



# CONQUERING **CHANGE**

2015-2016  
Annual Report

# OUR MISSION:

The Arc of Essex County provides comprehensive services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families ensuring a lifetime of achievement with dignity and full partnership in the community.



## A Letter from the CEO and Board President

Dear Friends and Members of The Arc Family,

Imagine capturing the mission of The Arc of Essex County in one word. Which word would you choose – support, acceptance, achievement? The options are endless, yet it takes an undercurrent of change to make them all work.

The Arc of Essex County was founded on the promise of change, and nearly 67 years after our inception it is a constant in everything we do. Our success is measured by our ability to adapt, respond, and innovate as our landscape shifts. Based on these metrics, The Arc of Essex County conquered change in Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

How? After nearly four years of preparation, our first adults moved into the state's fee-for-service system with The Arc's guidance and support. These adults experienced seamless transitions that you have come to know and expect from The Arc. And, when the Children's System of Care unexpectedly accelerated their own fee-for-service initiatives, we quickly adjusted and responded, continuing to support the children and families in our respite programs – again, without service interruption.

We know this shift has created uncertainties for the individuals and families we serve. However, The Arc of Essex County's systems, infrastructure, and staff have been tested time and again, and our experience and preparedness are instrumental in ensuring service continuity. As more individuals and families begin their transition, we are ready.

Our planning and preparation in the face of monumental funding changes has positioned The Arc as a leader in the fee-for-service transition. While many other agencies are focusing solely on this transition, The Arc of Essex County is looking to innovate in all areas. As our population and their needs change, we are examining and implementing accessibility and aging-in-place standards modeled after our latest group home in Roseland; expanding specialized day habilitation services such as our Bridges Day Program; and reinvesting in Camp Hope so its recreational spaces meet our campers needs for the next 60 years.

While change can be difficult, it is also necessary and exciting. As this fiscal year comes to a close, we look forward to driving change in the future and celebrating achievements along the way. Your renewed support ensures The Arc of Essex County can continue to be a champion on behalf of the individuals and families we serve.

Thank you for your confidence in all we hope to achieve.

Sincerely,



Linda C. Lucas  
Chief Executive Officer



Brad K. Hopton  
Board President

# Fee-For-Service: Rising to Change

In 2012 the State of New Jersey began shifting Division of Developmental Disabilities funding from a contract-based system to a fee-for-service model. For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, these changes mean additional flexibility and choice. For agencies, the transition requires a fundamental change in administrative processes and how services are provided. The Arc of Essex County embraced this change and quickly evolved to meet the new requirements.

Committed to minimizing the impact on individuals and their families, The Arc of Essex County became Medicaid approved, invested in electronic health record software and mobile technology, examined current services to ensure they meet new state requirements, advocated for reasonable state-assigned rates, established new operating procedures, and extended professional support services to guide families through the steps they would need to take.

Throughout the year, The Arc fielded more than 500 information and resource phone calls, provided nearly 100 day program tours, and coordinated self-directed and transition services for more than 80 individuals and families.

In June 2016, The Arc of Essex County's first adults moved into the state's fee-for service system. As The Arc intended, their transitions were seamless and they continued to receive the highest level of support. Behind the scenes, The Arc's new technology and processes also experienced seamless communication with the state's Medicaid billing provider.

As additional individuals and families begin their transition into the fee-for-service model, The Arc of Essex County is ready. Professional support services continue to be available and the new systems and infrastructure have withstood the test of time. With a solid foundation in place, the agency is focused on continuing to provide individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities innovative activities and expanded opportunities.

While many agencies are suspending services in the face of monumental change and funding uncertainties, The Arc of Essex County is investing in programs and services. This commitment will continue to position The Arc as the premier service provider for individuals and their families across Northern New Jersey.

**“The Arc of Essex County is moving forward with a person-centered approach as the State of New Jersey continues to roll out its fee-for-service initiatives. The state-mandated changes require The Arc of Essex County to change how we operate; however, our mission and focus remain the same. We will continue to offer creative resources and opportunities to ensure the most fulfilling lives for the individuals and families we serve.”**

- Linda Lucas, Chief Executive Officer, The Arc of Essex County



Two day program attendees steal a dance during The Arc of Essex County's third annual Day Programs Prom at the Embassy Suites in Parsippany. Members of the community supported by donating Prom attire, flowers, and more.





