



*For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities*

Summer 2014

# PROGRESS

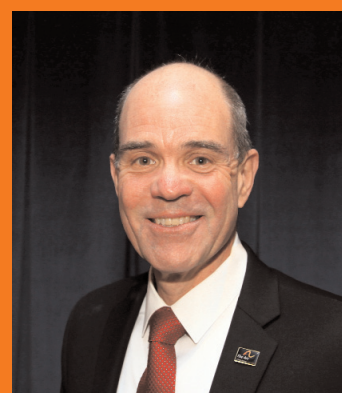
## A Message from the President

**A**s I wrap up my first year as President of The Arc of New Jersey, I want to thank all our volunteers, self-advocates, members and staff for all of their hard work and dedication. This has been a truly challenging year for The Arc of New Jersey, filled with obstacles, concerns and great change. We've started the new fiscal year with still many questions unanswered but are moving forward with the issues of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families always at the forefront.

However, we also have reasons to celebrate, including The Arc of New Jersey's 65th Anniversary. Sixty-Five years ago, a dedicated group of families caring for loved ones with developmental disabilities had a vision of a better life for their family member. Fueled by these pioneers' experiences, hard work and unwavering commitment, The Arc was launched in 1946, with The Arc of New Jersey incorporating in 1949. Today, every program, service and support The Arc of new Jersey provides to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families can be attributed to our dedicated founders and their dreams for the future.

That is why we are so proud of the exceptional advocacy and services we provide every year to thousands of individuals and their families. We know our founders would be pleased with all we have accomplished and would applaud our newest endeavor, The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute. Our 65th Anniversary Awards Celebration Dinner in the Fall will recognize this rich history as well as some of our most distinguished individuals and organizations that support and advocate for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I welcome you all to join The Arc of New Jersey on Friday October 24th at The Imperia in Somerset, NJ to help celebrate 65 wonderful years of advocacy, support and progress. For more information on the 65th Anniversary Awards Celebration Dinner, and to purchase tickets or for ad journal and sponsorships, go to [www.arcnj.org/news\\_events/65th](http://www.arcnj.org/news_events/65th) or contact Celine Fortin at (732) 246-2525 ext. 25 or via email at [cfortin@arcnj.org](mailto:cfortin@arcnj.org).



**Robert Hage, President,  
The Arc of New Jersey**

*Celebrating*  
**65**  
*Years*

### A Message from The Executive Director

As I take a look back at this past year it never ceases to amaze me the perseverance and dedication of our self-advocates and families who work so tirelessly to have their voices heard. Equally remarkable are the volunteers, staff and local county chapters of The Arc who advocate throughout the year on the local, state and federal levels. The Arc of New Jersey's advocacy around the New Jersey FY 2015 budget was a true work of collaboration and cooperation. Shortly after the FY 2014 budget was signed last June, The Arc of New Jersey was already working on our message for FY 2015. We made sure that every opportunity to speak with or testify before the Department of Human Services, the Legislature or Governor was taken. Self-advocates, families and staff testified at every hearing and met with members of the Senate and Assembly Budget and Human Services Committees. The entire community of The Arc responded with fervor to action alerts, making their needs known with compelling stories. Everyone worked hard - very hard - and in the end, while we did not get everything we asked for, there was still a significant amount of new funds for services for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. With the FY 2015 budget signed, we would like to thank Governor Christie, Senate President Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Prieto, and the entire Legislature for their support. Their commitment to the individuals we serve and their families, as well as their support of community living, should be recognized and commended. Thank you also to all of you. You help make The Arc strong and we will count on each and every one of you moving forward.



**Tom Baffuto**  
Executive Director,  
The Arc of New Jersey

### The FY2015 Budget has been signed.. Next Steps

After a year of advocacy, The Arc of New Jersey's Governmental Affairs Department is proud to report that the final Fiscal Year 2015 budget includes more than \$100 million in new state and federal funding for supports and services to assist individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This money will be used to help people exiting developmental centers, those in need of services from the Community Waiting List, students aging out of their education entitlement program and people facing unpredictable emergencies. Included in the \$100 million figure is the reinvestment of funding following the planned closures of North Jersey and Woodbridge Developmental Centers before the end of the calendar year. Also contained in the Budget is \$24 million in new money in the Children's System of Care under the Department of Children and Families, which went toward additional services in FY 14 and will carry over into FY 15. Finally, a one-time increase for community providers, which was removed from the FY 14 budget, was reinstated in FY 15 as a result of our persistent advocacy efforts.

