

Challenger

A NEWSLETTER THAT CONNECTS, ENGAGES AND INFORMS

2023 Highlights!

Our new Inclusive Recreation Area was built. We love this new addition to our facility and the downtown community!



We celebrated our 70th Anniversary with a grand open house and community celebration!



We hosted our first annual Disability Transition Fair. Lot's of information was shared and connections made.



This beautiful and very colorful mural was painted on the side of our building for all to enjoy!



We welcomed our Day Habilitation program back to The Arc building. It's great to have everyone under one roof!



The Arc began providing IHH Services. IHH works with participants between the ages of five through adulthood who have serious emotional disturbances, mental health issues, or behavioral health diagnoses.

**Integrated
Health Homes**
PROGRAM

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Director of Behavioral Health Services

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Amy Stevens

GreenState Credit Union
VP, Member Assistance Center



A partner agency of the
United Way of East Central Iowa

From the Director's Desk

Hello Arc Friends and Family!

Happy New Year! Here at The Arc we are so excited for 2024 and all of the possibilities it brings for our agency and the people we serve. When we reflect over last year (our 70th anniversary!), we accomplished so much – building our first ever inclusive community recreation area; having a 70th celebration with ribbon cutting; enhancing our programming space; managing all programs on-site; having not one, not two, but three fundraisers hosted in our honor (2 golf tournaments and RAYGUN tees), and the list goes on. Our admin team is fully staffed and started professional development activities with our teams to invest in them and show our appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the people we serve.



Theresa Lewis

This year the excitement continues. We hope you will all join us and help us raise funds to support your loved ones at the 2024 Arc March. This year we are at Lindale Mall, bringing back some of the nostalgia and history of our signature event. In August, we will host our first touch-a-truck event at Kirkwood Community College, and we are adding another fundraiser in September (Curl Jam 2024) that is hosted to benefit The Arc by the Cedar Rapids Curling Club and Simmons Perrine Moyer Bergman PLC. In addition, we will be planning some family and community events in our new recreation area over the summer – stay tuned for the details of each special event.

In July of this year, we will begin a new Strategic Plan that will guide our direction for the next few years. Staff and Board have been actively involved in determining our priorities and goals so we can strengthen and grow our services to meet the needs of our communities. More details to come in the next Challenger edition.

The Arc appreciates each individual and family we have the privilege to serve. Thank you for choosing The Arc and taking this journey with us!

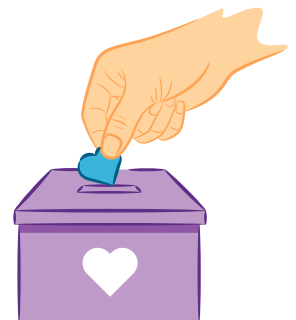
With gratitude,

Theresa Lewis
Executive Director

March is Developmental Disability Awareness Month

To help spread awareness, there will be Arc donation boxes at 4 area Subways. We thank everyone for their donations!

- 555 Gateway Pl SW • Cedar Rapids
- 3025 Mt Vernon Rd SE • Cedar Rapids
- 3601 29th Ave SW (Walmart) • Cedar Rapids
- 100 Hwy 1 • Mt. Vernon, IA



Advocacy Corner

Legislative Advocacy

Our friends with the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council (Iowa DD Council) have resources to help support your legislative advocacy efforts. Visit iowaddcouncil.org to learn more about the DD Council and read about some of the tools they have available below:



- **Guide to Iowa Legislature** includes information on how to navigate the Iowa legislature, a breakdown of all elected officials, and advocacy tools and resources. Visit [2023-2024 Legislative Guide](https://irp.cdn-website.com/dc8e72bb/files/uploaded/2023-2024%20Legislative%20Guide%20(Updated).pdf) ([https://irp.cdn-website.com/dc8e72bb/files/uploaded/2023-2024%20Legislative%20Guide%20\(Updated\).pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/dc8e72bb/files/uploaded/2023-2024%20Legislative%20Guide%20(Updated).pdf)) to learn more about Iowa's legislative process.
- **Bill Tracker** is an easy-to-use online tool to track bills of interest for persons diagnosed with a disability in the current legislative process. Visit [Bill Tracker](https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-tracker) (<https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-tracker>) to review current bills. By selecting a specific bill, users can see the status, committee, and recent action of each bill.
- **Bill of the Week** highlights a bill or topic of importance to Iowans with disabilities, their caregivers and community members each week. Visit [Capitol Snapshot](https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-of-the-week) (<https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/bill-of-the-week>) to review this week Bill of the Week and past weeks of this legislative session.
- **Take Action Center** provides an easy-to-use tool to contact your State and Federal officials. Visit [Take Action Center](https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/take-action-center) (<https://www.iowaddcouncil.org/take-action-center>) and select '**Contact Your State Officials**' or '**Contact Your Federal Officials**', enter your home address, and utilize the available form to share your thoughts with the officials representing you.