## Reimagining Camp Hope: A 60th Anniversary Celebration

Since 1956, Camp Hope has provided more than 8,000 children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with an opportunity to experience traditional summer fun adapted to meet their needs. The Arc of Essex County used Camp Hope's 60th Anniversary as a springboard to celebrate the traditions established over the years and reimagine the possibilities for the future.

True to its roots, Camp Hope combines life skills, social, and recreational activities with aquatics, sports, music, and the arts to help campers tackle new goals, build confidence, and form lasting friendships. With two separate programs, children from five to 21 years old enjoy a traditional camp experience while individuals 21 years and older can return for the Adult Camp Experience. Parents have peace of mind knowing Camp Hope provides an appropriate and stimulating environment.

As The Arc imagined the future of Camp Hope, increasing the number of engaging, interactive, and accessible-friendly play spaces became a top priority. In early 2016 an ambitious capital campaign, Create Play, launched to build upon capital improvements that began in 2011 with the addition of a zero-entry pool. The goal was to reimagine, reinvest in, and revitalize Camp Hope and the grounds that have been the background for countless memories. The identified recreational improvements included a new open-air activity pavilion, an interactive and accessible playground, a splash pad aquatic feature, enhanced sports facilities, and general improvements to the camp's buildings and landscaping.

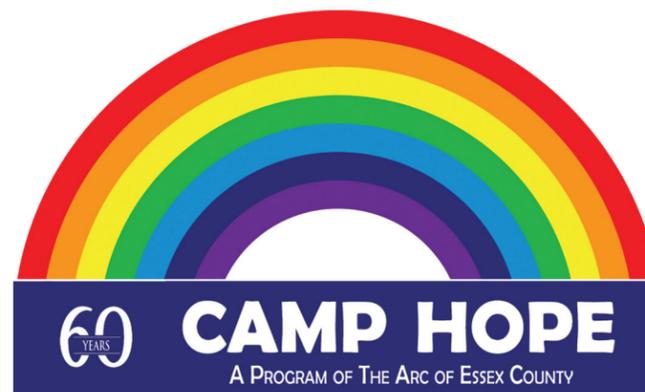
Following an exciting and interactive Camp Hope Challenge Week in early June and prior to the start of camp in July, a new basketball court



Workers from the Township of East Hanover donate their time to install a new basketball court in June 2016. With the addition of adjustable height backboards, the new court can provide years of fun for campers of various skill levels.

with adjustable height backboards was installed. Fundraising efforts and collaboration with the Township of East Hanover will continue through the remainder of 2016 with main phase construction beginning after the 2016 camp season.

The reimagined spaces will become a reality prior to the 2017 camp season and meet campers' needs for the next 60 years. Future generations will have the perfect backdrop for summers packed with joyful memories.



**"The Create Play capital campaign will enable The Arc of Essex County to further elevate the summer camping experience for years to come. These improvements will allow all campers to participate fully in an interactive and accessible-friendly environment, which has always been at the heart of Camp Hope. We are excited to unveil a reimagined Camp Hope in 2017."**

- Heather Comstock, Senior Director, Development and Communication, The Arc of Essex County

# Welcome Home: An Evolving Approach to Residential Living

Dale Crews lived with The Arc of Essex County in the Nutley group home for nearly two decades. During that time, she bonded with her roommates and group home staff, and enjoyed participating as a member of her community. While the Nutley group home holds many memories, navigating the colonial-style property with her walker became increasingly challenging. Collectively Dale and The Arc recognized the need for a home that would meet her mobility needs now and in the future.

Inspired by Dale, and others like her, The Arc of Essex County embarked on a search for properties that could support current and future residents whose mobility needs may evolve. The beginning of the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year marked an opportunity to transform The Arc's vision for future residential living into reality.

The Arc of Essex County purchased a ranch-style home in Roseland, NJ in June 2015. Over the next 11 months, the agency transformed the house's original design to meet the needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in every phase of life. Utilizing funding from the Essex County Division of Housing and Community Development, the Borough of Roseland, and the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, The Arc added front/rear wheelchair ramping, converted the existing master bathroom to an accessible-friendly bathroom, and installed comprehensive lighting and fire suppression systems.

