



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families since 1948.

# The Guardian

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## *The Arc Celebrates* Five Stepping Stones Graduates

It was a full house the morning of Thursday, June 15th as families, staff, and volunteers packed the Stepping Stones gym for the school's annual completion ceremony and graduation. The 2017 school year concluded with the graduation of five students.

Graduates began the ceremony by walking in to the traditional tunes of 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!



## *Speaking Out Against* Proposed Healthcare Reform

On Friday, June 23rd Linda Lucas, CEO of The Arc of Essex County and long-time supporter and parent, Eileen Stuart, participated in a press conference with U.S. Senator Bob Menendez at the Newark Community Health Center. During the press conference, Eileen shared how proposed Medicaid budget cuts would impact her daughter Laurie, who lives in



an Arc of Essex County group home and attends our Reach Day Program, and all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

A health care vote is expected in the Senate in the coming weeks, and it will include deep cuts to Medicaid. This will have a devastating impact on people with disabilities and their families. Be sure to take action and let your senators know the importance of Medicaid to you and your loved ones.

The Arc of the United States offers resources and guidance for how to take action - to view these resources, please [click here](#).

## *Fatihyah and Jamal Crowned King and Queen at Annual "Mardi Gras" Prom*

On Thursday, June 22nd, The Arc of Essex County crowned the annual king and queen during the 2017 Prom, themed "Mardi Gras." Fatihyah from Opportunity Zone and Jamal from Supportive Work Opportunities Program (SWOP) took home the titles.

The prom, complete with a Mardi Gras theme, featured an afternoon of dancing, singing, food, and fun at Libretti's in Orange. Members of the community generously 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 2018. Follow The Arc of Essex County on our social media channels to get a sneak peek into the 2018 prom theme!

## *Large Crowd Gathers for Annual Membership Meeting & Free Housing Workshop*

More than 50 members of The Arc of Essex County attended the Annual Membership Meeting & Free Housing Workshop hosted on Monday, June 26th at the main office in Livingston. Presented alongside The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute and the Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey (SHA), speakers discussed how to utilize SHA's recently published housing guide, *The Journey to Community Housing with Supports*, to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in New Jersey.



Throughout the evening, attendees learned about various housing models available in New Jersey, how innovative elements from the guide can be incorporated into affordable housing in a variety of residential settings, and how to utilize the resources available from multiple sources to fund housing and supportive services. Speakers identified challenges and clear opportunities associated with planning for independent living.

If you have any questions about housing options available through The Arc of Essex County, please contact Director of Residential Service, Rebecca Lorusso via email at [rlorusso@arcsex.org](mailto:rlorusso@arcsex.org) or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270.

## *Special Young Adults Wins Inaugural Bowling League*

Throughout the months of May and June, teams from each Arc of Essex County Day Program competed for the title of champion in the inaugural bowling league. Gathering weekly at Hy Way Bowl in Union, one champion emerged besting the competition by 30 pins... Special Young Adults. Coming in second was Opportunity Zone followed by Reach.

The Arc of Essex County honored the champions and all tournament participants at an awards ceremony and celebration at Opportunity Zone on Wednesday, June 21st.

Congratulations to all Bowling League participants. Our Day Program teams are anxiously awaiting the arrival of kickball season later this month. Do you have a loved one interested in 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 Senior Director of Support Program Services, Melissa Soules, to learn how you can enroll - [msoules@arcessex.org](mailto:msoules@arcessex.org) or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1262.



## *Gearing Up for the Fourth* Annual Uncorked & Uncapped Event on September 28

The Arc of Essex County is gearing up for the fourth annual Uncorked & Uncapped: Wine, Beer, and Food Fest on Thursday, September 28th at the Westminster Hotel in Livingston. The fun-filled evening, which will run from 6:30-9:30 p.m., features fine wine, craft beer, spirits, and restaurant samplings while honoring the partnerships that have been integral to The Arc's success.



Keep an eye on the mail for formal invitations and the announcement of the 2017 honorees later this month. Vendor slots and sponsorships are available. If you are interested in participating in Uncorked & Uncapped as a sponsor or vendor, please contact Heather Comstock, Senior Director of Development and Communication, at [hcomstock@arcessex.org](mailto:hcomstock@arcessex.org) or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1224.

## *Home Depot Lends a* *Hand* at Camp Hope

A team of 40 Home Depot volunteers visited Camp Hope on Saturday, June 24th to donate their time, materials, and talent to beautifying Camp Hope following months of renovations and improvements. The team, which included volunteers from five local stores including Parsippany, Montville, and East Hanover, planted trees, built planters and benches, and made general landscaping improvements in advance of Camp Hope's 2017 season. In total, more than \$3,000 worth of product was donated by Home Depot towards the Camp Hope Create Play Capital Campaign.

