



The Arc[®]
of Essex County

EXPECT

MORE

Annual Report 2014-2015

A Letter from the Chief Executive Officer and Board President

Dear Friends and Members of The Arc Family,

As we reflect on our 66th year serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families, we can't help but notice a common thread throughout our history.

Change.

Since our inception in 1948, The Arc of Essex County has been dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with I/DD and supporting their families along the way. A lot has changed, for the better, in those 66 years. And...

The future is even brighter.

The end of our 2014-2015 fiscal year marked another impactful change for those we serve – movement from a contract-based system to a fee-for-service system. This change, which we've been preparing for all year, is yet another way individuals and their families are empowered with the freedom to choose the services that best fit their needs.

As we wrap a year of preparing for change, we welcome the opportunity to show individuals and their families that when it comes to their service provider, they should...

Expect More.

Everyone deserves the best, and The Arc of Essex County delivers on that expectation each and every day. Our compassionate, dedicated staff treats every person who walks through our doors with the upmost respect. By joining The Arc family, the best resources and staff join your team to help navigate state systems, access services, reach goals, and achieve dreams.

These are just a few of the ways we care for our Arc Family. Your ongoing support ensures that The Arc of Essex County continues to meet and exceed the expectations of the individuals and families we serve. Thank you for making it all possible.

Sincerely,



Linda Lucas

Linda Lucas
Chief Executive Officer



Brad K. Hopton

Brad K. Hopton
President



How Do We DELIVER MORE?

We are the **largest** service provider in Essex County & the **largest** chapter of The Arc in New Jersey, with services such as...



Two early intervention
programs impacting
200
children & families



NASET School of
Excellence since
2010

7 weeks of
summer
day camp



37
Unique classes, group
respite, trips, & recreation
programs for adults & kids



Transition services
provided to
23
schools in Essex County



10
Adult day programs



26
Adult residential
programs



Respite care amounting to **80,000 hours**
for **350** individuals & families in one year alone

Our **staff** are highly trained and highly **compassionate...**



Our trainers spend more than
1,400 hours
training program-support staff



* one person represents 25 consumers

Who ensure
1,500
people are engaged in their
communities & achieve their
dreams

Our programs are managed by executives with
65 years of collective experience with The Arc

75
CENTS

of every \$1 donated goes directly towards program expenses at the average U.S. non-profit.*



We operate more efficiently at The Arc of Essex County...

89
CENTS

of every \$1 donated goes directly towards program expenses.

*Source: CharityNavigator.org, Top 10 Best Practices of Savvy Donors, <http://bit.ly/1Z84VMM>

“Here at The Arc of Essex County, **financial stewardship** and **long-term sustainability** are top priorities as we plan for the future. When you donate, you invest in the impact we have on the lives of nearly 1,500 individuals and their families each and every day.”

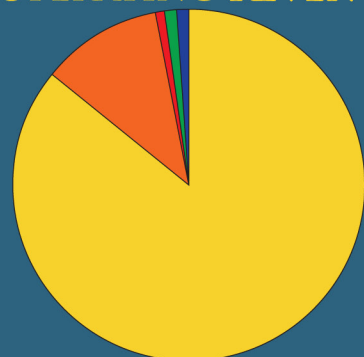
*Benjamin Proce, Chair, Finance Committee
The Arc of Essex County's Board of Directors*



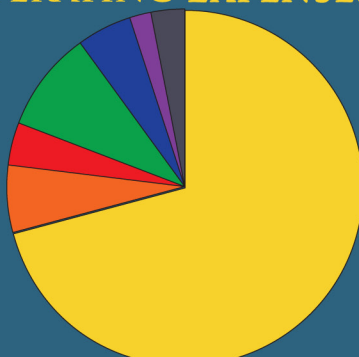
OPERATING REVENUE

VS.

OPERATING EXPENSES



\$25,927,231



\$25,545,884

STATE FUNDING

TUITION & FEES

CONTRIBUTIONS

MISCELLANEOUS

NET ASSETS RELEASED
FROM RESTRICTIONS

PERSONNEL EXPENSES

PROFESSIONAL FEES

SUPPLIES

FACILITY COSTS

TRANSPORTATION

DEPRECIATION

OTHER



JACKSON SHULKOWSKI

“We are so thankful that we have found The Arc of Essex County and the Stepping Stones Early Intervention Program and School. Our son started in early intervention at 7 months old and is now almost 5. He has benefitted from the therapy and instruction he receives. The support of The Arc and these programs have allowed our son to take his first steps this past year.