Dale and her roommates moved into the home in May 2016 and have been forming their own traditions and memories ever since.

The success of the renovation project emphasized the importance to create



Pictured (L-R) - Ben Proce, Trustee of The Arc of Essex County, John Duthie, Mayor of Roseland, Linda Lucas, CEO of The Arc of Essex County, Joe DiVincenzo, Essex County Executive and George Serio, Jr., Director of the Essex County Division of Housing and Community Development officially open the Roseland group home in May 2016.

long term housing stability for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. As The Arc moves forward in its residential endeavors, the agency embraces the responsibility to anticipate and respond to residents' needs. The Arc will continue to make needed accessibility improvements to existing properties, while searching to acquire new homes with living space all on one level.

With a focus on responding to the community's needs, The Arc of Essex County is creating flexible housing options. Residents and their families can be confident in The Arc's ability to innovate and adapt now, and in the future.

**"As we look to acquire and renovate additional residential properties, being able to meet evolving service and mobility needs is a top priority. Ranch-style homes offer our residents living space on one level which is important as they enter their senior years. Additionally, for those with mobility needs, interior and exterior modifications further enable our residents to live comfortably in all phases of life."**

- Frank Cinque, Senior Director, Asset Management,  
The Arc of Essex County





## Parent-2-Parent: Where Families Come First

The Arc of Essex County's Parent-2-Parent program serves new and expectant mothers and fathers welcoming children with Down syndrome into the world. Since the program's founding nearly 40 years ago, countless families have begun their journey raising a child with special needs with a call to The Arc.

Upon receiving a diagnosis, doctors, nurses, and social workers provide an introduction to the Parent-2-Parent program. Employees and trained parent volunteers of The Arc of Essex County are available for families on a moments notice to provide emotional support, resources, and a lifeline to other families who have embraced the experience of raising a child with special needs.

The bonds formed between parents, children, and families during the Parent-2-Parent program often last a lifetime, and, since its inception, nearly 300 families have benefitted. The Arc's focus on serving the needs of the entire family do not end with the Parent-2-Parent program.

At six-weeks old children typically begin receiving early intervention services in a home or day care setting of their parent's choice through the state's

early intervention system. Many Parent-2-Parent families and others, will also supplement these early intervention services by participating in The Arc's Stepping Stones Early Intervention program. Stepping Stones teaches parents how to advocate for their child and prepares the whole family for the transitions to come. It is the only program in the state offering parent support groups, center-based therapies, and a formal, individualized development curriculum especially for children with Down syndrome.

This individualized development plan coupled with a focus on supporting the entire family provides children and parents with the foundations they need to succeed. The vast majority of school districts note Stepping Stones graduates are better prepared academically, physically, and socially. And, the bonds formed between participating families are cited as the most valuable aspect of the program.

The Arc's family-first commitment begins on day one and families can be assured knowing a supportive hand and lifelong resource will be available for years to come.



A child enrolled in Stepping Stones Early Intervention Step II works with a volunteer to build muscle tone.



**“The Parent-2-Parent program provides vital emotional support and mentorship to families during a time filled with questions and uncertainty. This family focus continues through the Stepping Stones Early Intervention program where parents and children bond with their peers, receive customized therapies, and build the foundation for a bright future.”**

- Kathy Hinnigan-Cohen, Chief Operating Officer,  
The Arc of Essex County

# Quality Assurance: The Arc's Ongoing Commitment to Innovation and Improvement



The Arc of Essex County was founded in 1948 by a group of dedicated parents and community leaders seeking greater opportunities and cultural acceptance for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). While The Arc has made great strides since its inception, the agency continues to create new opportunities and increase community acceptance enabling individuals with I/DD to live fuller, more independent lives as engaged citizens in their communities.

Woven into the core of every program and service provided by The Arc are checks and balances to ensure day program attendees and residents have the highest quality of life. These Quality Assurance practices, implemented by members of The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors and staff, enable the agency to continue evolving to meet the community's needs and innovating in the face of change.

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, The Arc of Essex County's Quality Assurance department expanded its approach to include greater involvement from individuals' guardians and families resulting in more balanced oversight. Throughout the year, members of The Arc's management team and Board of Directors toured and evaluated each program and community residence developing a plan of action to enact positive change for program attendees and residents.

