@arcsex.org or calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1224.

Memorable Holiday Activities Mark Parents Night Out

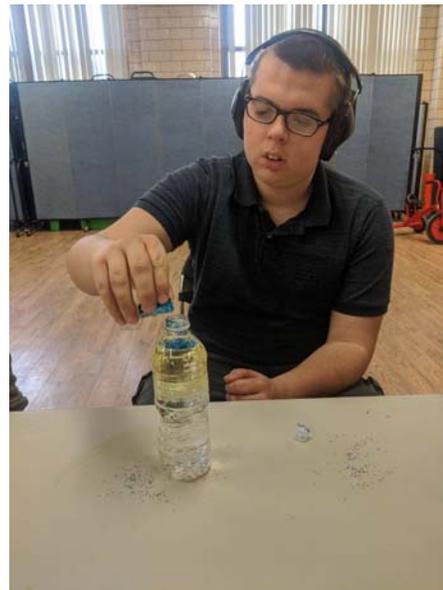
and Winter Break Programs

On Friday, December 13th, The Arc of Essex County hosted a Winter Wonderland themed Parents Night Out program giving attendees an entertaining evening while parents took some time for themselves. Participants enjoyed decorating their own holiday ornaments while listening to their favorite, festive tunes.

Then, between Christmas and New Year's, The Arc hosted its annual Winter Break Child Care program. Taking place at the Stepping Stones School in Roseland, attendees enjoyed fun filled themed days including arts and crafts, games, movies, and more. Attendees particularly enjoyed crafting their own sensory water bottles out of food coloring, oil, water, and glitter.

Don't miss out! The Arc's Parents' Night Out program returns with a Valentine's Day theme on Friday, February 7th. Hosted by the Children and Family Services department, this program welcomes children with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their siblings ages 5-21 for an evening of fun while mom and dad take time for themselves.

For more information and to sign up for the next Parents' Night Out, contact Jennifer DeBarr with any questions at jdebarr@arcsex.org or at (973) 535-1181 x1292.



Main Street Elves Return

for 2019 Holiday Tour

The Main Street Elves, a choir of 12 Main Street Hub Adult Day Program attendees kicked off their



holiday tour with a stop at The Arc of Essex County's Main Office on Friday, December 13th. Singing crowd favorites Silent Night, Jingle Bells, Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, and This Christmas staff and attendees were excited to get in the holiday mood. The elves continued their tour visiting other Day Program hubs to spread cheer ahead of the holiday break.



Do you have a loved one interested in The Arc of Essex County's innovative Adult Day Services? Check out our Adult Day Services brochure, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Director of Adult Day Services, Angela LoSapio, to learn how you can enroll - alosapio@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1231.

6th Annual Board Caroling

Event Spreads Cheer

On Sunday, December 8th, members of The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors, their families, and Executive Management team kicked off the holiday season by caroling with residents of The Arc's group homes. The group visited the Linden Supervised Apartments, and Nutley and Claremont Group Homes where residents from various properties gathered to welcome the jolly crowd, enjoy homemade cookies, and join in on the festivities. The group homes look forward to participating in this cheerful tradition with some residents going as far as wearing matching holiday sweaters for the occasion.



This caroling trip marked the 6th annual event, and continues to grow in popularity. The Arc of Essex County is already looking forward to continuing the tradition in 2020!

Docky D Altruists Gift Toys to The Arc

On Saturday, December 14, The Docky D Altruists, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that gives altruistic events for those willing to give back to the community, hosted their 4th annual Ugly Tops Holiday Gift Drive benefitting The Arc of Essex County at the Racquets Club of Short Hills.

The festive and fun evening highlighted the mission of The Arc of Essex County and was capped off with the donation of more than 150 toys for children and young adults in The Arc of Essex



County's services. The Arc of Essex County extends its appreciation to the Docky D Altruists and all those who contributed to this year's Ugly Tops Holiday Gift Drive!

The Arc would also like to recognize Sax LLC, the United Way of Northern New Jersey, and Shop Rite for contributing holiday gifts and turkeys to The Arc's families in greatest need this holiday season as well as Rose Wilson, a local high school student, who handcrafted holiday themed cupcakes for the Stepping Stones School's holiday party.

Best Buddies Program Hosts an Ugly Sweater Party

at Seton Hall

On Saturday, December 7th The Arc of Essex County's Best Buddy participants visited with their Seton Hall University friends to celebrate the holidays with an Ugly Sweater Party on campus. Participants and Seton Hall students enjoyed festive music, a pizza party, ugly sweater crafts, and an ugliest sweater contest.

Best Buddies creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships and leadership development for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Do you have a loved one interested in educational programming, community experiences, seasonally-themed events, and weekend group respite programs like the Best Buddies program? If so, The Arc of Essex County's Winter 2020 Adult Community Inclusion, Recreation, & Respite Catalog is right up their alley!

Check out the Winter 2020 Recreation Catalog, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Manager of Community Supports Services, Dacia King-Sarkodie, to learn how you can enroll - dking@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1272.



