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COVID-19 Update from the CEO



Dear Members of The Arc Family:

We are living in unprecedented times and collectively questioning what is next amidst the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. As we've detailed over the past three weeks, The Arc of Essex County is continuing to monitor and respond to the almost daily changing Coronavirus situation. We continue to rely on guidance from federal and state authorities while aggressively adhering to CDC health and hygiene protocols.

As you know, the first Friday of each month marks the release of The Guardian, The Arc of Essex County's monthly e-newsletter. In this special COVID-19 edition, we highlight how life goes on at The Arc of Essex County while practicing social distancing and look forward to warmer weather and healthier times.

The status of our programs remains the same. However, we continue to implement new measures in an effort to ensure the health and wellbeing of our residents and staff:

New Measures:

- Deployment of iPhones to consumers and programs for remote monitoring (Facetime)
- Increased use of telemedicine services with Station MD, the DDC and other medical providers

Current Closures:

- Shapiro Center for Early Intervention: Suspended; modified teleservices began 4/1
- Stepping Stones School: Suspended; remote learning plan activated
- Stepping Stones Early Intervention: Suspended until further notice
- Children and Adult Individual and Group Respite and Recreation Programs: Suspended for consumers until DDD/DCF authorize return
- Adult Day Programs: Suspended for consumers until DDD authorizes return

Ongoing Services:

- Residential Services: No outside visitors; only essential community activities
- Administrative Support: The main office is open with limited hours, staggered, and remote staffing; only essential visitors
- Program Administration: Staff deployed to Arc locations to support residential services
- Everyone entering the residential programs (including staff) are required to have their temperatures taken prior to entering the home.
- Support staff shopping teams continue to pick up and deliver items including groceries to group homes as needed.

Our staff, especially those in direct support positions, are the heartbeat of our organization. We continue to commend them for their unwavering dedication to those we serve. I encourage you to continue to reach out to thank them and share your appreciation with us.

Stay safe and be well.



Linda C. Lucas
Chief Executive Officer

April 25th Building Tomorrows Event Goes Virtual

10K and Half-Marathon Options Added

We know you are looking forward to the 22nd Annual Building Tomorrows Run and

Walk in late April. We're happy to say the event is **not cancelled**, we're just doing it differently! Due to the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak, the run and walk will be held virtually in your local neighborhood!

We've also added additional racing distances including a 10K and a half marathon for individuals who were in the midst of training for longer races. All 1-mile walk, 5K, 10K, and half marathon finishers will receive special 2020 swag including a custom finisher medal and completion certificate. Registration for all distances is \$30 and will benefit individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) served by The Arc of Essex County.

Get up and get dressed in your race day gear, stretch, bring your water bottle, and hit the treadmill, streets, or trails. Celebrate your finish by uploading your time then post your contest photos on social



media! Use the hashtag: **#BuildingTomorrowsNJ**. Contest categories include:

- Best Virtual Team Photo
- Most Creative Cheer Sign
- Best Motivational Photo
- Most Scenic Route

Now, more than ever, The Arc of Essex County needs your support. Visit www.runorwalk.org today to sign up and begin fundraising! We'll provide you with all the tools you need to succeed in your efforts, including sample team recruitment and fundraising emails, training tips, and more. Every step you log, from the convenience of your community, will help spread awareness about I/DD and support the more than 1,500 individuals and families served annually by The Arc of Essex County.

Residents Stay Active

While Having Fun at Home

Beginning on Friday, March 13, The Arc of Essex County's residential programs began practicing social distancing as a way to remain healthy amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. While this meant the cancellation of Adult Recreation & Respite and Day Programming outside of the home, The Arc remains committed to maintaining a regular daily schedule full of engaging activities.

Residential and Day Program staff teamed up to execute this new approach. For the Millburn Group Home, this meant developing a weekly calendar of activities that incorporates every residents' interests. Activities include in-home spa days, karaoke and music classes, arts & crafts, and staying active through chair yoga, dancing, and neighborhood walks.

The Nutley Group Home and many others adopted a similar approach. Nutley residents enjoyed making personal-pan pizzas, baking and decorating cupcakes, taking in the blooming cherry blossoms, and completing puzzles to name a few.

The Arc of Essex County would like to recognize and thank our direct support professionals (DSPs) who are reporting to work every day to support the consumers living in our residential services. These front-line staff are caring for our residents as they would their own family. It is only with the extraordinary hard work and dedication of the staff, especially the DSP's, that The Arc of Essex County can continue to provide the necessary direct care and support to our residential consumers in an unprecedented environment.

If you or a loved one are interested in pursuing an independent living placement with The Arc of Essex County, please contact The Arc's Director of Residential Service, Rebecca Lorusso via email at rlorusso@arcsex.org or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270. For additional information about The Arc of Essex County's residential services, [click here](#).



