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The Arc Celebrates *Stepping Stones Graduates*

It was standing room only the morning of Friday, June 17th as families, staff, and volunteers packed the Stepping Stones gym for the school's annual completion ceremony and graduation. The 2016 school year concluded with the graduation of six students.

Graduates began the ceremony by walking in to the traditional pomp and circumstance. They were joined by the remainder of their classmates as they lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, the Star Spangled Banner, and a performance of their favorite songs. Following the ceremony, graduates, students, families, and friends enjoyed a dessert reception and year-end photo slideshow.

The Arc of Essex County would like to wish all of our graduates the best of luck as they begin their new adventures!



Donna and Alex Crowned King and Queen

at Annual "Stepping Out" Prom

On Friday, June 24th, The Arc of Essex County crowned the annual king and queen of the 2016 Prom, themed "Stepping Out." Donna from Supportive Work Opportunities Program (SWOP) and Alex from Reach day program took home the titles.



Donna and Alex are all smiles as they rock their king and queen crowns.

The prom, complete with a red carpet theme, featured an afternoon of dancing, singing, food, and fun at The Embassy Suites of Parsippany. Volunteers from Prudential assisted with prom photos as well as event set up and break down. Anderson's Florist in Montclair generously provided boutonnieres and corsages for all prom attendees while members of the community donated nearly 20 prom, formal, and cocktail dresses for attendees to wear.

This annual event offers approximately 100 Day Program participants the opportunity to enjoy a traditional prom experience. The highly anticipated event will return in June 2017. Follow The Arc of Essex County on our social media channels to get a sneak peek into the 2017 prom theme!

Large Crowd Gathers for Annual Membership Meeting

More than 70 members of The Arc of Essex County attended the Annual Membership Meeting hosted on Monday, June 27th at the main office in Livingston. New members were elected to the board of directors including Trish Boylan, Eileen Hahn, Dana Irviss, and Allison Morgan. Attendees received an update on the status of the fee-for-service transition and learned how to choose and use a support coordinator that's right for them.



The Arc of Essex County's CEO Linda Lucas kicked off the evening by reviewing the state of the fee-for-service transition noting that a new cohort of individuals will begin in the new service model this summer. The complete transition to the fee-for-service model is expected to take some time, but as families begin their transition they will be required to select a support coordinator if their loved one is still living at home.

Director of Business Development Melissa Soules then lead attendees through the roles of the family, support coordinator, and service provider; questions to ask as you interview potential service coordination agencies, and how to work with and evaluate your service coordinator. Attendees came prepared with thoughtful questions that were answered throughout the evening's presentation.

The presentation and resource documents are available for download:

- ["Choosing and Using a Support Coordinator that's Right for You" Presentation](#)
- [Selecting a Support Coordination Agency - Making Choices, Becoming Empowered](#)

- [New Jersey Support Coordination Agencies](#)
- [Support Coordination Agency Selection Form](#)
- [Request for Tier Assignment Form](#)
- [Person-Centered Planning Tool \(PCPT\) Forms](#)
- [Individualized Service Plan Forms](#)
- [Evaluating Your Support Coordination Services](#)

Director of Business Development Melissa Soules is also available to answer fee-for-service transition questions via email at msoules@arcessex.org or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1262.

Movie Night Under the Stars

Returns on Saturday, July 30th

This summer, The Arc of Essex County will host our second annual Movie Night Under the Stars at Camp Hope. Join us on Saturday, July 30th from 7 to 9 p.m. for a viewing of Disney's Zootopia. Admission is \$7 per family and includes popcorn and drinks. Be sure to bring your own blankets and chairs!

For additional information and to reserve your spot, contact Courtney Kane at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1292 or ckane@arcessex.org by Friday, July 22.



Create Play Challenge - Five Days, Big Impact

First-Ever Crowdfunding Challenge Week a Success

In just five days, supporters completed every challenge issued for the week, unlocked matching challenge funds, and shared their Camp Hope memories and experiences in celebration of the 60th anniversary. In total, Create Play Challenge Week raised an impressive **\$18,620** in support of the following projects:

- Challenge #1: Raise the Hoops!**
 - Two Adjustable Height Backboards
 - Court Resurfacing
 - Court Lining

Challenge #2: Spruce up the Splash Pad!

Water Feature #1: Ladybug Mobile Spray and Play

Water Feature #2: Giant Water Umbrella

Water Feature #3: Small Arch Sprayer

Water Feature #4: Flower Shower

Challenge #3: Build the Backstop!

Portable Backstop

Challenge #4: Searching for Shade Challenge!

One 20x20 Pole Frame Tent

Two 10x10 Pop-Up Tents

The construction of the new basketball court is already complete and awaits the arrival of 2016 Camp Hope campers. Be sure to like [The Arc of Essex County's Facebook page](#) as we announce the completion of the additional projects!

The Arc of Essex County would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Create Play Challenge Week, shared their Camp Hope experiences, and helped us spread the word to the greater community. Special thanks to Bruce Bird, former Board President and current Member of the Board of Trustees, and Brad Hopton, current Board President, for their generous matching gifts.