Let's Chat

Join The Arc for our new series "**Let's Chat**". A 10-minute series connecting individuals diagnosed with a disability, their caregivers, and community members with professionals on topics impacting the disability community.

Let's Chat!

We would like to thank John Speer, Chief Administrator of Grant Wood Area Education Agency for sharing what the AEA is, how AEA teams across Iowa are supporting students in need, and why those services are vital to our state. To view our conversation with John visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrYJiwKcoDg>.

We would also like to thank Chris Ackman, Communications and Volunteer Manager for Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP). Chris shares the services HACAP offers, current challenges facing Iowans, and why people should care. To view our conversation with Chris visit: <https://youtu.be/DJ6xFku220w>

In addition to our new series, visit our [YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/@thearcof-eastcentraliowa6376) (<https://www.youtube.com/@thearcof-eastcentraliowa6376>) to watch past trainings and subscribe for future content. Past trainings include:

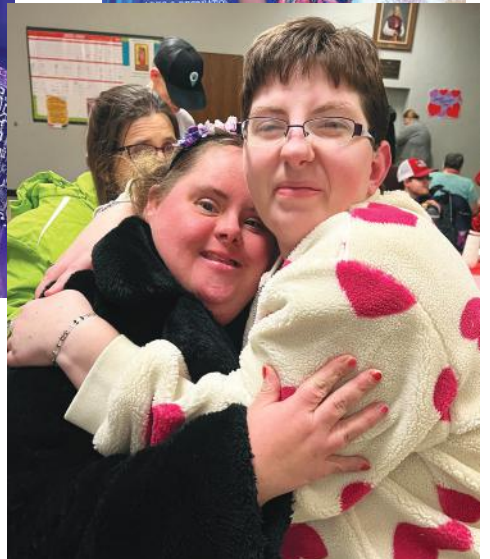
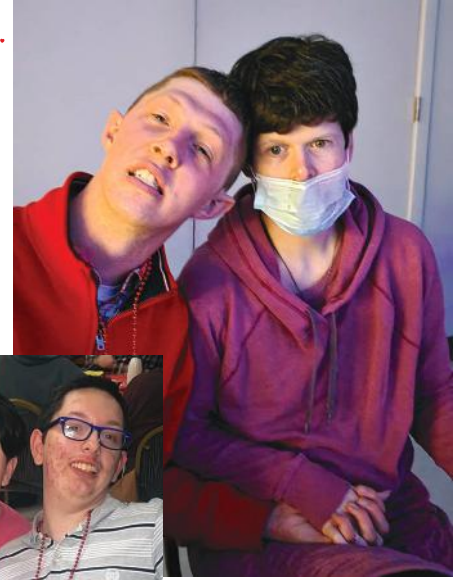
- [Abuse Awareness Presentation](#)
- [Applying for SSI & SSDI with Frank Varvaris](#)
- [Estate Planning with Frank Varvaris](#)
- [Sexual Assault & Grooming Training with Riverview Center](#)
- [5 W's of Voting](#)

Also, be sure to **LIKE** our [Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/arceci/) (<https://www.facebook.com/arceci/>) and [Subscribe to our Email List](#). (Go to arceci.org and at the bottom you will find "Email Subscription") to stay up to date with The Arc and see new content as it is released.

Services Spotlight

Sweetheart Dance

After taking a few years off due to Covid, The Arc's Annual Sweetheart Dance is back! Friday, February 16, over 150 Arc friends danced the night away at St. Matthew's Church. The dance floor was full of smiles and awesome dance moves. We look forward to hosting more Arc dances soon.



Welcome To The Arc



Hi, I'm Ray Acker and I'm the new Employment Specialist.

I have been with The Arc for almost 5 years. I previously worked with the Dayhab program and then helped with the Virtual Dayhab program during COVID.

I live with my wife, Haley, in Blairstown with our 2 dogs, Chloe and Cali. In my free time, I enjoy watching sports and hanging out with our dogs. I'm looking forward to this new position and helping our individuals achieve their goals.

