



The Guardian

Serving the IDD community since 1948

October 2021

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THE ARC CELEBRATES DSP WEEK AND IS HIRING

The Arc of Essex County is actively hiring DSP staff, managers, and more. Incentives include sign-on bonuses of up to \$750, flexible hours, and great compensation and benefits. To apply, go to [ArcEssex.org/jobs](https://www.ArcEssex.org/jobs) and join this fantastic team!

In recognition of Direct Support Professionals Week (September 12 to 18), The Arc of Essex County spotlighted five of its incredible staff members and their experiences working for The Arc:

Shaniqua Johnson has been with The Arc's day programs for three years, and just keeps rising. "Who would have thought I'd start at the bottom and move up so fast? To be appreciated and recognized, it's a good feeling. I know they see my worth." [Click here](#) to read more about Shaniqua.

Blondell Cameron says her love for her job at The Arc was only reinforced during the pandemic. She was moved to a new position so that she wouldn't have to be laid off, and felt supported with protective equipment and efforts to keep staff and consumers safe. "They really showed that they care," she says. "It's so true that you want to come to work where you enjoy what you're doing, where you respect people and they respect you. And that is what we have here." [Click here](#) to read more about Blondell.

Wallace Daniels has been helping the residents of The Arc's Belleville group home for more than 20 years, and says the key is to have patience and be nice. "People here are family," he says. "We all have to try and look out for one another, and we do that." [Click here](#) to read more about Wallace.

Kawana Johnson is a single mother of two who was able to adjust her hours to accommodate the elementary school schedule. "Being at The Arc has given me flexibility, so I can pick them up, help with homework, and be there for them. It's been a blessing." [Click here](#) to read more about Kawana.

For the 22 years that **Dee Moon** has been working for The Arc of Essex County, one thing has never changed: the unconditional love for and from the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities she serves. "You never know what to expect in a day, but you do know that when you come in you will always get to know their true selves, and they will appreciate you more than anything," she says. "I love being part of their lives." [Click here](#) to read more about Dee.



BRIDGES TAKES A VISIT TO THE PRUDENTIAL OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTER

Several participants in the Bridges Specialized Day Program took a trip to the Prudential Outdoor Learning Center, taking in the sights, scents, and sounds of a nature-filled sensory experience.

The 1.5-acre Learning Center is based in Newark and features outdoor exhibits located in a series of ten thematic gardens. Our Bridges visitors got some fresh air and learned about native plants while enjoying the views.

The Arc of Essex County's Specialized Day Programs serve consumers who require additional supervision and support in order to successfully participate in various in-center and community activities. Here, participants benefit from more individualized care, provided by highly trained staff. Consumers take part in activities similar to traditional Community Resource Centers but at a more comfortable pace with greater staff support. To learn more, [click here](#) or contact Angela LoSapio at (973) 535-1181 x1231 or alosapio@arcessex.org.



STEPPING STONES WELCOMES STUDENTS BACK TO SCHOOL

Stepping Stones School welcomed 29 students back to the classroom this fall, and the children have been soaking in the beautiful autumn weather with long walks in the sunshine. They have been exploring all that fall has to offer, including apples, colored leaves, and pumpkins.

The school held its virtual Back to School Night on September 30, and is preparing for its own in-school Fall Festival on October 8, complete with games and activities in the classrooms and a special lunch for all the children. They're also gearing up for Halloween, and hoping to host a fun costume parade through the building.

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, or to request a virtual tour and assistance with an out-of-district placement, contact Sue Brand, Director of Early Childhood and Education at (862) 210-8781 or sbrand@arcsex.org.



INAUGURAL CRAFT BEER OPEN A SUCCESS

The sun was shining as more than 70 golfers took to the greens at Crestmont Country Club for the inaugural Craft Beer Open on Monday, September 27. The day featured 18 holes of golf with on-course tastings of craft beer, spiked drinks, and hand-rolled cigars. The event capped off with a cocktail awards reception, complete with delicious food, wine, and spirits tastings. A silent auction included foursomes at fantastic courses throughout New Jersey, as well as other prizes. We are so grateful to everyone who was a part of the day, including the golfers, sponsors, vendors, and volunteers.

The reception included a presentation of The Arc's 2021 Community Partner Award, which was given to the New Jersey State Golf Association Youth Foundation. The Arc's CEO, Linda Lucas, presented the award to Eric Houseknecht of the NJSGA Youth Foundation, and thanked the Foundation for providing a three-year grant to support The Arc in developing a comprehensive adaptive sports program at Camp Hope.

Prizes for the tournament, including the top three teams, the longest drive, closest to the pin, and closest to the line, were all presented during the reception as well.

The day would not have been possible without our sponsors: PSEG; Primepoint; Walsh Pizzi O'Reilly Falanga LLP; William H. Connolly & Co., LLC; In Memory of Susan Wright; Matt and Paige Guest; Station MD; Franchino Delargy LLC; City Fire Equipment; Benefit Management Solutions; Eastern Janitorial; Howie's Spiked; and Alphabet Health.