The teachers and therapists continue to push him to be all that he can be. His speech is emerging; he can now feed himself; he is toilet trained. These are all areas that will allow him to more easily be accepted in the community and enjoy his day-to-day activities. If you could see the smile on his face every day, you would understand how important these programs are to our family.”

- DEBBIE AND STEVE SHULKOWSKI



FELICIA RAINES

“Since infancy, our daughter Felicia has continued to take part in The Arc of Essex County's activities and programs including Camp Hope, recreation, and now Adult Day Services where she joins a community of friends each day while engaged in work activities. This makes her feel that she has value in the workplace, like her siblings, even collecting a paycheck.

Felicia recently took her first trip with The Arc to Ocean City, Maryland and thoroughly enjoyed herself. Felicia has developed a sense of organization and discipline through her activities with The Arc. She has also developed socialization skills through relationship building over the years with her peers. There are very few aspects of Felicia's life that The Arc has not touched in a positive way.”

- JO-ANN RAINES



“What I love about the **Stepping Stones School** is that the staff expects so much from the kids and they don’t put any limitations on them. They push the students to go beyond themselves. That’s what I want Micah to carry on. He shouldn’t just settle for the mundane; he should continue to excel and go beyond what anyone expects of him.”

- Sheryl Ware

When Sheryl Ware and her husband began searching for a school for their son Micah five years ago, they relied on recommendations from their early intervention physical therapist and gut reactions. They knew The Arc of Essex County’s Stepping Stones School was where Micah belonged almost immediately after setting foot in the school.

“When we went on the tour, we were really happy with what we saw,” said Sheryl whose son, Micah, began his final year at the Stepping Stones School in September 2015. “We loved that it felt like a family. Everyone was so warm and the kids seemed very happy and confident. We had a choice of another school, but we didn’t even bother going to check it out.”

During the tour, the Ware’s remember seeing students talking clearly and expressing themselves in ways she could only dream for her son. “If he could talk like that one day, it would all be worth it,” said Sheryl remembering her first impression of the school.

Since beginning his studies at Stepping Stones, the Ware’s have joyfully witnessed Micah hit developmental milestones they never thought

possible and become a confident, determined student. Not only is he talking like the children Sheryl and her husband saw during the tour, but his reading has taken off, and, through work with the physical therapist on staff, he can run smoothly and he recently learned to jump.

Sheryl attributes Micah’s success to the individualized approach the staff takes with each child. “They are not just another kid. To the staff, each child is special,” said Sheryl. “They take the kids’ personalities into account for how to reach them.”

“What I love about Stepping Stones is that the staff expects so much from the kids and they don’t put any limitations on them. They push the students to go beyond themselves. That’s what I want for Micah to carry on. He shouldn’t just settle for the mundane; he should continue to excel and go beyond what anyone expects of him,” said Sheryl. “If it wasn’t for everything The Arc of Essex County does and how they love the students, maybe he wouldn’t have achieved everything he’s achieved. Micah has surpassed our expectations.”

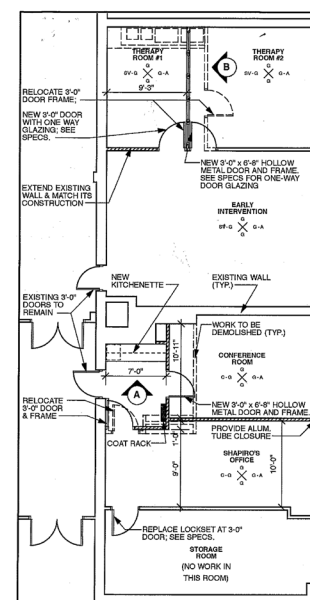
EDUCATION & EARLY CHILDHOOD OVERVIEW



The Arc of Essex County’s Department of Education and Early Childhood serves children with intellectual and developmental disabilities from birth to 10 years old and their families in Early Intervention and Education programs. Programs are designed to maximize the growth and development of children by supporting the advancement of motor, cognitive, physical, communication, and social skills. More than 90 trained staff and volunteers work with children and their families to provide the needed therapies and primary education which lay the foundation for future success. This is accomplished through:

- The Shapiro Center – an early intervention program based in the child’s natural setting (i.e. home or daycare)
- Stepping Stones Early Intervention – a center-based, private program which includes parent-support groups
- Stepping Stones School – a Department of Education Approved Private School for the Disabled, serving children ages 3-10

