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Coronavirus Update from the CEO

Dear Members of The Arc Family:

Spring has arrived. The clocks have jumped ahead. Although in NJ we have seen an uptick in COVID activity, the feeling in the air is positive. Maybe it's because we can finally spend time outdoors where there is a greater sense of freedom or because there are greater opportunities for vaccines and more people are being vaccinated. No matter the reason, we will take hold of the good feelings and make the best of them!

Vaccine eligibility has expanded for our community to include all adults with an intellectual or developmental disability. Vaccine distribution sites have increased, including a location at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) run by FEMA and a special Essex County set-aside for teachers and school personnel at the West Orange K-Mart site. The Arc family continues to experience a steady increase in vaccinations and a low incidence of COVID positivity.

Recently, DDD has begun adjusting the COVID policies, procedures, and protocols in partnership with the Department of Health and in tandem with the updated CDC guidance. These changes include loosening restrictions to the residential visitation policy and eliminating the quarantining requirement for vaccinated residents upon return from an out-of-residence visit. Additionally, DDD has identified a metric to be used as guidance for the re-opening of congregate day programs, which could begin as of March 29. Published each Thursday, this metric, the COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid is a

public, statewide report of the weekly COVID activity based on a rolling 7-day average. In the report, the state is divided into 6 regions. Each region is assigned 1 of 4 levels depending on the activity in that region; the levels are: very high, high, moderate and low. DDD has determined that congregate day programs may open only in those regions that are designated low or moderate. For the week ending March 27, 2021, the entire state of NJ, including Essex County is designated in the High level.

Although disappointed that we can't progress more quickly to open our congregate day services, we continue to make plans and expand opportunities in all other areas. We remain hopeful that state COVID restrictions will continue to relax which will then have a positive impact on our capacity to move forward. We are determined to provide timely and relevant information about services, resources and opportunities for staff, consumers, and families. Although information changes frequently, The Arc is focused on staying on top of the most recent guidance from all state and federal partners so as to implement the best strategies, provide and expand needed services, all while mitigating risk and protecting health and safety for all.

The health, safety, and happiness are of the utmost importance and the primary focus of The Arc of Essex County. Our efforts to sustain this focus continue with full force are attributable to the hard work and dedication of our staff and the entire Arc Essex family. We are thankful and appreciative for all and will strive to continue our commitment to all opportunities that support our Arc family, now and in the future.

Thank you, all. Stay safe and be well.



Linda C. Lucas
Chief Executive Officer

Updates:

- Congregate adult day programs may open as per the CALI report as of March 29, 2021.
- Community Based Supports and HAP continue and expand with in-person services supporting individuals (CBS) and families (HAP) to engage in community activities.
- Camp Hope general registration for summer 2021 continues with limited week availability; ESY at Camp Hope option available.
- DDD supplemental funding for day and residential program continues through June; DDD \$3/hour residential COVID stipend funding ends March 31.

Current Status of Programs and Services:

- Shapiro Center for Early Intervention: In-person and telehealth services continue
- Stepping Stones School: In-person classes continue; 100% remote option continues
- Stepping Stones Early Intervention: Virtual sessions continue into spring
- Children Group Respite and Recreation Programs: In-person activities authorized to resume with restrictions; plans remain in development
- Arc Essex congregate day programs: Remain closed due to CALI report designation; virtual activities continue
- Community Based Supports and Individual Respite: Limited options currently available
- Virtual activities calendars continue to increase and expand for at-home and residential home consumers on www.arcessex.org; virtual billing continues

Stepping Stones Celebrates World Down Syndrome Day

with Virtual Music Show

In celebration of World Down Syndrome Day, the students of



the Stepping Stones School were treated to a special virtual show by Matt Mazur of Turtle Dance Music. Featuring music, bubbles and plenty of jokes, the students enjoyed laughing and singing the afternoon away while sporting blue and yellow outfits and mismatched socks, hallmarks of Down Syndrome awareness. The day was complete with pizza and ice cream sundaes for lunch!



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@arcessex.org.