Our work, which takes place in halls of the State House and with legislators throughout New Jersey, is rooted in our dedicated family members, self-advocates, local chapters and direct support professionals who keep our budget message front and center both locally and statewide.

This year our budget efforts included the following:

- ♦ Hundreds of holiday cards to the Governor
- ♦ Testimony at three budget hearings
- ♦ Multiple letters from our organization, our board president and the New Jersey Statewide Self Advocacy Network to DHS, DCF, the Governor, the Senate President, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Budget Chairmen, and ranking members of the Budget Committees
- ♦ Two public statements in response to budgetary plans
- ♦ Meetings with the Senate President, the Assembly Speaker, all the members of the Senate and Assembly budget committees, and the Majority Leaders
- ♦ Action alerts to the Budget Chairmen
- ♦ Budget resolutions in both Houses in support of our cause
- ♦ A Legislative Action Day at the State House with the help of direct support professionals and self-advocates



## Introducing The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute Website

**W**e are excited to announce the launch of the The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute website. The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute is a new initiative that started in January 2014. The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute provides resources and guidance for families of loved ones with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The website will allow our families to find activities for their loved ones within their county, access resources, sign up for action alerts, find information on The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute, and much more. For more information about The Arc of New Jersey Family Institute visit [www.arcnjfamilyinstitute.org](http://www.arcnjfamilyinstitute.org) or email [info@arcnj.org](mailto:info@arcnj.org).



## A Year in Review for Planning for Adult Life

**T**his past October 2013, The Arc of New Jersey introduced the Planning For Adult Life Program. Planning for Adult Life targets students 16-21 years old, with a developmental disability. PFAL's mission is to empower students and their families to plan for what will happen when the student leaves school. PFAL has hit the ground running since its induction. During the past school year the PFAL program has reached over 1300 people through Prep Clubs, MAPs Club, a Webinar Series, informational emails, and the PFAL website. The program continues to expand throughout the state of New Jersey and currently serves 17 counties and 38 schools statewide. For more information about Planning For Adult Life, visit [www.planningforadulthoodlife.org](http://www.planningforadulthoodlife.org) or email [info@arcnj.org](mailto:info@arcnj.org).



## Project HIRE receives CARF Accreditation

**P**roject HIRE received a 3 year accreditation from CARF International (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) this past March. CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. CARF International visited the offices at The Arc of New Jersey March 12 - 14, where they spent time performing audits as well as speaking to staff members, program participants and families. In their final report, CARF surveyors noted The Arc of New Jersey's exemplary advocacy and stated the following: "Project HIRE staff are passionate and committed to the mission of quality services".



## Get Out The **VOTE 2014!**

**V**oting gives you the opportunity to make a choice and advocate for change. This year, on **Tuesday, November 4, 2014**, New Jersey citizens will elect 12 congressional representatives and New Jersey State Senator. The Arc of New Jersey has developed a comprehensive **Get Out the VOTE 2014!** guidebook to help you learn more about the voting process, how to vote and who will appear on this year's ballot.

Remember.....**Your VOTE = Your VOICE!**

Log on to The Arc of New Jersey's website at [www.arcnj.org](http://www.arcnj.org) to download your copy of our guide booklet, and **Get Out The VOTE 2014!**

**Election Day is Tuesday, November 4, 2014**



## 2014 Disability Policy Seminar

The Arc of New Jersey and several local county chapters attended The Arc of the US Disability Policy Seminar April 6 - 9, held in Washington, DC. Attendees met with members of New Jersey's federal delegation to secure their continued support as legislation and budget proposals develop in Washington. The Arc of New Jersey staff, with our Board President and representatives from The Arc of Bergen and Passaic, The Arc of Warren and The Arc of Union, talked about the critical need for the ABLE Act, re-authorization of the Combating Autism Act, the CRPD (The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) treaty, the Keeping All Students Safe Act, and the community living individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are able to enjoy because of Medicaid and Social Security. Collectively, the organizations met with representatives or high-ranking staff members from the following offices: Congressmen Frank Pallone, Bill Pascrell, Leonard Lance and Scott Garret, and Senators Robert Menendez and Cory Booker.