Camp Hope's 2017 season officially kicked off this past Wednesday, July 5th. Campers were delighted to find a brand new playground, basketball court, splash pad aquatic feature, outdoor activity pavilion, recreation field, and renovated pool pavilion awaiting their arrival. Themed "Holiday Week," organized activities



centered around themes including Halloween, Mardi Gras, and Independence Day.

A second phase of construction will begin following the 2017 camp season. If you would like to make a contribution towards the revitalization of Camp Hope, visit [www.arcessex.org/createplay](http://www.arcessex.org/createplay).

## *DSP Coalition Secures \$20M in FY18 Budget*

*This article was originally published by The Arc of New Jersey on July 6, 2017.*

On July 4th, Governor Christie signed the FY18 Budget and it includes \$20 million for increased wages for DSPs. The Arc of New Jersey worked tirelessly these past 12 months as Chair of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage to secure this funding, and they are very pleased to have obtained this victory in year one of the campaign.



The Arc of New Jersey thanks everyone who supported the Coalition this past year, as they know this outcome would not have been possible without you. The Arc of New Jersey is grateful to everyone who participated in action alerts, forwarded materials, came out to the lobbying day in Trenton and shared posts on social media.

This is wonderful news for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families who rely on DSPs for services. Stay tuned for more info in the coming weeks about plans for the FY19 Budget!

## *Board Members Elected for The Arc of Essex County and The Candle Lighters*

Trustees, advisory board members, and officers were elected to the Board of Directors for The Arc of Essex County during the June 26th Annual Membership Meeting.

### **Officer Appointments:**

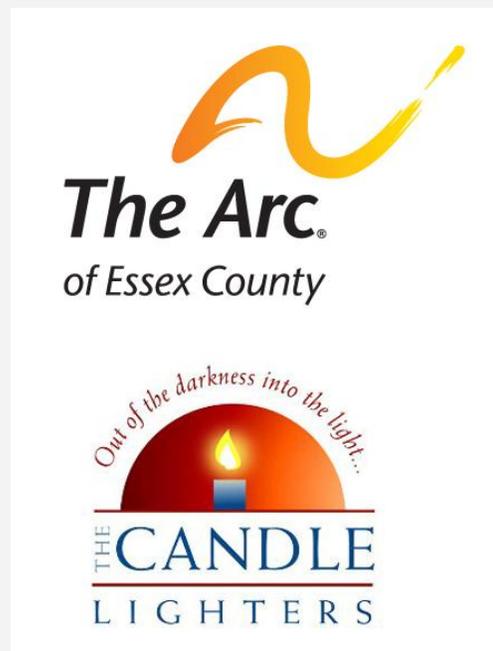
**Third Vice President:** Benjamin Proce  
**Treasurer:** Gary Russikoff

### **Advisory Board Appointments:**

Stuart Applebaum  
Jeffrey Bird  
Patricia Boylan  
Lorraine Coppola  
Caitlin DiRuggiero  
Mark Gerson  
Eileen Hahn  
Bruce Humphreys  
Herbert Lev  
Peter Madonia  
Angela McCaffrey  
Kenneth Sauter  
John Schettine  
William Sumas  
Maryanne Vindici  
Paul Wirth

### **Trustee Appointments:**

Juan Arroyo  
Robert Laurino  
Matthew Ryan



To view The Arc of Essex County's full Board of Directors, visit [www.arcessex.org/about/board-of-directors/](http://www.arcessex.org/about/board-of-directors/).

Additionally, The Candle Lighters recently elected its 2017 executive officers. Established as a 501(c)3 organization in 1974, The Candle Lighters are dedicated to raising resources for The Arc of Essex County's unfunded and under-funded programs. Benefiting programs include Camp Hope, the Stepping Stones Early Intervention program, and recreation programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**2017 Candle Lighters Executive Officers:**

**President:** Lisa Wolfe

**First Vice-President:** Stephanie Hopton

**Second Vice-President:** Amy Cusack

**Recording Secretary:** Rachel Ryan

**Corresponding Secretary:** Olympia Chamcham

**Treasurer:** Debbie Shulkowski

**Immediate Past President:** Trish Boylan & Eileen Hahn

For more information about The Candle Lighters, please visit [www.thecandlelighters.org](http://www.thecandlelighters.org).

## The Arc Remembers

### Lloyd Farmer

Lloyd Farmer was a three year resident of The Arc of Essex County's Beacon Group Home in Livingston. He was a gregarious, talkative man who had an impressive collection of albums and album covers which he displayed prominently around his room. He loved music and spent many happy hours listening to his collection of vinyl records.

Lloyd was very close with his family and remained in contact with his father and four siblings. If you'd like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County, in Lloyd's memory, please visit [www.arcessex.org/donate](http://www.arcessex.org/donate). Please note your donation is in memory of Lloyd - an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to his family members.

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## The Arc of Essex County

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