Now Offering Virtual Adult Day Program Tours

Graduation season is quickly approaching and the class of 2021 will soon begin their transition from school to adult life. The Arc of Essex County is now offering virtual Adult Day Program tours for soon-to-be graduates or individuals and families who are looking for a new service provider. During your virtual tour, learn about The Arc's approach to in-person and virtual Day Services and have your questions answered while exploring our Day Program locations scattered throughout Essex County.



Individuals interested in scheduling a Virtual Program Tour can contact Assistant Director of Day Services, Candes Reid, at creid@arcessex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1247.

3 Weeks Left to Earn Your 2021 Building Tomorrows Swag

The Arc of Essex County's 23rd Annual Building Tomorrows event is just three weeks away! Warmer temperatures make now the ideal time to start training for your first spring race! Join us from the comfort of your community as we go the distance to support children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). With race lengths including a 1-mile walk, 5K, 10K, or half marathon as well as creative photo contest categories, there are endless ways to get involved and have fun!

All 5K, 10K, and half marathon finishers, as well as walkers who donated or raise \$30 or more, will receive redesigned 2021 swag including a custom finisher medal and completion certificate. Runners and walkers who donate or raise \$100 or more will also receive a commemorative 2021 event t-shirt. Registration for all run distances is \$30 while registration to participate in the 1-mile walk is \$10. All proceeds will benefit individuals with 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 and photos then share your success on social media! Use the hashtag: #BuildingTomorrowsNJ. Contest categories include:

- Best Virtual Team Photo
- Most Creative Cheer Sign
- Best Essex County Landmark Selfie
- Most Scenic Route

Thanks to participants and sponsors including PSEG, Bogush, William H. Connolly, Bird Pharma Consulting, NJM Insurance, Sax LLP, Benefit Management Solutions, Eastern Janitorial, StationMD, Wakefern, and the Livingston Rotary we are well on our way to reaching our fundraising goal. **Now, we need you!**

Visit www.runorwalk.org today to sign up and start earning your Essex County themed swag! 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.

Camp Hope Hiring;

DCF Funding Deadline Approaching

Do you know someone looking for a fun and exciting summer job? The Arc of Essex County's Camp Hope is hiring! Join us for a virtual Camp Hope employment information session on Tuesday, April 13th to learn about open positions, what to expect, and participate in on-the-spot interviews. Available positions include:

- Certified Life Guards
- Counselors
- Camp Nurse
- 1:1 Behavioral Counselors

Camp staff must be available for the entire 2021 camp season which begins June 28 and concludes on August 13. Mandatory training will take place approximately one week prior to the beginning of camp. Staff hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – approximately 4 p.m. Additional requirements may be required for certain positions. Sign on bonuses are available for individuals hired as certified life guards or a camp nurse.

To register for the April 13 Camp Hope employment information session, contact Melissa Falletti-McCarthy at mmccarthy@arcessex.org.

DCF Funding Deadline Approaching

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, which serves children up to age 21, is currently accepting requests from families for financial assistance toward the 2021 summer camp season. Completed applications for both financial support toward summer camp tuition and one-to-one aide services for summer camp must be postmarked or received by PerformCare no later than Friday, April 30, 2021. For additional information and to download DCF's Financial Assistance Application, [click here](#).



NOW HIRING SUMMER 2021 CAMP STAFF

Seeking 2021 Camp Hope Staff:

- Certified Life Guards
- Counselors
- Camp Nurse
- 1:1 Behavioral Counselors

The 2021 camp season will last from June 28 - August 13, with training taking place approximately one week before the start of camp. Staff hours are Monday through Friday from approximately 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

Lifeguard:

- Current lifeguard certification

Counselor:

- At least 16 years old
- Experience working with individuals with I/DD preferred but not required
- Associate's or Bachelor's degree in related field is a bonus

1:1 Behavioral Counselors:

- High school with 3 years experience working with individuals with I/DD
- OR a Bachelor's degree with 1 year experience

Nurse:

- CPR/First Aid for the Professional*

*Great opportunity for LPN's, RN's, EMT's, Nursing Students, etc.