## Developmental Disability Awareness Month 2014

The month of March marked Developmental Disability Awareness Month. The theme for this year's DD Awareness Month was "Everyone Belongs". The Arc of New Jersey held a contest in which elementary and middle schools created a bulletin board display around the theme for DD Awareness Month. The Arc of New Jersey received numerous submissions from schools and six schools were chosen as our winners. The winning bulletin board displays were featured in the State House during the week of March 17th, when the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project and The Arc of New Jersey welcomed more than 45 legislators to Goldfinch Square at the State House in recognition of Developmental disabilities Awareness Month. The event provided our organization and the Self-Advocates the opportunity to talk to our elected officials about people with I/DD. In addition, having The Arc of New Jersey and the Self-Advocacy Project at the State House brings DD issues to the forefront and helps promote our message and mission to important decision-makers. Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez and Deputy Commissioner Dawn Apgar presented Self-Advocates with a proclamation from Governor Christie in recognition of Developmental Disability Awareness Month. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner posed for photos and took time to speak with self advocates about their hard work and advocacy efforts. On the legislative side, Assemblywoman Valerie Huttie (D-37), and members of the Assembly Human Services Committee presented Self-Advocates with a ceremonial resolution on the Assembly Floor.





## The Mainstreaming Medical Care Program Celebrates 25 Years at Annual Conference

The Mainstreaming Medical Care Program celebrated its 25th year on Friday May 30th at their annual conference. Over 400 health care and social service professionals attended this year's conference. Beverly Roberts, Director of the Mainstreaming Medical Care Program works diligently with the assistance her Program Assistant Beth Moffit throughout the year to ensure that the conference is a huge success.

The Mainstreaming Medical Care Program was established in 1985 and is involved in many advocacy and educational efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of health care for New Jersey residents with developmental disabilities. The focus for this year's conference was promoting quality healthcare for persons with developmental disabilities. DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez, Assistant Commissioner Liz Shea, Executive Director Tom Baffuto, President Bob Hage, and many others were present to speak during the opening. Ten workshops pertaining to medical related issues for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities were offered as well as 16 exhibitors.

For more information about the Mainstreaming Medical Care Program and to sign up for the *Healthy Times* e-newsletter, visit [www.mainstreamingmedicalcare.org](http://www.mainstreamingmedicalcare.org) or email [bmooffit@arcnj.org](mailto:bmooffit@arcnj.org).



## 14th Annual Criminal Justice Advocacy Program Conference

The Criminal Justice Advocacy Program held its 14th Annual Equal Justice conference on Thursday, April 24th at the NJ Law Center in New Brunswick. Established in 1982, The Criminal Justice Advocacy Program, led by Director Jessica Oppenheim, identifies community based services that can be incorporated into probation or parole conditions for defendants with developmental disabilities.

This year's conference focused on sexuality and reducing sexual harm for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Over 190 conference attendees from all professional backgrounds including law enforcement officials, the courts, human services, legal system were in attendance. DHS Assistant Commissioner Liz Shea, Executive Director Thomas Baffuto and Jessica Oppenheim opened the conference. Workshops were held throughout the day on various topics regarding sexuality and working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Criminal Justice Advocacy Program also unveiled their New Attorney Guide which provides information on when a person with a developmental disability is arrested and the proper procedures that should be taken.

For more information about the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program, visit [www.cjapnj.org](http://www.cjapnj.org) or via email at [acohen@arcnj.org](mailto:acohen@arcnj.org)







## The Horizon Foundation for New jersey Healthy Lifestyles Program

**T**he New Jersey Self Advocacy Project, in partnership with The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, created a program called Healthy Lifestyles. Healthy Lifestyles assists individuals with developmental disabilities to create a healthy lifestyle through education, exercise and much more. Healthy Lifestyles started in October 2013 and has been a huge success, reaching over 1000 self advocates. With the introduction of the Healthy Lifestyles Program, Self-Advocates have been able to participate in adaptive exercise sessions and educational workshops to ensure that they are living the healthiest life possible. For more information about the The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project, visit [www.njselfadvocacyproject.org](http://www.njselfadvocacyproject.org) or via email at [NJsap@arcnj.org](mailto:NJsap@arcnj.org)