Group Home in Roseland

Welcomes Four Women

*Originally printed in The Progress,
June 29, 2016*

Four women, Dale, Caryn, Jennifer, and Christy, are in the process of settling down into their immaculate new ranch home tucked away on a quiet suburban street in the heart of Roseland that is perfectly tailored to suit their needs.



Two years after its inception, The Arc's new Roseland group home opens its doors.

The just-planted grass is still sparse, but shining a healthy green under the early summer sun, and the house, which was renovated in advance of the women's move, boasts new furnishings, widened openings between rooms, an expanded bathroom, and a ramp up to the front door, to accommodate mobility issues.

"Nice decking where you can really just float on up to the front porch," Frank Cinque, Senior Manager of Property and [Housing for The Arc of Essex County, said of the ramp](#) . He has spent nearly two years working on the purchase and development of the property.

The Arc of Essex County's, a 501c3 organization that provides services and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, new group home in Roseland is the organization's 26th overall in Essex County. And the layout of the home is perfectly suited to the needs of the residents.

"We were lucky to get all living space on that first floor," Cinque said.

Essex County does not have many ranch homes, but they are important for residents with mobility issues, Cinque said.

"I like it," Caryn, whose last name, along with her co-residents, was omitted for safety reasons, said of her new home. "It's nice and cool in here."

"I'm happy to move in," Jennifer said.

The residents said that they had already met some of the neighbors, and plan to bake cookies to share.

"The girl likes chocolate chip," Caryn said of one of her young new neighbors whom they plan to bake for.

Caryn and Jennifer said that they were looking forward to seeing their friends and having a cookout.

Living At Home

"At the end of the day, they should have the choice to have just as fulfilling a life as you or I, that's really what it comes down to. We are here to foster that, foster independence, and give them the choice," Lorusso said.

Lorusso is in charge of the department-wide policies, procedures, and operations relating to resident quality of life, whether they be regarding diet or clinical support, home decorations or replacement supplies.

Roseland Group Home Manager Marguline Dorcent is in charge of the day-to-day operations of the home, managing support for the women, and having fun with the residents.

"They like to watch professional wrestling and they love makeup, it's nice to work with a bunch of ladies, they like to do things I like to do," Dorcent said.

Dorcent takes them to the cinema, out to dinner, parties, and other events the ladies enjoy. They have taken a liking to bowling at the nearby Funplex.

"We could make a lot of money for that," Caryn said about the group's bowling skills.

And since they like shopping, Dorcent plans to take them to the Short Hills Mall.

During the week, the women go to a daytime program operated by The Arc of Essex County called Community Link, where they spend time with friends.

Friendly Neighbors

Typically, communities that The Arc of Essex County has homes in are very supportive and Roseland looks to be no different.

"I'm on site during construction and I get to meet everyone in the neighborhood, people are curious, once they find out who The Arc is, they take a breath of air, and they ultimately love what we build," Cinque said.

Cinque shared an anecdote about a home in West Orange, where a neighbor made meals for the residents.

"Initially they'll be an open house, probably in the middle of July, we'll invite the neighbors," Chief Executive Officer of The Arc Linda Lucas said. "Some neighbors stay friendly with us and stay engaged with us, some don't."

But the reception has "generally been great," Lucas added.

The Arc actually has a relationship with the town that predates this home-a school, Stepping Stones, in the former municipal building.

"We love the town, the mayor, John Duthie, is fabulous, his town is very supportive," Lucas said.

Currently, The Arc is in the process of procuring a \$40,000 grant from Roseland's municipal housing trust fund. In addition to a \$40,000 capital grant from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, and a \$531,000 contribution from the Federal Home Loan Program through the Essex County Community Development Block Grant, this left The Arc with only a \$40,000 balance, which it zeroed by raising money from private donors.

The Arc's flair for raising funds is backed by a long institutional history. Seeded in 1948 by a group of supportive parents of children with disabilities, it has burgeoned into a 25 million dollar annually funded, 500-man-and-women strong organization with more than 25 residential programs, and other day services, serving 1,500 people.

"There's a sense of community in this county," Lucas said. "What we do here at The Arc is ensure that the community extends to the community we support."

All with intellectual and developmental disabilities, have moved into their very first home, designed with their family dynamic and support needs in mind. And Roseland officials are thrilled to have them there.

"The group home is a wonderful addition to Roseland," Duthie said. "Their purpose is a great one."

Sport Camp Hope and The Arc of Essex County Apparel on Your Travels This Summer

Want to rock apparel from Camp Hope and The Arc of Essex County this summer? Short and long sleeve t-shirts and sweatshirts are currently available for purchase in a variety of children and adult sizes.

For questions, sizing availability, and to purchase apparel, contact Brielle Cummings at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1227 or via email at bcummings@arcessex.org.





**How you can help...
VEHICLE DONATION**

The Arc of Essex County will gratefully accept donations of your used cars, vans or trucks.

Vehicle donations made to a charitable non-profit organization are tax deductible.

BENEFITS: • Free Towing • Tax deductible

- Hassle free way to get rid of your unwanted vehicle
- Support the mission of The Arc of Essex County

Donate your vehicle 877-ARC-2270

Please remember to designate our chapter and we will receive 90% of the net proceeds from your vehicle donation.

➔ [Donate Now](#)

The Arc of Essex County

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