Hi, I'm Alicia Stratford and I'm the new Direct Care Supervisor.

I just recently came from ABA Clinics. I have worked at Systems Unlimited, Linn County Options, and REM.

I have 3 sons and 3 huskies. I support local music in my free time. I am very excited to be at The Arc!



Arc March

Are you ready to help?

The Arc of East Central Iowa's annual Arc March is not only a festive and joyful occasion where we come together to celebrate everyone in our Arc community, Arc March is also a vital fundraising event that helps us bridge funding gaps in our programs and services. Each year we lean on everyone in our Arc family to help make this event a success.

Here are some ways you can help The Arc March be our most successful event yet!

- Sign up! Buy the t-shirt! Plan to join us on Saturday, April 6th at Lindale Mall from 8:00-10:00 AM!
- Set up a fundraising team! Do you know the top three teams win some fabulous prizes?
- Tell YOUR story to your friends and family of why The Arc is an important resource for you.
- Create a Facebook fundraiser.
- Host your own special event ahead of Arc March with all proceeds going to Arc March. A lemonade stand? A chili supper? Sell Shamrocks?
- Create an event at your office.
- Invite friends and family to come to Arc March.

The possibilities are endless. We thank you in advance for your support, your enthusiasm and your creative ideas that will make this year's event one for the record books!



The Arc's Aktion Club

Aktion Club is a service club for adults with disabilities and is sponsored by the Cedar Rapids Kiwanis Club. The Arc's Aktion Club meets the first Thursday of every month to do a service project. In February they filled baggies of laundry detergent and took them to Geneva Towers to help residents with laundry costs. If you know someone who would be interested in joining the club, please contact Jenny Bosking at jbosking@arceci.org to learn more.



Participant Spotlight



Jaquan Carney

About Me.

I am 17 years old and live in Cedar Rapids. I love animals! Cats and dogs are my favorite.

Favorite Arc Activities?

When at The Arc I love helping staff wash dishes and sweep.

Favorite Arc Memory?

I really enjoyed hanging out with Arc staff and friends and seeing Santa at the CRANDIC holiday event.

Favorite Hobby?

I'm an artist! I love to draw and color in my coloring books.

Favorite Outdoor Activities?

I really enjoy just being outdoors and I really enjoy going to water parks in the summertime!

Giving to The Arc for Someone Special

Donations to any organization in honor of someone can be a meaningful and impactful way to celebrate or remember that person while also contributing to a cause they care about. It's a lovely way to make a meaningful tribute, express admiration, or even raise awareness to a cause. During the holiday season, The Arc of East Central Iowa was deeply grateful for the generosity from our friends and supporters who contributed to our annual campaign. Your gifts will be used to purchase supplies, pay our direct-care staff, keep our building operating safely and much more. Some of our nearly 200 gifts came with a message of support for someone. We are so appreciative of gifts given with a purpose of support and also given with someone special in mind.

In honor of:

Sammy Herkelman
Eloise Boals (4)
Roger, Oline & Jake Stigers
John Philip Mitchel
Chris Johnson

Tommy Boone
Mary Jane & Doris Donohue
Brayden P
Dave Harris
Emma Wilkinson

The Bosking Family
Tyler Smothers
Khloe Lehman

In memory of:

Paul J Jorick Jr
Ethan Mortensen

Nicholas
Staci and Amy Rettenmeier (2)

Donal Ferris
Sarah Wilharm

Thank You 2023 Annual Campaign Donors

Terry & Johanna Abernathy, John & Madonna Albright, Tom & Kathleen Aller, Alliant Energy, Steve & Mary Beth Allsop (Voice of Hope Foundation), Eric & Cynthia Anderson, Ruth Armstrong, Judi & Jeff Barta, Sheryl Bass, Mark Bauermeister, Tom Beamish, Joshua Bean, Robert Becker, Jared Roach & Amy Belice, Jim & Rachelle Bell, Benchmark, Inc, Kerri & Terry Benda, Dave Berger (Climate Engineers, Inc.), Bethany Lutheran Women's Guild, Dean & Teri Billick, Diane Bloomhall, Jenny & Steve Bosking, Peter & Joann Bryant, Lavern & Audrey Busse Foundation, June Cach, Lesley Caven, Stephen & Kimberly Cole, Ray & Mary Collins, James Cone, Libby Slappey & Charles Crawley (Slapey Family Foundation), Cyber Grants, Janie Dawson, Mike & Karen Delaney, Chris Stebral & Jody Donaldson, Kevin & Anne Downey, Mike & Jan Drahozal, Bernard Drahozal, Patricia Drumbarger, Mike & Cindy Dunn, Jon & Dina Dusek, Haley Edinger, Brian Fagan, Jessica Fahey, Fairfax State Savings Bank, Jeannette Fauchier, Dale & Judy Fitzgibbons, Amy & Patrick Fleming, Marjorie Fletcher, Sharon Fuller, Lisa & Andre Gallet, General Mills, Rebecca Geraty (Rebecca S Geraty Living Trust), Faye Gerner, James Goalder, Karen & Alejandro Gomez, May Gortner Charitable Trust, Dave & Diane Graham, James & Valerie Gray, James Griffin (Crescent-Janko Masonic Foundation), Dave & Sharon Harris, Frances Hatfield, Ann Hatfield, Eric & Ann Hearn, Carol Hills (The Jared & Carol Hills Foundation), Sabrina Hootman, Virginia