REGISTER FOR AN INFO SESSION TODAY:

Contact Melissa Falletti-McCarthy at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1284 or mmccarthy@arcessex.org.
123 Naylor Avenue | Livingston, NJ 07039 | (973) 535-1181 | www.arcessex.org

Interested applicants must attend a Camp Hope Employment Info Session/On-the-Spot Interview:

- Wednesday, March 24: 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 13: 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

The Arc of Essex County's Camp Hope, a six-acre summer day camp located in East Hanover for children and adults with autism, Down syndrome, and other intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).



Please note, limited availability remains. Additionally, if you feel your camper requires 1-to-1 support to attend our summer camp, please contact us at camphope@arcsex.org or (973) 535-1181 ext. 1264 to discuss availability.

Camp Hope is an 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.

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 2021 openings:



Branchbrook Supervised Apartments (1 Male Vacancy)

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 3-Bedroom Supervised Apartment
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single-Family Home with a Great Backyard and Walking Distance to Branch Brook Park
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from late 30's to late 60's. They enjoy spending time participating in community activities like the annual Cherry Blossom Festival, motor bike shows, and more. They continue to learn new skills with an emphasis on self-advocacy and communication skills to identify and work towards their dreams.



Cedar Grove Group Home

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 5-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single Family Home Located a in a Quiet Cedar Grove Neighborhood
- Current roommates are males ranging in age from early 30's to early 60's. They enjoy spending time as a group playing board games and pursuing individual interests including playing with their Wii gaming system and watching DVDs. They also enjoy all their community has to offer including going to the movies, dining out, bowling, carnivals, parties, and more (pre-covid).



Bloomfield Group Home

- 1 Bedroom Available in a 6-Bedroom Group Home
- 24/7 Staff Supervision
- Large Single-Family Home in a Great Bloomfield Neighborhood
- Can accommodate residents with additional medical supports and aging needs
- Current roommates range in age from late 30's to late 60's. They enjoy spending time as a group celebrating birthdays and holidays, taking trips to Atlantic City, the bowling alley, and movie theater (pre-covid), and pursuing individual hobbies.



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.

The Arc Awarded

Nearly \$30,000 in Grants

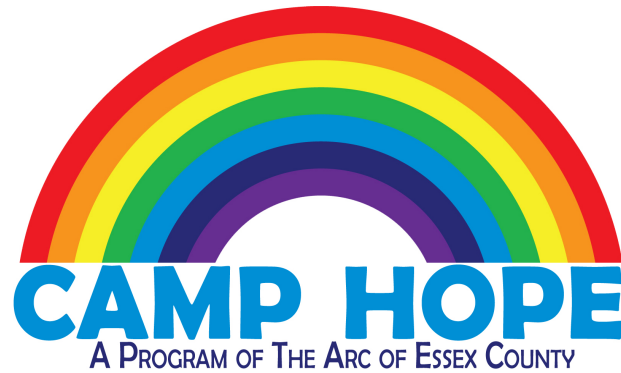
Thanks to grants awarded by the Orange Orphan Society, Lillian Schenck Foundation, and Catholic Human Services, The Arc of Essex County's Washington group home, Camp Hope, and Camp Hope's fee assistance program will receive needed funding and new equipment.

Awarding Camp Hope just under \$15,000, the Orange Orphan Society contributed \$10,000 towards the 2021 fee assistance program and just under \$5,000 towards the purchase of new tables and chairs for the camp's pool pavilion. These funds will enable low income children and adults from the Oranges and Maplewood to attend Camp Hope's 2021 season and provide additional seating when enjoying meals and rainy day activities.

The Lillian Schenck Foundation also made a generous contribution towards Camp Hope's fee assistance program. Utilizing \$3,000, additional low income children and adults from across Northern New Jersey will be able to attend Camp Hope after many families experienced financial hardship following a year of financial strain caused by COVID-19.

Finally, Catholic Human Services awarded The Arc an \$11,600 grant which will be used to purchase and install an all-encompassing 22kw generator for the Washington Group Home. The generator will ensure the safety and wellbeing of its residents in the event of a power outage.

The Arc of Essex County extends its utmost appreciation to these generous and long-standing foundations.



Stay Connected!



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