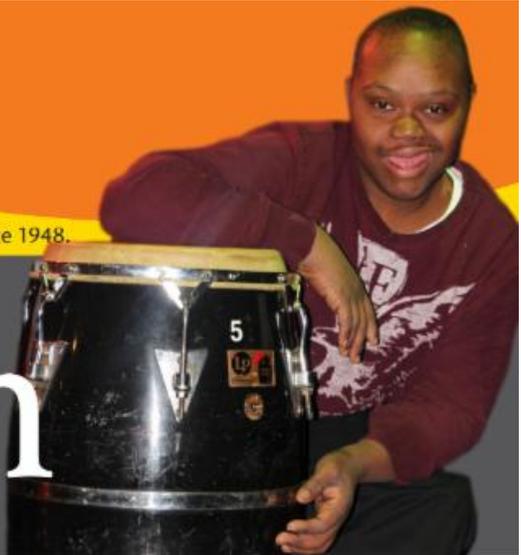




For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families since 1948.

The Guardian

January 2017 • Volume 68 No. 1



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8-Week Performing Arts Clinic Concludes with Holiday Performance

In late October, attendees of The Arc of Essex County's day programs began an 8-week performing arts clinic at Lyric Performing Arts Center (PAC) in West Orange, New Jersey. Attendees participated in hip hop dance, drama, singing, and music classes, and concluded the program with a live performance for their families and friends on Thursday, December 15th.



The final performance included three hip hop routines, a trio of singers, a drum performance, and an improv acting scene. The performers enjoyed the clinics so much that The Arc and Lyric PAC will continue their partnership with another 8-week session beginning in January 2017.

Want to make more of these classes possible for our day program attendees? A \$10 monthly gift could enable a group of 6 adults to participate in another 8-week program! To set up your monthly gift, visit www.arcessex.org/monthlygift.

Essex CDBG Funds New Vehicle and Main Office and Group Home Improvements

Thanks to a 2015 community development block grant (CDBG) from Essex County, The Arc was able to make accessibility improvements to the main office and Belmont group home prior to the New Year. The main office entrance now features an automatic door opener while accessibility ramping was upgraded and improved at the Belmont group home in Livingston.



Funding also assisted in the purchase of a new passenger van through a 2016 Essex CDBG grant.

The van, acquired prior to the New Year, will be used by the Arc company day program and the Saturday Children's Respite Program. It can accommodate 12 individuals and features track seating which gives The Arc flexibility to accommodate more wheelchair-bound passengers, when needed.

In total, \$60,000 in 2015 and 2016 Essex CDBG funds enabled The Arc of Essex County to acquire the van and make accessibility improvements. The Arc of Essex County would like to thank the Essex Division of Housing and Community Development for their ongoing support and commitment to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

30 Residential Properties Fully Licensed During Annual Reviews



The Arc of Essex County's residential team was busy throughout the months of November and December coordinating licensing with the state's Department of Human Services. This annual review ensures ongoing compliance with the state's standards for community residences for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

During the licensing period, a team of four state inspectors completes an administrative review and home inspection for each property, examining every component of The Arc's residential living experience. Areas examined include organization and administration, advocacy and rights, service delivery/habilitation, health and safety, and fire safety and physical environment. At the conclusion of The Arc's 2016 licensing period the state awarded full licenses for each of The Arc's 30 residential properties and supportive living apartments.

The Arc of Essex County is committed to providing the highest quality of life and home-like experience for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While the licensing period only lasts two months a year, we enact best practices year-round to fulfill our responsibilities to the individuals and families we serve.

The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors and Executive Management Spread Holiday Cheer



On Sunday, December 18th nearly 20 members of The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors, their families, and Executive Management spread holiday cheer by caroling with residents of The Arc's group homes. The carders stopped by the Green Avenue, Washington, and West Caldwell properties where residents from a total of nine group homes gathered to welcome the cheery crowd, enjoy homemade cookies, and join in on the festivities.

This annual tradition began just two years ago. To date, members of the Board of Directors and Executive Management have caroled at 11 of The Arc's 25 residential properties with the group growing from year to year. The Arc looks forward to continuing the tradition in 2017.