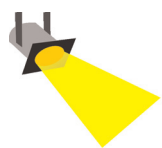
## 21st Annual Self Advocacy Luncheon

**O**n Saturday April 12th, New Jersey Self- Advocacy Project held their 21st Annual “Spring Into Action” luncheon at the Imperia in Somerset, NJ. There were over 370 self advocates in attendance at this year’s luncheon. The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project, led by Director Dennis Donatelli was established in 1983 and assists people with developmental disabilities to become involved in self-advocacy, so they are able to create positive changes in their lives. Speakers at the luncheon included Executive Director of The Arc of New Jersey Tom Baffuto, Dr. Joel Nunez, Frank Latham from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, Ellen Moscovitz, President of the Advisory Board of the New Jersey Statewide Self Advocacy Network (NJSSAN), and Barbara Coppens, Immediate Past President of the Advisory Board of NJSSAN. Awards were also given out during the luncheon and included the following : Robert Hage, President of The Arc of New Jersey - 2014 Heroes Award; Yvette Granger-Advisor of the Year; Power in Numbers - Group Achievement Award; and Colleen Watkins - Jane Miller Memorial Leadership Award. The luncheon ended with an afternoon of music and dancing. For more information about the New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project, visit [www.njselfadvocacyproject.org](http://www.njselfadvocacyproject.org) or email [NJsap@arcnj.org](mailto:NJsap@arcnj.org).



## DID YOU KNOW... You can *Shop on Amazon* and support *The Arc of New Jersey*

**D**o you shop on Amazon? Now you can make those shopping trips support The Arc of New Jersey as well. Instead of going to your regular [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) account, just go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). Log in with your already established username and password. Choose your charity by searching for “The Arc of New Jersey, North Brunswick, NJ”. Click “select” when you see us come up. That’s all it takes! Now every time you shop, go through this portal and .5% of eligible purchases are donated to The Arc of New Jersey. Thank you for supporting The Arc of New Jersey and have fun shopping!!



## LOCAL COUNTY CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT



### The Arc of Monmouth County hosts a Red Carpet Premiere in Partnership with the Alogonquin Arts Theatre

**T**he Arc of Monmouth County held a Red Carpet Premiere Event of “Believe and You Can Achieve”, which is a new film about the importance of employment for people with developmental disabilities. The film is a result of a year long project by The Arc’s Achievement Zone, and was funded through a grant from the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities and support from The Arc of New Jersey. Over 100 guests attended the film premiere which also included a brief film from the NJ Coalition for Inclusive Education. The complete film is now available for viewing at The Arc of Monmouth County website at [www.arcofmonmouth.org](http://www.arcofmonmouth.org).

### The Arc of Camden County’s “Help One Get Hired” Program

**T**he Arc of Camden County’s “Help One Get Hired” program seeks to realize New Jersey’s “Employment First” initiative endorsed by Governor Chris Christie in April 2012. “Help One Get Hired” bridges the gap between people with disabilities and their community’s businesses. “Help One Get Hired” specifically focuses on connecting the special education programs at local high schools with career exploration services and resources. For more information about “Help One Get Hired” visit [www.facebook.com/helponegethired](http://www.facebook.com/helponegethired)



## Don’t Forget to Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter!!

**D**o you have a Facebook or Twitter Account? Do you like to keep up on the latest news and events happening with The Arc of New Jersey? If so follow and “Like” us on Facebook and Twitter. Feel free to leave us a comment, we would love to hear from you!! Tell a friend to tell a friend about learning more about The Arc of New Jersey and the work we do to support individuals with I/DD and their families.

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**The Arc** is committed to enhancing the quality of life of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, empowerment, education and prevention



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### **Do you like what you see? We sure hope so!**

The Arc of New Jersey is extremely proud of all its accomplishments over the past year and we are pleased to bring you a snapshot of all of our advocacy, information, support and program highlights in this issue of *Progress*. However, the great work of The Arc of New Jersey is only as strong as the support we receive. We rely on YOU - our members, constituents and donors - to keep us strong and viable long into the future.

So please show your support by making a tax-deductible donation to The Arc of New Jersey today! You can make a one-time donation or spread it out over time by making a recurring donation. Either way your support will help further the mission and vision of The Arc of New Jersey and vitalize our advocacy efforts.

***Go to [www.arcnj.org](http://www.arcnj.org) and click on the “Donate Now” button to make your donation today!***

### **Save the Dates!**

**September 20, 2014** - The NJ Self-Advocacy Project Annual Self-Advocacy Conference to be held at the Doubletree Hotel, Somerset

**September 30 - October 2** - The Arc of the US National Convention in New Orleans, LA

**October 24, 2014** - The Arc of New Jersey 65th Anniversary Dinner and Awards Celebration to be held at The Imperia, 1714 Easton Avenue, Somerset