**"The Arc of Essex County's Quality Assurance program upholds our commitment and responsibility to continue innovating on behalf of individuals with I/DD and their families. This program not only helps us improve the day program and residential experience, but also helps the agency prioritize strategic improvements so we can elevate our best practices and evolve for the future."**

- Erin Koropsak, Senior Director, Quality Assurance, The Arc of Essex County

An attendee of the Arc company day program earns a paycheck working twice a week at the Goodwill in Rockaway. The Arc's vocational day programs enable individuals with I/DD to achieve social and economic inclusion through sustainable employment.

During these annual reviews, the human resources, information technology, transportation, maintenance, residential, and adult day departments report on the status of staff training, vehicle maintenance, facility upkeep, and more. Concurrently, residents and day program attendees and their families are asked about their quality of life, participation in activity planning, and satisfaction levels. The feedback is analyzed and an action plan developed for each of the nearly 40 community residences and day programs.

The Quality Assurance program not only benefits day program attendees and residents, but also helps The Arc prioritize capital improvements and gathers valuable data needed when reporting to the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). The Arc of Essex County has received glowing feedback from DDD's residential licensing team on the quality of life, policies, procedures, and availability of records.

By involving every stakeholder in the Quality Assurance process, The Arc of Essex County is able to better identify strengths and areas of improvement and fulfill its responsibility to provide the highest quality programming that enables individuals to explore and experience new opportunities.



# Quality Assurance Reviews Examine:

## Quality Assurance & Families Review:

- Do attendees/residents like their house/day program?
- Are attendees/residents happy with their staff interaction?
- Do attendees/residents enjoy the planned activities?
- Are attendees/residents part of the activity planning process?
- Do residents like their housemates?
- Are prescriptions current and stored appropriately?

## Board Members Review:

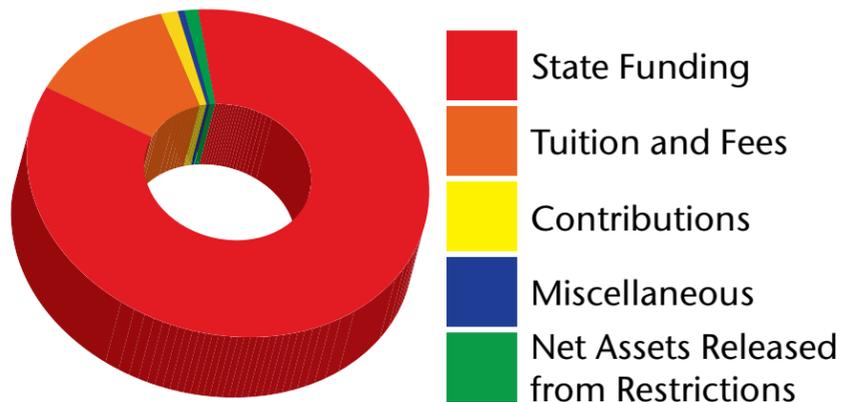
- Overall condition of the program/home?
- What is the culture between staff and residents?
- Recommendations to improve the program/home?

## Internal Reviews:

- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Transportation
- Maintenance/Facilities

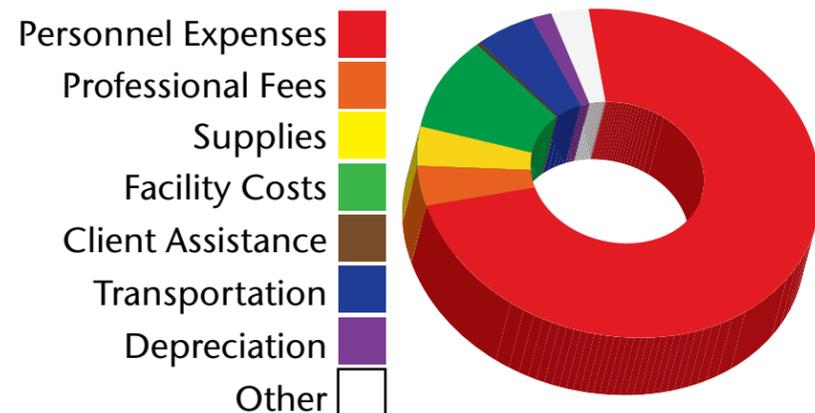
# 2015-2016 Financials

## OPERATING REVENUE



**\$25,922,616**

## OPERATING EXPENSES



**\$25,537,254**

# YOUR IMPACT

“The Arc of Essex County has provided support and care over the past 18 years, not only to our son Joseph, but to my husband and me. The Arc was a lifeline of help in those early years. When The Arc came into our lives, we realized immediately that we were not alone.”