When Winter Weather Hit, West Essex Unico Brought the Holidays

to The Arc's Group Homes

Residents of The Arc of Essex County excitedly anticipated getting in the holiday spirit with West Essex UNICO during their annual holiday party at Notre Dame Church in North Caldwell on Sunday, December 1. Unfortunately, Mother Nature threw a wrench in the plans with the first major snow storm of the season.



While the weather prevented group home residents from braving the roads to attend the party, members of West Essex UNICO didn't let that get in their way. They brought the party to the group homes by delivering a

bountiful Italian meal along with goodie bags and presents for each resident!

The Arc of Essex County and those we serve would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the West Essex UNICO for their continued generosity and going above and beyond this holiday season!

Staff Spotlight

Rachel Miller

On Monday, December 16th, Vincent Maglio, the General Manager of a local GNC store in West Caldwell was compelled to call The Arc of Essex County to share his observations between Arc staff member Rachel Miller and a teenager in her care. While working, he watched as Rachel soothed, cared, and interacted with the teenager with genuine affection. He specifically noted that her kind and patient demeanor made her a fantastic representative of the agency.

Rachel first joined The Arc of Essex County family in 2010 as a counselor in training at its summer day camp, Camp Hope. In addition to serving as a group leader at Camp Hope each summer, she also supports The Arc's respite programs serving three children and young adults and their families throughout the year. The Arc of Essex County recognizes Rachel for living The Arc mission and bringing it to life in her day-to-day interactions.

Are you or someone you know interested turning your compassion into action at The Arc of Essex County? Join us for an Employment Open House throughout the month of January. Open houses will take place at The Arc's main office every Tuesday from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. For questions and to RSVP, contact The Arc's recruiter Cyeta Graham at recruiter@arcsex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1256.



Adult Recreation Program Hosts

Cookie Swap

On Sunday, December 8, The Arc of Essex County's recreation program participants celebrated the holidays with a holiday sweater cookie swap event. The group enjoyed decorating and sharing cookies with their peers, and afterward had a delicious chicken and waffles meal. Everyone left with a box full of beautiful cookies, a recipe booklet, and an ugly sweater medal for participating.

Do you have a loved one interested in educational programming, community experiences, seasonally-themed events, and weekend group respite programs? The Arc of Essex County's Winter 2020 Adult Community Inclusion, Recreation, & Respite Catalog is now available! Highlights include:



- Wreath Making and Easter Brunch
- Game Day and Super Bowl Celebrations
- Trips to the Silverball Museum in Asbury Park and Mt. Airy Casino
- Pottery, Confectionary and Pasta Making Classes and more!

Check out the Winter 2020 Recreation Catalog, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Manager of Community Supports Services, Dacia King-Sarkodie, to learn how you can enroll - dking@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1272.

The Arc of Essex County's Residential Corner

January Openings

For individuals seeking a community living placement, The Arc of Essex County has the following January 2020 openings:



Ashwood Group Home (1 Vacancy)

- 1 bedroom available in 6-bedroom group home
- 24/7 staff supervision
- Recently renovated, single family, bi-level home on a quiet, residential street in Livingston
- Current roommates are an active and social group who, when not out in the community, enjoy hosting backyard barbecues, throwing parties, and participating in social activities offered for individuals with developmental disabilities in the area





Bloomfield Supervised Apartment (1 Vacancy)

- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Apartment-style living in a multi-family, Arc of Essex County, owned home
- Single bedroom on 1st floor in shared apartment with opportunities to mingle with fellow residents
- Within walking distance to Bloomfield's downtown shopping & restaurants



**South Orange 2 Bedroom / 2 Bathroom
Supportive Living Apartment**

South Orange Supportive Living Apartment (1 Female Vacancy)

- 1 bedroom available in a 2 bedroom apartment
- Minimal community living support needs
- Access to an emergency on-call system for added safety 24 hours a day
- Apartment-style living in 5-floor building with elevator
- Located steps from public transportation and South Orange's vibrant downtown



Respite Group Home

Are you heading out of town for an upcoming business trip, wedding celebration, or planning a medical procedure that requires overnight or rehab recovery? Do you need coverage for your loved one with an intellectual or developmental disability? The Arc of Essex County's Respite Group Home can help. Accommodating up to 6 residents, the home is designed to provide a caring and supportive stay during planned or unplanned respite events. The home features:

- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large, 2-Story, Single Family, Colonial-style Home
- Designed to create a family-like setting in which consumers can feel comfortable until they transition into permanent housing or return home
- Staff is prepared to manage behavioral issues and additional supports based on the needs of the individual

For additional information about The Arc of Essex County's residential services, [click here](#). If you are interested in pursuing independent living at one of the above properties, please contact The Arc's Senior Director of Residential Services, Rebecca Lorusso via email at rlorusso@arcsex.org or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270.

Bridges Wins Annual Day Programs

Food Drive Competition

Throughout the months of November and December, The Arc of Essex County's Adult Day Programs competed to see who could gather the most non-perishable food items for our Home Assistance Programs (HAP). This year, we had a new champion! Bridges claimed victory by gathering 166 non-perishable food items that were distributed to HAP families in advance of the holidays. For their efforts, Bridges attendees and staff will enjoy a pizza party.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the food drive competition! Collectively all Day Programs collected nearly 800 non-perishable food items. Our HAP families are extremely grateful to have received such wonderful donations during the holiday season. Tune in this time next year to see who claims the title as 2020 champion.