2014-2015 HIGHLIGHTS



- Expanded the Stepping Stones School footprint to the first floor of the Roseland building, adding two additional therapy rooms and a sensory room for early intervention
- The expansion also included a conference room and two office spaces to relocate The Shapiro Center early intervention program and Children’s Services programs including Life Management, the Home Assistance Program, and various respite services
- Delivered early intervention services to nearly 200 families through the Stepping Stones Early Intervention Program and The Shapiro Center
- Provided education to 30 students in The Stepping Stones School

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES OVERVIEW



The Arc of Essex County's Children and Family Services Department supports children with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as their families with a comprehensive system of programs designed to foster cognitive and physical development, teach and enhance communication and social skills, and support primary caregivers as they work to provide and advocate for their child, sibling, relative, or friend. The Arc of Essex County provides:

- Camp Hope, a seven week summer day camp
- Assistance to low-income families through the Home Assistance Program
- Group respite, individual respite, and recreation programs
- Parent workshops on various topics throughout the year

2014-2015 HIGHLIGHTS



- Provided more than 58,000 hours of respite care to 233 individuals and families throughout Essex County
- Provided recreation programs to nearly 200 individuals including 136 campers for Camp Hope's 58th season
- Supported 20 families through the Home Assistance Program, capping the year with a holiday celebration and feast

“When all of this happened with my daughter, God sent me a group of angels to help. It truly takes a village and **The Arc of Essex County is part of our village. If it wasn't for The Arc, Taz wouldn't have come as far as she has. Without The Arc, I don't know where I'd be.”**

- Tamika Agosto



Tamika Agosto knew her daughter Tazhane (Taz) would have to face many challenges in her life from the moment she was born. Taz suffered from a lack of oxygen to her brain during delivery and as she grew, Tamika knew she needed help. She enrolled Taz in early intervention services with The Arc of Essex County at the age of 2 and a half. The Arc has been a part of the Agosto family ever since.

Seeing what early intervention services did for Taz, Tamika continued with The Arc. Beginning when she was 6 years old, Taz started attending Camp Hope. She loved the activities and the pool. When the New Jersey Department of Children and Families cut funding, Tamika worked with staff from The Arc of Essex County to find additional resources and funding for Taz to continue to attend Camp Hope.

“The Arc fights for me. When DCF tried to cut funding, I wanted to give up. But the staff wouldn't let me,” recalled Tamika. **“If I have a**

problem, I call The Arc and within 10 minutes I'll hear back about whether or not they can help. Not one time have they told me they can't. They find other resources, helping hands. The Arc is my strength.”

Taz is now 19 years old. She continues to attend Camp Hope every summer. She is also enrolled in The Arc of Essex County's Saturday Group Respite and remains part of the Home Assistance Program. Taz has grown up with The Arc. From a rambunctious, spitfire at the age of 2 and a half to a happy, balanced 19 year old, The Arc and Tamika have seen her grow.

“When all of this happened with my daughter, God sent me a group of angels to help. It truly takes a village and The Arc of Essex County is part of our village. If it wasn't for The Arc, Taz wouldn't have come as far as she has. Without The Arc, I don't know where I'd be.”



“Greg comes home happy and he cannot wait to get on the bus in the morning. I don’t know where Greg would be if Bridges didn’t exist. I want **The Arc of Essex County to know that I appreciate everything they do and that their great work does not go unnoticed.”**

- Julie L.

Finding an environment where your child will flourish and grow as they transition to adult life can be filled with uncertainties. As Julie L.’s son Greg prepared to graduate in June 2013, Julie began an extensive search to find an environment where Greg could continue to grow and enjoy his community.

Greg had been homeschooled in a 1-to-1 environment from the time he was a child until he turned 18. He then moved to a 1-to-3 teacher to student school environment for the last three years in the education system. Beginning his transition three years before he aged out ensured that Greg and his family could learn what was needed to seamlessly transition to adult life.

Julie toured nearly 16 programs in Morris, Essex, and Union counties, searching for an appropriate program for Greg. The activities offered at many of the 1-to-6 staff to consumer ratio programs were appropriate, but Greg needed more support. The 1-to-3 programs were geared towards individuals who needed more medical care or behavioral support. Neither environment was appropriate for Greg.

Julie petitioned the state for Greg to attend The Arc of Essex County Day Program with a 1-to-1 support. Unfortunately, the petition

was denied, but wheels were already in motion at The Arc of Essex County to open a new day program, specifically designed for individuals on the Autism spectrum, with a lower staff-to-consumer ratio. When asked if Julie and her son were interested, the response was a resounding yes.