You Make a Difference

Thank you for all of your continued generous contributions to The Arc. This edition of the Challenger recognizes volunteers, donors and members who generously supported The Arc from November 2023 through January 2024.

Thank You

General Donations

Mel Atringa, Aegon Transamerica Foundation, Aldi, Alliant Energy, Andrew Bellagamba, Applebee's Neighborhood Bar & Grill, BladeWorks, Jane Bockenstedt, Cargill, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights, Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, City of Cedar Rapids, Collins Aerospace, CRBT, CrowdStrike, Jade Groen, Todd Henry, Rebekah Hochstedler, Ruth Hojka, Ann Jeffries, John Deere, Justice Electric, Sara Kelley, Jeffrey Keslar, Knights of Columbus #3893, Tracey Koffron, Patty Lynott, David Maier & Matt McGrane, McGrath, MidAmerican Aerospace, Laurel Murphy, Karen Muters, Becky Olsem (Metro Studios), Vickie Ozburn, Leslie and Matthew Petersen Fund of the GCRCF, Susan Polglaze, James Potts, Dave Radack, RAYGUN, Raytheon, Dale Rettenmeier, Jess Rockwell, Kristin Schaefer, Anthony Schwendinger, Shruthi Singh, Shelly Strellner, Joseph Terfler, Cheryl Tlusty-Marsh, Natalia Vorobtsov, Clint Wade, Linda Wiersema, Kim Wilkerson (Wilkerson Consulting Group), Blake Wilkinson, Frank & Jody Wilson, Jagdish Zagade

Memorials

Joanne Bishop

Jeff & Tammy Dunbar, Cheryl Ewert, D & G Fritz, Tami Huffman, Marjorie Wysong

2023 Annual Campaign Donors contined

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Andrew Flood

Michael Flood

Tony Haugh

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Mark David Randall

Jaclyn Noonan

Sara Smith

Ryan Smith

Cody Whittaker

Cheri Whittaker

Volunteers

Hours - 33

Kristin Aller, Adam Brown, Jeff Corrigan, Jessica Fahey, Terese Fisher, Maria Gaffney, Teri Gibson, Nate Haas, Brad Hauge, Christopher Johnson, Shelby Kobliska, Cherri Lock, Carol Meade, Ben Mulholland, Michael Neuerburg, Danielle Rodriguez, Kristin Schaefer, Erica Smothers, Mindy Sorg, Amy Stevens, Shelly Strellner, Blake Wilkinson

Membership

Arc Angel

Dennis & Rebecca McCollough, Mark & Denise Mitchell

Arc Builder

Teri Gibson, Mark Ogden & Iris Muchmore, Suzanne Myers, Scott & Jackie Nau

Arc Friend

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For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

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The Arc of East Central Iowa

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Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Phone: 319-365-0487
Fax: 319-365-9938
www.arceci.org

Address Service Requested

Mission Statement

The Arc of East Central Iowa empowers individuals with disabilities and their families to engage in lifelong opportunities to live, learn, work, play, and advocate with full dignity and inclusion in their communities.

Make a Difference
Donate at www.arceci.org



Join us as we walk together to raise awareness about intellectual and developmental disabilities at the **27th Annual Arc March!**

April 6th, 2024
Lindale Mall

8:00 AM - Activities Begin | 9:30 AM - Walk Starts



Go to www.arceci.org for details on this event or to make a donation!



Register by March 17th to guarantee a t-shirt!

• **CELEBRATING THE ABILITIES IN ALL OF US!** •