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## Camp Hope Success

On Friday, August 13th, The Arc of Essex County wrapped up the 2020 camp season, one marked by the unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic. In total, more than 60 campers, 78 percent of whom were under the age of 21, enjoyed the abbreviated, 5-week camp season. Tireless effort, safety precautions, and enhanced cleaning procedures resulted in **zero cases of COVID-19** in campers and counselors.

The final weeks of camp were lively as ever with campers suiting up for Superheroes week and bringing their enthusiasm and curiosity to Camp Hope Adventure Time. As is tradition, swimming was one of the most popular activities, followed by target golf and wacky science experiments.



"I wanted to thank you so much for allowing Garrett the opportunity [to attend] these past 4 weeks at Camp Hope! It made an incredible difference in his overall state of mind. His depression and anxiety from the months prior were replaced with fun physical activity, socializing, learning, and happy memories," said Christine Smith. "I drove away Friday morning after drop off, full of emotion. It's organizations like The Arc that understand the crucial need of having our children fulfill their lives to their highest potential. Seizing all the opportunities of what's offered to them, despite the circumstances that are currently surrounding it. Congratulations to your staff, they did an incredible job!"

Camp Hope is, traditionally, a seven week summer day camp for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities located in East Hanover (modified to 5 weeks due to the ongoing pandemic). Operating since 1956, 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](http://www.arccamphope.com). For questions, contact Laurie Best, Senior Director of

Children & Adult Day Services at (973) 535-1181 x1264 or [lbest@arcsex.org](mailto:lbest@arcsex.org).

## Virtual Recreation Programs

### *Continue to Entertain*

As The Arc of Essex County rolls out additional virtual programming throughout the month of August, two favorites emerged: game day and movie day. Hosted by The Arc's Senior Manager of Community Services, Dacia King-Sarkodie, game day continued to see the highest attendance with game favorites including Pictionary, Hangman, and Jeopardy. Participants quickly work together to solve the puzzles while encouraging and supporting the group.



Another popular activity, Movie Day, leads participants on a variety of adventures. The most recent movie day features a brief video clip about ocean life, followed by virtual tours of two renowned aquariums. Participants enjoyed watching the various fish and discussing the different sizes & colors.

The Arc of Essex County is committed to providing dynamic services and supports by leveraging technology and practicing social distancing. Our full virtual programming calendars are available online at [www.arcsex.org/virtual](http://www.arcsex.org/virtual).

If your loved one is interested in joining our Day Programs classes, contact Director of Adult Day Services Angela LoSapio at [alosapio@arcsex.org](mailto:alosapio@arcsex.org). For Adult Recreation & Respite virtual gatherings, contact Director of Community Services, Maureen Murray at [mmurray@arcsex.org](mailto:mmurray@arcsex.org), and for more information about Children's Services, contact Director of Children's Services, Erika Zupkus at [ezupkus@arcsex.org](mailto:ezupkus@arcsex.org).

If you would like to make a donation to The Arc of Essex County to ensure we can continue to be agile, responsive, and innovative, especially during difficult times like these, please visit [www.arcsex.org/covid19relief](http://www.arcsex.org/covid19relief).

## Charity Navigator Rates The Arc of Essex County

**100/100**

Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities, recently rated The Arc of Essex County for the first time. After careful review of The Arc's policies, procedures, tax returns, and audits, Charity Navigator has rated The Arc of Essex County 100/100 in the areas of financial health and accountability and transparency.

This pristine ranking demonstrates to donors how efficiently Charity Navigator believes The Arc of Essex County will utilize their generosity, how well it has sustained its programs and services over time, and a commitment to being accountable and transparent, so that donors can make intelligent giving decisions. The Arc of Essex County is honored for the recognition, and will always remain responsible financial stewards of our donor's investment.



## ***Stepping Stones School Set to Reopen***

### ***for In-Person Learning***



On Tuesday, September 8th, The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School will reopen for full time, in-person learning; 100 percent remote learning remains an option for students not yet ready to return in person. Teachers and staff are excitedly preparing for the student's return. While the essence of the Stepping Stones education remains, The Arc is following all CDC and NJ DOH/DOE guidance while taking advance safety precautions amidst the ongoing pandemic.

Stepping Stones class sizes have always operated under a model of small staff-to-child ratios, and classes will continue to be capped at 12 students per classroom. Work spaces are six feet apart and each student will be equipped with their own classroom supplies. All staff will wear masks, including special masks with clear plastic to view the mouth. Children will be encouraged to do so as tolerated. Weekly exposure surveys will be completed by all staff and students along with daily health checks prior to admittance into the school.

Individualized therapies will continue in the therapy suites which will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. Group therapies will take place in the students' classrooms. The school will be closed to outside visitors and the volunteer program will be placed on hold until further notice. Teacher/parent meetings, tours, intakes, and IEP meetings will take place virtually. School facilities will be sanitized regularly with a deep cleaning occurring three times per week.

While the 2020-2021 school year will look a bit different, our approach to learning remains unchanged. We look forward to welcoming the majority of our students back for in-person learning and will continue to offer 100 percent virtual options for families who need it.