“I kept thinking, ‘I hope this is going to happen.’ I’m basing this decision on talking to people and knowing what my other bad choices were,” said Julie. “My only other choice was a home option. But I wanted to give him something more; something that was less isolated.”

The new program, Bridges, opened in October 2014, 16 months after Greg graduated. He was one of the first enrolled. To his family’s delight, Greg has not regressed and has adapted his skills to the new environment and team.

“Greg comes home happy and he cannot wait to get on the bus in the morning,” said Julie. “I don’t know where Greg would be if Bridges didn’t exist. I want The Arc of Essex County to know that I appreciate everything they do and that their great work does not go unnoticed.”

DAY SERVICES OVERVIEW



Adult Day Services support the wide variety of individual goals set by program participants (ages 21 and over) by providing an extensive variety of community programs and activities. The Arc of Essex County provides:

- 10 Adult Day Programs in Essex County
- Day habilitation, pre-vocational, career planning, group supported employment, community based supports, community inclusion services, and respite
- Specialized programs for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, seniors, and those with complex needs
- Service to more than 600 individuals and their families annually

2014-2015 HIGHLIGHTS



- Opened Bridges, a new program in West Caldwell, designed to ease the transition from school to Adult Services for new graduates with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Provided services to more than 600 individuals and their families, including more than 21,000 hours of respite care
- Hosted nearly 80 Day Program participants at “Shining Stars,” The Arc’s second annual Prom

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW



Residential opportunities provide individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities a supportive, home-like environment in an integrated community setting. Located throughout Essex County, residential programs provide the appropriate levels of support to help each resident enjoy their freedom, live responsibly with their housemates, and become immersed in their community. The Arc of Essex County provides:

- Housing at 26 community residential properties including single and multi family group homes, as well as supervised and supported living apartments/condos
- Community residential support to more than 140 individuals

2014-2015 HIGHLIGHTS



- Added six community residential living opportunities; two in West Orange and four in Livingston
- Acquired and began renovations on a new group home in Roseland. The home is expected to open in 2016 and will house four residents

“Life is only getting better for Joe with **The Arc of Essex County. I don’t know what more we could ask for. If nothing changed, I would be happy for the rest of my life.”**

- Larry Manfra



In the past 40 years, a lot has changed for Joe Manfra. But one thing has remained the same – The Arc of Essex County has been a constant in his life. Joe and his family were first introduced to The Arc more than 40 years ago. Since then, Joe has attended nearly every program offered through The Arc including education, recreation and camp, day programs, respite, and, as of two years ago, he became a resident in one of The Arc’s group homes.

The youngest of eight kids, Joe lived at home with his parents most of his life. After his mother passed away and his father’s health began to decline, The Arc of Essex County’s Day Program staff began to notice that Joe was struggling. He started missing program two to three times a week. When he did attend, he was often late or was picked up early. Kathy and Larry, Joe’s legal guardians, decided to make the call their parents never could. A room was open at The Arc of Essex County’s Belleville group home.

“Kathy, Cheryl, and I went to the group home probably saying to ourselves, ‘we’re not going

to accept this,” remembered Larry. “But once we met Joe Paris [the group home manager], it all just clicked. It started with Joe going for dinner, then a weekend, then it was jump on it, pull the trigger, and we did.”

Since moving into the group home, Joe has lost 50 pounds, he is taking better care of his hygiene, he eats right, and he has a better sleeping pattern. His family attributes his happiness to the love and care provided by The Arc family, the social activities available to him, and to being surrounded by his peers.

“Whatever our expectations were, the group home blew them away,” said Larry. “People in our old neighborhood ask me all the time ‘how’s Joe doing.’ I tell them, the best he’s ever been.”

“Life’s only getting better for Joe with The Arc of Essex County. I don’t know what more we could ask for, said Larry. “If nothing changed, I would be happy for the rest of my life.”



“It is very important for Adam to experience life. By attending **The Arc of Essex County’s** Livingston Day Program, he is able to do that. Everyday is a learning experience. When I pick Adam up after program, he tells me he wants more. The day is not long enough for him because there are so many activities to choose from. It is a perfect match.”

-Halina Erven

According to Halina Erven, her son Adam has a sixth sense for judging people. In the family’s two year search for a day program, there were no programs that lived up to their expectations and where Adam wanted to stay.

Per state protocol, the Division of Developmental Disabilities only provided Halina with a list of programs within Morris County, where the family resides. Yet, the Essex County line was just a few miles from their home. So, Halina went out on her own and found The Arc of Essex County’s Livingston Day Program.