Stepping Stones Transitions to Remote Learning

Beginning on Monday, March 16 The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School transitioned to remote learning as schools throughout the state closed due to Coronavirus. Students (and a few siblings) are making the most of their remote learning experience while completing work sheets, participating in interactive learning activities, and even taking virtual yoga classes! The Arc would like to thank the parents who are helping our teachers and therapists with this tremendous undertaking!

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, view the Stepping Stones School website [here](#). To request assistance with an out-of-district placement, contact Sue Brand at (862) 210-8781 or sbrand@arcessex.org.



Community Rallies to Support The Arc

During COVID-19 Response

The Arc of Essex County continues to support children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities amidst the growing uncertainty caused by COVID-19. The impact of this public health crisis is felt by everyone, and we are appreciative and proud of how the community is coming together to support one another. We'd like to extend our sincerest gratitude to our friends at Stone Water, Eastern Janitorial, and the Townships of Livingston and Millburn who donated various items for our residents and staff.



Facing an unexpected and unprecedented closure and not wanting supplies to go to waste, Stone Water sent a portion of their perishable food to The Arc to be distributed amongst our 25+ residential programs. Our group home staff and residents are enjoying fresh produce, meats, pizza dough, and homemade bread Stone Water so generously provided!

Additionally, our friends at Eastern Janitorial donated face masks to be used by residents and staff during

necessary trips in the community, while the Townships of Livingston and Millburn graciously donated gloves, personal protective gear, and hand sanitizer.

Would you like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County? Visit www.arcessex.org/donate or email Senior Director of Development and Communication, Heather Comstock, at hcomstock@arcessex.org.

Looking forward to Summer Fun

Check Out the Spring/Summer 2020 Adult Recreation & Respite Catalog

While we may be practicing social distancing now, we are busy planning for life after quarantine. Do you have a loved one interested in educational programming, community experiences, seasonally-themed events, and weekend group respite programs? The Arc of Essex County's Spring/Summer 2020 Adult Community Inclusion, Recreation, & Respite Catalog is now available! Highlights include:

- Sea Turtle Celebration at Turtle Back Zoo
- Strawberry & Peach Festivals
- A Day at American Dream's Sealife Aquarium and Point Pleasant Boardwalk
- Cupcake Decorating, an Ice Cream Social, and Community Festivals



Community Inclusion, Recreation, & Respite Catalog

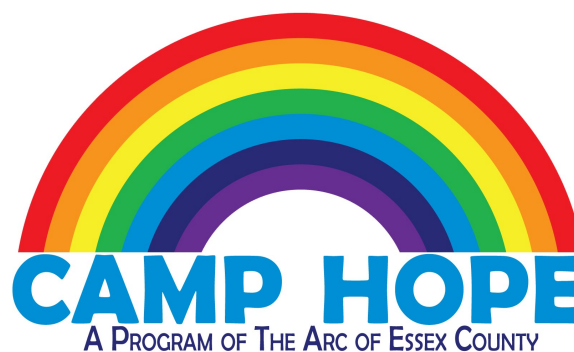


Check out the Spring/Summer 2020 Recreation Catalog, [available here](#), then reach out to The Arc of Essex County's Manager of Community Supports Services, Dacia King-Sarkodie, to learn how you can enroll - dking@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1272.

Complete Your Summer 2020 Camp Application Today!

Limited Spots Remain

The Arc of Essex County continues to accept applications for the 2020 Camp Hope season which will run from June 29 - August 14, 2020. Popular weeks are filling up fast, so don't delay in submitting your application and reserving your spot! To apply, please visit the [Camp Hope website](#) and download the application. Applications will be processed as they are received – limited availability remains for some weeks. For questions and to find out availability for desired weeks of attendance, contact Erica Zupkus at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1275 or by emailing ezupkus@arcessex.org.



Funding Assistance:

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' deadline to receive applications for both Financial

Support toward Summer Camp Tuition and One-to-One Aide Services for Summer Camp is quickly approaching. If you'd like to request financial assistance toward the 2020 summer camp session for your child up to age 21, your DCF funding application must be completed and postmarked or received by PerformCare **no later than Thursday, April 30, 2020**. For additional information and to download DCF's Financial Assistance Application, [click here](#).

Camp Hope is an approved service through the Supports Waiver for individuals over the age of 21. If your loved one is interested in attending Camp Hope this summer, contact your family member's Support Coordinator to have camp added to their service plan.

The Arc of Essex County's Residential Corner

April Openings

For individuals seeking a community living placement, The Arc of Essex County has the following April 2020 openings:



NEW! Verona Supervised Apartment (1 Male Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 3-Bedroom Supervised Apartment
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large 2 Family Home with Great Front Porch
- Located near public transportation and within walking distance of Verona's downtown shopping & restaurants and the beautiful Verona Park
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from early 20's to late 40's. They enjoy spending time pursuing their own interests such as reading, watching TV, being active, socializing with friends, and occasionally participating in community activities as a group.