-Diane Pierce, Parent of a Teenager in The Arc of Essex County’s Agency-Hired Respite Program

# YEAR in REVIEW

DEVELOPMENT

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IMPACT:

- 172** Education & Early Intervention
- 711** Service Navigation
- 108** Vocational Services
- 496** Respite Services
- 224** Recreation
- 301** Day Habilitation Services
- 146** Residential Services

**NEARLY 1,500 INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES**

On Thursday, September 24, 2015 nearly 250 family, friends, and stakeholders of The Arc of Essex County attended the 2nd Annual Uncorked & Uncapped: Wine, Beer, and Food Fest at the Westminster Hotel in Livingston. Honoring the individuals and groups whose longstanding support and service has been integral to the agency’s success, the event raised nearly \$78,000.

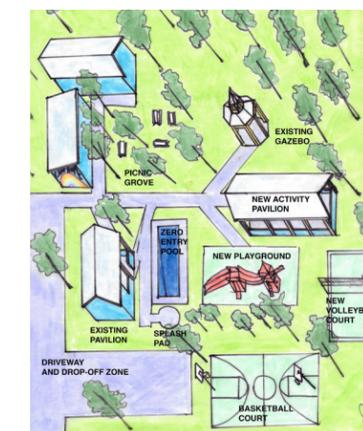


**Save the date!** The 4th Annual Uncorked & Uncapped: Wine, Beer, and Food Fest returns to the Westminster Hotel on September 28, 2017!

The Arc of Essex County hosted its 18th Annual Building Tomorrows 5K Run, 2-Mile Walk, and Family Fun Fest on Saturday, April 16, 2016 in Bloomfield’s Brookdale Park. Attendees enjoyed pristine weather and a wealth of fun, food, and activities while raising more than \$63,000.



**Save the date!** The 2017 Building Tomorrows 5K Run, Family Walk, and Fun Fest moves to South Mountain Recreation Complex on April 29, 2017.



In early 2016, The Arc of Essex County launched the Camp Hope Create Play capital campaign to revitalize campground recreational spaces. At the end of the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year in June, the campaign had already raised \$84,500 with additional pledges from the Township of East Hanover to install a new, fully air conditioned building.

Fundraising for the Create Play capital campaign continues. To contribute, visit [www.arcessex.org/createplay](http://www.arcessex.org/createplay).

**FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016**

# Guardians

These members of The Arc of Essex County family are distinctive supporters of the agency's mission and objectives. Gifts and grants of \$25,000 or more in any one fiscal year show an abiding belief and confidence in The Arc of Essex County.

The Candle Lighters  
The County of Essex, Division of Housing and Community Development  
Township of Bloomfield, Department of Community Development

# Benefactors

The following donors demonstrate a profound commitment to The Arc of Essex County, to its present and its future. Gifts and grants of \$10,000 to \$24,999 in any one fiscal year are the bedrock of the agency's foundation and enable The Arc to remain a strong and innovative source of strength for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Bird Pharma Consulting, LLC  
Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation  
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Orange Orphan Society

PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP  
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# Patrons

These gifts and grants of \$5,000 to \$9,999 ensure the continued fulfillment of The Arc of Essex County's mission. We thank these donors for helping us provide the very best quality of service to our consumers.

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# Golden

We recognize these donors who have contributed between \$1,000 and \$4,999 in tribute to the more than 40 programs which The Arc of Essex County runs, so that the lives of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in Essex County and the surrounding area will be enhanced.

Benefit Management Solutions  
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# Visionary

These members of The Arc of Essex County family contributed \$500 to \$999 in a single fiscal year. These funds allow us to build on our present successes to meet the needs of the future.

Applebee's/Doherty Enterprises, Inc.  
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# Angels

The donors whose gifts and grants range from \$250 to \$499 help us sustain and enrich our programs, while providing a nurturing atmosphere to all we serve.

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