Do you have a loved one interested in attending The Arc of Essex County's Adult Day Services? Check out our Adult Day Services brochure, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Director of Adult Day Services, Angela LoSapio, to learn how you can enroll - alosapio@arcsex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1231.



Tributes from Fall 2019

Tributes are a beautiful way to acknowledge those you care for, and at the same time, help further The Arc's mission. To purchase a tribute, please call Minerva Delgado at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1237 or visit The Arc of Essex County's website [here](#).

Special Occasions:

In Honor of Susan Comparato





Thomas Amico

Megan Blank
Alicia Carter
David Clinard
Can Jiang
Elissa Johnson
James Larish & Susanna Suh
Frank Reda
Yvonne & Michael Rooney
Susan Ungerleider

In Honor of BML Public Relations

Ken Jacobs

In Honor of Marnie McNany

Amit Basak

In Honor of Jo-Ann Raines

Cara L. Schnaper

In Honor of Paul Rooney

Ellen Rooney

In Honor of Laurie Stuart

Alan Saltzman

Memorials:

In Memory of Henry Alexander

Albert Ianacone

In Memory of John Daudt

Juan & Lisa Arroyo
Kathleen N. Casazza
Jean C. Chase
Suzette Harris
Ellen & Herb Lev
Brenda & Robert Murphy
Sally Ann Schoeneick
Carl F. Wronko

In Memory of Gregory J. De Lorenzi

DeLorenzi Family Fund

In Memory of Bob Leopold

Lorraine Coppola

In Memory of Debbie Pecora

Jennifer Garcia

In Memory of John Schettine

Susan Golden

Supporters can host Facebook Fundraisers for birthdays and celebrations to raise money on behalf of The Arc of Essex County. We are very grateful for the following individuals who fundraised October – December 2019:

David Meyer's Giving Tuesday Fundraiser

Robert Meyer

Delia Naguit's Giving Tuesday Fundraiser

Delia Naguit

Ejay De Yro

Nancy D'Uva Fass' Giving Tuesday Fundraiser

Deb Fass Jacobs

Laura Capalbo Bini

Nicole Canfora Lupo

Steven Glass

Developmental Disabilities Training Resource Website

Available to NJ Families

The Arc of New Jersey, in partnership with The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, launched www.ddtrainingresources.org to provide a wide range of information about trainings and support resources for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families throughout the State of New Jersey.



DD Training Resources includes information and archived resources originating from state service systems, community providers, advocacy organizations and community resources. The trainings, resources, local New Jersey event calendar, national event calendar, and archived materials address a number of areas including, but not limited to, accessing services, navigating systems, individual rights, advocacy tools and finding resources in the community.

To view the website and utilize the training and resource materials, visit www.ddtrainingresources.com.

#becounted

in the 2020 Census

The article originally ran on The Arc of the United States blog in September 2019.

Are you ready to be counted? The 2020 Census is coming up and it is critical for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. The census seeks to include every individual living in the United States, but many people with

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disabilities are historically left out of the count—harmfully impacting funding, services, and supports.

Census data helps guide the distribution of more than \$800 billion in federal funding. The count, conducted every 10 years, is also directly tied to key funding streams that support people with disabilities to live in the community, instead of institutions. It determines political representation and affects public policy, as well as programs and supports in housing, voting, education, health care, and public health. The Census Bureau recognizes people with disabilities as a hard-to-count population, meaning that they may not be fully represented in the count, and that the programs that are important to them may not receive the consideration they deserve.

The Arc is excited to announce a major initiative to find solutions. We are pleased to share that we have received a grant from the Ford Foundation to launch a project to help ensure that people with disabilities are counted in the 2020 Census. We recognize the Ford Foundation's generosity and engagement in the fight for disability rights.

In planning for Census 2020, The Arc will develop and share materials to motivate and inform people with I/DD to respond to the count in order to produce more complete and fair data. Our outreach will include our chapter network and membership, and partnerships with national disability groups and advocacy organizations.

The Arc has also joined the Census Bureau's National Partnership Program to help raise awareness, share resources, and work together to ensure that all people are counted in 2020.

#becounted

The Arc Remembers Long-Time Board Member John “Jack” Daudt

John “Jack” Daudt was a member of The Arc of Essex County family for more than 35 years serving as a tireless advocate for his son, Ryan, and many others with developmental disabilities. During his tenure with The Arc, Jack served in various positions including Board President and Delegate to The Arc of New Jersey from 1989-1991, Chair of the Personnel Committee from 1992-1993 and again from 2003-2012, Trustee, and Advisory Board member.

In lieu of flowers, Jack would appreciate donations made to The Arc of Essex County. The Arc conveys its condolences to the Daudt family during this difficult time. To make a donation in Jack's memory, please visit www.arcessex.org/donate and note that your donation is in memory of Jack Daudt – an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to the Daudt family.

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