Bloomfield Supervised Apartment (1 Vacancy)

- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Apartment-style living in a multi-family, Arc of Essex County, owned home
- Single bedroom on 1st floor in shared apartment with opportunities to mingle with fellow residents
- Within walking distance to Bloomfield's downtown shopping & restaurants



**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.

Camp Hope Receives More Than \$13,000

in Grants

The Orange Orphan Society and Investors Bank recently awarded The Arc of Essex County grants totaling more than \$13,000 to support the agency's Camp Hope program. The Arc will utilize a \$1,000 grant from Investors Bank and a \$7,500 grant from Orange Orphan Society to fund camperships for children and adults in need. The Orange Orphan



Society's grant will be directed specifically to campers up to 18 years of age in need of fee assistance living in the Oranges or Maplewood.

An additional \$4,639 from the Orange Orphan Society will be used to purchase outdoor furniture for the recently renovated pool pavilion and golf equipment including a mobile driving range. The Arc of Essex County would like to thank Orange Orphan Society and Investors Bank for their continued support of the Camp Hope program.



Camp Hope is a seven week summer day camp for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities located in East Hanover. Operating since 1956, camp runs Monday through Friday, 9 am to 3 pm, starting in late June and ending in August, with transportation provided for campers living in Essex County and surrounding areas. Camp Hope provides campers with traditional camp activities including supervised swimming and outdoor fun with modified sports, arts & crafts, and music. While enjoying these activities, attention is also given to daily living skills, peer interaction, socialization skills, and developing appropriate behaviors.

For more information, visit www.arccamphope.com. To request a tour and for questions regarding the application process, contact Erica Zupkus, Director of Childrens Services at (973) 535-1181 x1275 or ezupkus@arcsex.org.

Tributes from Winter 2020

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 Minerva Delgado at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1237 or visit The Arc of Essex County's [website here](#).



Special Occasions:

In Honor of Mary Tranchetti

Ann Chieppa
Wayne and Barbara Chieppa
Jane and Sal DiCola
Ron and Leslie DiCola
Richard DiCola
Denise Giaimo
Donna Gialanella
David Kiljarawicz
Cynthia Mosley
Livia Pettinato
Judi and Pat Recucci

Memorials:

In Memory of Barbara Cohen

Lee Bergman

In Memory of John (Jack) Daudt

Stuart Applebaum
Cynthia Arcala
Sheila Balasa
Genevieve Collins
Robin Jimenez
Joan Loiacono
Susan Lubeck
Maureen Mostwill
Kathleen O'Hagen
Jo-Ann Raines
Audrey Schaefer
Josephine Schuster

In Memory of Marcy Goldstein

Diane Hurwoitz
Jeanette Nirenberg

In Memory of W.L. Hughes

Lee Bergman

In Memory of Maureen O'Brien

Tom Baffuto
Herb & Ellen Lev

In Memory of Debbie Pecora

Abby Rubin

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 January – March 2020:

Angela's Birthday Fundraiser

Cheryl August
Nicole Chiong
Sharon Crump
Cathy Fesolowich-Bentler
Jen Grana
Margaret Higgins
Patricia Hill
Fred Losapio
Kim Marconi
Fallon Villamor

Haven's Birthday Fundraiser

Adinah Alexand
Kathleen Nann
Mary Rodriguez
Eileen Stevens
Darci Zartman

Susan's Birthday Fundraiser

Danny Caufield
John Caufield
Susan Caufield
Eugene Errico
Bill Juliano
Jim Langenbach
Ed McCarthy
Thomas McGovern
Mark Pocius
Chrissy Thatcher
Saveria Tommaso
Brian Warnock
David Warnock

Vasilios's Birthday Fundraiser

Nick Caplanis
Liz Cartaina
Kelly Elardo
Kristin Giordano
Vasilios Hatzimanolis
Kelly Hurley
Tammy O'Connor-Lockett
Michele Wright

The Arc Remembers Scott McCleave

Scott McCleave joined The Arc of Essex County family in early 1997 when he began attending the Arccompany Day Program. In 2006, he moved into the Verona Supervised Apartments program and eventually transferred to the West Caldwell Hub Day Program. He passed from natural causes in early March.

Scott was kind, compassionate, and outgoing, developing deep relationships with his peers and staff and earning him the title of Prom King at The Arc's 2019 Day Programs prom. He loved all types of music and dancing. He was an avid sports fan and was active in his community.

The Arc of Essex County conveys its condolences to the McCleave family and Scott's extended Arc family during this difficult time. If you would like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County in Scott's memory, please visit www.arcessex.org/donate and note that your donation is in memory of Scott – an acknowledgement of your tribute will be sent to family members.

Stay Connected!