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](mailto:sbrand@arcsex.org).

## ***Staff Highlight:***

### ***Richard Ogunbote***

Richard Ogunbote is a dedicated, compassionate member of The Arc of Essex County's residential team who has worked at the Seven Oaks group home in Orange for nearly 5 years. Recognized by his colleagues and superiors alike, Richard is a "natural" who enjoys spending time with his residents as much as they enjoy spending time with him.

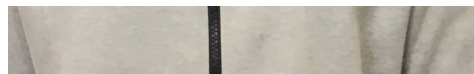
"This past month, the Seven Oaks group home went swimming at Camp Hope. I had the opportunity to watch Richard swim with the consumers," said Therese Tomaiko, Assistant Director of Residential Services overseeing the Seven Oaks group home.

"There is a rhythm about Richard that is calm and peaceful, as he truly cares about his job and takes it seriously. Every now and





then we get a reminder as to why we chose to work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and it brought tears to my eyes.”



Richard embodies the passion and dedication that drives the mission of The Arc of Essex County. We extend our utmost appreciation to Richard and recognize his unwavering dedication to those we serve.

## The Pamela and Craig Goldman Charitable Foundation

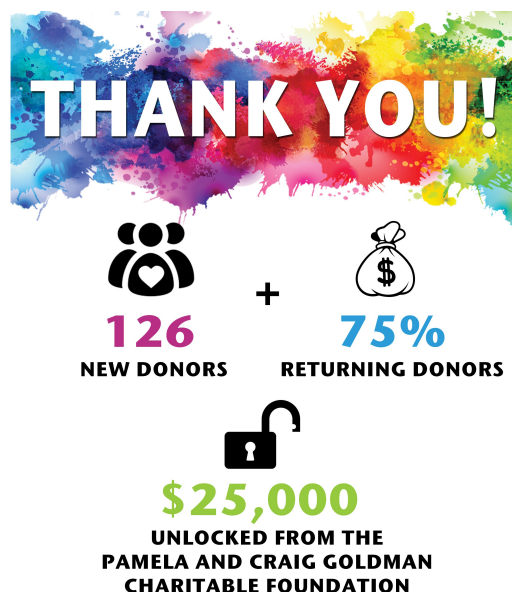
### *Awards \$25,000 to Studio Arc*

In late 2019, The Pamela and Craig Goldman Charitable Foundation issued The Arc and its donors a two-part challenge – recruit 50 new donors to the Annual Appeal campaign to unlock \$5,000, and secure an increased contribution from 75 percent of past annual appeal donors to unlock an additional \$20,000.

The Arc crushed the first challenge, to recruit 50 new donors, securing new donations from 126 people by early December 2019 and worked tirelessly through the winter towards the second challenge. By late April, even amidst the pandemic, 75 percent of previous annual appeal donors had increased their donation!

In late August, The Pamela and Craig Goldman Charitable Foundation awarded The Arc the full \$25,000 which will be used to furnish Studio Arc with professional-grade crafting equipment for pottery and candle-making, a wide array of studio art supplies, and more.

The Arc of Essex County would like to extend its upmost appreciation to all of the donors who contributed to the 2019 annual appeal as well as to The Pamela and Craig Goldman Charitable Foundation. Exciting updates regarding Studio Arc will be forthcoming soon.



## Summer 2020 Featured Backyard Activities

### *and Pool Visits for Residents*

While in-person day programming is still suspended in the state of New Jersey, The Arc of Essex County is ensuring summer fun for adults in its residential programs. When the 2020 camp season came to a close in mid-August, The Arc of Essex County utilized the recreational grounds to offer enriching outdoor fun for residents of its independent living programs for the remainder of the month.

Each residential program was assigned a designated time to visit the Camp Hope grounds where lifeguards along with the residential program staff were on-site to supervise swim time.



Residents also utilized the newly renovated basketball court and playground to enjoy outdoor fun.

In addition to the opportunities provided at Camp Hope, residents participated in supplemental virtual and in-person programming in their homes. The Oakwood group home was treated to a backyard bubble performance while the West Orange group home enjoyed making homemade pizzas. The Linden supervised apartments program took advantage of the park near their home to re-explore their community and enjoy the sunshine.

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@arcessex.org](mailto:rlorusso@arcessex.org) or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270. For additional information about The Arc of Essex County's residential services, [click here](#).

## The Arc of Essex County's Residential Corner

### *September Openings*

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



#### **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.



**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



### Respite Group Home

Are you heading out of town for an upcoming business trip or planning a medical procedure that requires overnight or rehab recovery? Do you need coverage for your loved one with an intellectual or developmental disability? The Arc of Essex County's Respite Group Home can help. Accommodating up to 6 residents, the home is designed to provide a caring and supportive stay during planned or unplanned respite events with every safety precaution in place. The home features:

- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large, 2-Story, Single Family, Colonial-style Home
- Designed to create a family-like setting in which consumers can feel comfortable until they transition into permanent housing or return home
- Staff is prepared to manage behavioral issues and additional supports based on the needs of the individual

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](mailto:rlorusso@arcessex.org) or by calling (973) 535-1181 ext. 1270.

**Stay Connected!**



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