We also thank our tasting partners: Allagash Brewing Co.; Troegs Brewing Co.; Weyerbacher Brewing Co., Sixpoint; Sparkling Ice Spiked; Howie's Spiked Beverages; Organic Vintages; Jersey Spirits Distilling Co.; and Suero Cigar Services.

And our event committee pulled everything together under the leadership of chairman Michael Franchino: Corny Durkin, William Frese, Bradford Huntington, Frank O'Brien, Eileen Stuart, Meredith Whitaker, and Richard Wright.

It was a beautiful day, made even better by the generosity of our supporters.



BEACH TRIPS AND BOWLING RETURN

After an 18-month pandemic hiatus, The Arc of Essex County in September resumed some of our most popular activities: a day trip to Point Pleasant and weekly bowling excursions.

A group of five participants went on the road to Point Pleasant to take in the sights, enjoy the beach, and explore the arcade and carnival games and delicious foods that the boardwalk has to offer. It was a beautiful late-summer day and everyone had a fantastic time, with smiles visible even through the mask wearing.

The Arc also welcomed bowlers to Brunswick Olympic Bowl in Belleville in September. This recurring community inclusion program is a favorite among The Arc's adult consumers, and will continue on Saturdays through the fall, with 10 dates on the calendar from September to December. Bowling together allows participants to learn how to take turns and keep score as well as understand the importance of supporting and cheering on all players.

Although there were a few changes—such as mask wearing, fewer bowlers at each lane, and a later start time (with lunch included)—those who participated didn't miss a beat, as laughter filled the air.

If your loved one with intellectual or developmental disabilities is interested in educational programming, community experiences, seasonally themed events, or weekend group respite programs, the offerings for individuals 18 and older can be viewed in our [Community Inclusion, Recreation, & Respite Fall Calendar](#). For any questions, contact Manager of Community Supports Services Dacia King-Sarkodie at (973) 535-1181 ext 1272 or dking@arcessex.org.



GARDENS AT ARC GROUP HOMES FLOURISHED WITH VOLUNTEER HELP

Former Arc of Essex County employee Al Ianacone, and Sue Langner, lent their master gardening talents to The Arc's residential homes again after a year off due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The green-thumb duo set up vegetable and flower gardens at group homes in Verona, Montclair, and Bloomfield.

Due to the above-average rainfall, all the plants did well. The gardens produced tomatoes, parsley, basil, cucumbers, and zucchini. Potted plants included marigolds and snap-dragons. The residents and staff were excited to see their hard work pay off. We can't wait to see what next year's bounty has in store!



THE ARC OF ESSEX COUNTY RESIDENTIAL CORNER

October Openings

For individuals seeking a community living placement, The Arc of Essex County has the following September 2021 openings:



Marmon Group Home (1 Male OR Female vacancy) – New!

- 1 bedroom available in this 6-bedroom co-ed group home (3 bedrooms in each apartment)
- 24/7 staff supervision
- Two-family home in West Orange with spacious living room and dining room, an eat-in kitchen, and large backyard with patio
- The residents of this group enjoy socializing, hosting parties, and going on local trips to restaurants, movies, bowling, festivals, and concerts together (pre-COVID)



Terrace Group Home (1 Male Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in 4-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Recently Renovated, Single Family, Ranch-Style Home on a Quiet, Residential Street in West Orange
- Minutes from Eagle Rock Reservation, Shopping, and Recreation
- The residents of this all-male group home enjoy picnics at Liberty State Park, bowling, going to the mall to shop, and weekly restaurant nights (pre-COVID)



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

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@arcessex.org or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270.

TRIBUTES AND FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS – SUMMER 2021

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 Ann Burleigh at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1245 or visit The Arc of Essex County's website [here](#).

Special Occasions:

In Honor of Brian Caufield

- Jennifer and Bill Lipp
- Kelly Cattau
- Megan Dienna
- Lea Higgins
- Maryanne Vindici

In Honor of Marnie McNany

- Greg Borkowski

In Honor of Stepping Stones Therapists

- Lisa Wolfe
- PwC

Memorial:

In Memory of Mickey McNany

- Elizabeth Johnson

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 July to September 2021.

Joe Bergman’s Birthday Fundraiser

- Joe Bergman
- Betsy Bergman
- Mel Renner
- Samantha Altomare
- Denise Kollwe-Altomare
- Stephen Slotnick
- Brad Bergman

Nourse
David Le Grand

Elizabeth Knierim Campoli's Birthday Fundraiser

Toni B. Paris
Jean Chucka

Francesca Jaffe's Birthday Fundraiser

Francesca Jaffe
Lauren Kelly
Stan Lawthers
Page Miliotis
Emily Hg
Samantha Tyrka Sansone
Lisa Schoonmaker
Alaina Donna
Shelley Jaffe
Allison Calabrese
Vanessa Facendola
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