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Local Non-Profits Join With Local Businesses to Create Accessible, Inclusive Playground for Children

*Montgomery Alliance for Community Giving Donates Equipment
The Arc of Montgomery County Contributes Construction Funds*

Silver Spring, MD—Building an accessible, inclusive playground is a challenging and expensive project, but one which **Montgomery Alliance for Community Giving** is turning into a reality for The Arc of Montgomery County’s Karasik Child Care Center, Montgomery Primary Achievement Center (MPAC) and Sligo Woods Preschool programs in Silver Spring. Montgomery Alliance has collected over \$25,000 in donations for *“Swing Into Action for Children with Special Needs.”* These contributions will go toward new equipment designed to improve the health and fitness of children *with and without disabilities* and to allow all children to play together in one space.

The Arc of Montgomery County has matched these contributions, purchasing additional equipment and making structural improvements to the playground, including landscape grading and installation of a new tricycle path. These projects will be completed by **Sandoval Landscape Company**, which is donating labor and plant materials. Guy Williams and **DCA Landscape Architects** have donated a complete project development plan, including full landscape design. *These private non-profits and businesses, plus individual donors, are working together to make a long-term investment in the health and well-being of all children in our community.*

The project involves the removal of three outdated pieces of equipment, old asphalt and mulch from the entire playground. The area has been graded to address poor drainage issues, and two new pieces of equipment installed. A tricycle path with pedestrian crosswalks rings the perimeter, and special sensory stations have been installed in a grassy area adjacent to the path. Child-friendly trees, shrubs

and other plantings will be installed to provide shade and soften the areas closest to the building. Eventually, a new storage shed and fence will be installed, completing the project.

The Arc of Montgomery County empowers individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with lifelong opportunities to live, learn, work and play with dignity, freedom and full inclusion in the community. The Arc's programs in Silver Spring include:

- **MPAC**, which provides special education and related services to students 2-4 years old with developmental delays, autism, intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities;
- **Karasik Child Care Center**, which provides educational and childcare services to children 2-8 years old, with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities; and
- **Sligo Woods Preschool**, a community preschool which shares afternoon programming with MPAC to help children become acquainted and comfortable with individual differences at an early age.

In addition to these children's programs, The Arc provides residential and vocational services for over 400 adults daily, and referrals for information and resources to over 3,000 Montgomery County individuals and families monthly.

Montgomery Alliance for Community Giving helps sustain the work of organizations in Montgomery County which improve the lives of neighbors in need. Each year, they choose to sponsor one project and raise money from private donors to bring it to fruition. This annual campaign provides an opportunity for residents and business to invest in strengthening their community by financially supporting Montgomery County human service non-profit agencies.

A celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony featuring the children in action on the new playground will be held Friday, November 12 at 10 am at 10611 Tenbrook Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

Individuals from the community who would like to attend should register on The Arc of Montgomery County's home page, www.thearcofmontgomerycounty.org.

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