“We took the tour with Melissa and at the end, Adam told me to go home. He was staying,” said Halina. “We knew it was a perfect fit because of the staff - they are very reassuring, caring, and they nurture the program attendees.”

Adam looks forward to going to the YMCA with his day program for basketball each week. He takes pride in his work with Meals on Wheels. And, through attending computer classes with his program at the local library, Adam has learned how to do things on his iPad his

parents never thought possible.

“When I pick Adam up after program, he tells me he wants more. If there are weather advisories on TV, he will hide the remote because he is afraid he won’t be able to go to program,” laughed Halina. “The day is not long enough for him because there are so many activities to choose from. It is a perfect match.”

Since attending The Arc of Essex County’s Livingston Day Program, Halina and her family have seen Adam grow and become more independent. Before attending program, Adam was nonverbal, relying on sign language, gestures, and a communication device. Now his mom says he is constantly making noises at home. He knows that when he gets to program, he has to hang up his coat and put his lunch away.

“For me, as a parent, it is a blessing to see he is going out in the community,” said Halina. “It’s a very important factor. Even though he is disabled, I still want him to experience life. By attending The Arc of Essex County Day Program, he is able to do just that.”

SELF DIRECTED SERVICES OVERVIEW



All day programs, group respite activities, and individual support services offered by The Arc of Essex County currently accept self-directed and fee-for-service individuals. The Arc will continue to expand and create new services to meet the needs of program participants and their families. The Arc is equipped to provide select specialized services to parents and professionals. Staff with advance training is available to assist with:

- Information and resource services
- Targeted training on an array of topics
- Service navigation
- Transition services

2014-2015 HIGHLIGHTS



- Fielded calls from more than 525 individuals and families looking for services
- Conducted more than 85 tours of our programs and services for interested families
- Provided transitional services from school to adult life to 17 individuals and families
- 105 percent increase in self-directed service participation over last fiscal year

Fundraising & Development



As we close out another fiscal year, we'd like to thank all of the donors who support the important services our program participants depend on, and ensure that the agency can continue to deliver more for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Through your memberships, contributions, tributes, and participation in our special events, more consumers are able to attend Camp Hope and Stepping Stones Early Intervention; group home furniture and household items can be replaced; and more families can participate in our Home Assistance Program holiday party, to name a few.

As we embark on another year of change, we look forward to your participation in our 18th Annual "Building Tomorrows 5K Run, 2-Mile Walk, and Family Fun Fest" on Saturday, April 16th in Brookdale Park. We also look forward to the return of the third-annual "Uncorked & Uncapped - Wine, Beer, and Food Fest" on Thursday, September 29th. Please check our website for additional details.

We hope you will consider renewing your investment in The Arc of Essex County in 2016. Because of your donations, individuals and families can continue to **expect more** as we constantly strive to **deliver more**.

Donor Acknowledgement

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
Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey

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.

City of Newark, Department of Economic and Housing Development
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Township of Irvington, Office of Community Development and Planning
United Way of Northern New Jersey
United Way of Millburn and Short Hills

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.

Bird Pharma Consulting, LLC
Ellen Blumenkrantz
Connell Foley, LLP
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Paul Wirth

Donor Acknowledgement

GOLDEN

We recognize these donors who have contributed between \$1,000 and \$4,999 in tribute to the 44 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.

The Arc of New Jersey
Benefit Management Solutions
Frederic and Sheree Bennett
Bob's Discount Furniture
CFS Certified Financial Services
Chevron Matching Gift Program
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Minerva Delgado
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Glen Taylor
TD Bank, N.A.
Township of Nutley
United Way of Bloomfield
Village Super Market, Inc.
Wakefern Food Corporation/ShopRite

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.

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Joseph Ascoli
Cheer Me Up Foundation
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Widener University

Donor Acknowledgement

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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We thank these wonderful donors who have made contributions of \$100 to \$249 to support our mission. They help to provide us with a solid financial base.

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Donna Wurster

The Arc of Essex County is grateful to the many companies, individuals, and organizations who have contributed "gifts in kind." These donations have gone directly to help our consumers or have been used to generate income at raffles, auctions, and various other events. These contributions are invaluable to our success.

We have done our very best to be as accurate and complete as possible. The individuals listed generously donated during the 2014-2015 fiscal year, extending from July 2014 to June 2015. If we have omitted anyone or placed you in an incorrect donor category, please accept our apologies. Call us at (973) 535-1181 ext. 1225 so that we may correct our records.

The Arc of Essex County's 2014-2015 Executive & Advisory Boards

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