Create Play Campaign Sets Sights on Completing New Playground and Splash Pad

Since Camp Hope wrapped its 60th season in August, The Arc of Essex County, in partnership with the Township of East Hanover, have been busy transforming the camp grounds. In September, the existing camp buildings were demolished, making room for a brand new, fully air conditioned building and open air activity pavilion. The back field was also overhauled with new drainage, grading, and grass. Both of these improvements followed the installation of a new basketball court in June, made possible with funds from the Create Play capital campaign.



As The Arc of Essex County continues the fundraising and Camp Hope renovation efforts, the focus is shifting toward two new recreational features - a new accessible-friendly and interactive playground as well as a splash pad aquatic feature. These features will elevate the Camp Hope experience, provide hours of fun for campers, as well as provide an additional source of heat relieve for those hot summer days.

Will you help us make these features a reality for the 2017 Camp Hope season? To donate to the Create Play campaign, visit www.arcessex.org/createplay or contact Heather Comstock, Senior Director, Development and Communication, at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1224 or hcomstock@arcessex.org.

Livingston CRC 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 gather the most non-perishable food donations than any other program. After coming in second place for three years in a row, Livingston Community Resource Center (CRC) claimed victory gathering 110 non-perishable food items for members of The Arc's Home Assistance Program. For their efforts, The Livingston CRC attendees and staff will enjoy a pizza party.



Coming in second was Arcompany with 94 donations followed by SWOP with 87. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the food drive competition! Tune in this time next year to see who claims the title as 2017 champion.

Community Rallies to Host Annual Home Assistance Program Holiday Party

On Wednesday, December 14th The Arc of Essex County celebrated the season with a holiday luncheon for members of the Home Assistance Program (HAP) featuring face painting, balloon animals, door prizes and a visit from Santa. The HAP program provides services to low income families whose child and/or parent has an intellectual or developmental disability in the areas of



transportation, community resources, housing, navigating school systems, recreation, and at times skill trainings. The goal is to assist parents and families in becoming more self-sufficient, economically and personally, to maintain the family unit, and to attain independence.

This annual holiday party rallied more community support than ever before to make the season bright and festive. The Knights of Columbus Our Lady of the Mountains Council 3533 kindly donated the venue. The Rotary Club of Livingston contributed drinks and desserts even sending volunteers to help serve food. The HAP families each received non-perishable food items and winter apparel from The Learning Experience in Ledgewood, and children's toys from Rutgers Big Chill and Sax LLC. Members of the public donated winter coats, and The Arc of Essex County's Day Programs ran a food drive competition to benefit the families.

Santa Stops by the Stepping Stones School

Students from The Arc's Stepping Stones School were giddy with excitement on Thursday, December 15th as they awaited Santa's arrival at their annual holiday party. Taking place in the school's gymnasium, students, their families, and staff enjoyed holiday snacks, music, and mingling prior to the school's winter break.

Upon the man in red's arrival, each student and sibling enjoyed a visit with Santa complete with a gift to open ahead of the big day. Gifts were generously donated by anonymous donors to add some extra magic to the day.

The Arc of Essex County hopes everyone had a wonderful holiday season and we wish you all the best in 2017.



West Essex UNICO Hosts Annual Holiday Party for Residents of The Arc

The West Essex UNICO hosted their annual holiday party on Sunday, December 11th for residents and day program attendees of The Arc of Essex County. The party, hosted at Notre Dame Church in North Caldwell, featured a homemade Italian meal, singing, dancing, and a visit from Santa!



This annual holiday party is highly anticipated and enjoyed each year. The Arc of Essex County would like to send our thanks to the West Essex UNICO for putting on this wonderful event year after year.

Remembering Dorothy Kurzweil A Long-Time Friend of The Arc

Dorothy Kurzweil was an advocate and partner for The Arc of Essex County and a clinical social worker at Saint Barnabas Hospital in Livingston. She provided support to mothers and fathers in the pediatric, NICU, and ultimately maternal child departments for over two decades. A kind and trustworthy confidant, Dorothy recognized the value of making connections between new parents and The Arc as families began their journey raising a child with special needs.

Countless children and families became a part of The Arc family through the Parent-2-Parent and Stepping Stones Early Intervention programs, receiving therapeutic services and support thanks to Dorothy. Her tireless dedication laid the foundation for continued partnership between The Arc of Essex County and Saint Barnabas for years to come.

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The Arc of Essex County

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