

## 2021 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS RECOGNITION WEEK

Every day, Direct Support Professionals foster life skills, create opportunities for success, and provide compassionate and steady helping hands for the people they support. The Arc Montgomery County was honored to thank more than 250 DSPs during Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week, September 12-18, 2021!

The week began with volunteers from JCPenney at Westfield Wheaton teaming up with people we support to assemble and pack gift boxes. The personalized bright orange boxes were filled with a water bottle, lip balm, and a gift card. The gifts were then hand-delivered by employees and board members throughout the week.

The fun continued virtually with a Global Cultural Attire Showcase, where DSPs were invited to submit photos sharing their cultural pride and personal style. Submissions represented cultures from across the world, including Cameroonian, Indian, Hausa and Nigerian dress, and more.

The festivities didn't end there; DSPs received random acts of recognition through prize giveaways all week long. With the help of The Arc Montgomery County's community supporters, we gave away two JBL Bluetooth speakers, a Kindle e-reader, an Amazon Echo Show, an HD77 Bluetooth speaker, a classic Keurig coffee maker, and a Cosori 5.8-quart air fryer.

DSPs truly are the backbone and the heartbeat of our organization, and we are grateful for all they do every week!



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**The Arc Montgomery County**

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**FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



Fall always reminds me of new beginnings; I guess it's because of the excitement I remember as a child as a new school year began. In my mind, fall is when everything begins again.

This fall at The Arc, we have some new beginnings. The new Engagement Department, which will oversee fundraising, communications and volunteers, has hit the ground running. We have also begun work on our new Strategic Plan.

I'm pleased to announce that we have partnered with the Center for Leadership and Innovation at UMBC to develop a Strategic Plan that will guide us as we navigate challenges left by the pandemic and upcoming changes to the DDA service delivery system. We hope to engage our stakeholders in the development of the Plan and will keep you informed of our progress.

We have a lot of work ahead of us and we have strong teams in place to get the work done. Together, with your support, we will achieve a strong new beginning for The Arc Montgomery County!

*-Daria Cervantes, CEO*

Discussions

with

Daria

**Where We Are  
and Where We Are Headed**

An opportunity **for people supported by The Arc Montgomery County** to engage directly with CEO Daria Cervantes.

**Friday, November 5 at 3 pm**, Daria will host a Zoom discussion for about 45 minutes, including time for your questions.

To register visit our website calendar, at [www.TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org](http://www.TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org).

Email [Engagement@arcmontmd.org](mailto:Engagement@arcmontmd.org) or call 301.984.5777 x2218 with questions.

**NEW ENGAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**  
*Dedicated, Motivated, Excited!*

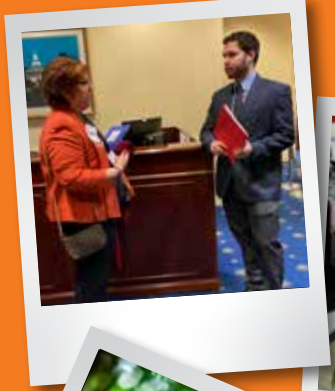
The newly created Engagement Department is part of an organizational effort to streamline volunteer support, communications, outreach and fundraising. This six-person team—comprised of a Director, Associate Director, Senior Communications Manager, Development Associate, Volunteer Manager and Graphic Designer—will collaborate with key Administration and Program employees, along with the Board of Directors and members, in advancing the organization's mission to provide inclusive and community-based programming and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

The Engagement Department is responsible for executing dynamic events designed to engage and involve employees, Board members, individuals we support and their families, the community, local elected officials, business owners and potential donors. Additionally, this team will craft communications and manage social media efforts, keeping various audiences up-to-date on community events, programs and key issues.

Alternative opportunities are being explored within the Engagement Department to safely connect volunteers with the people we support through virtual or socially-distanced efforts. Furthermore, this team will encourage donor support in creative and impactful ways—time, goods, services and people power, in addition to monetary contributions, can and will make a difference!

# #ADayInTheLife

Peek into a day with the amazing people of The Arc Montgomery County. Visit [@TheArcMontgomeryCounty](#) on Instagram to see folks you know, meet new friends, and learn how The Arc works for the whole community!



## CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

KFICCC currently supports 102 children, and there are 12 students participating in the After All program. KFICCC teachers are using a new curriculum—Teaching Strategies The Creative Curriculum®—and have been learning the program through a series of virtual trainings. This comprehensive and research-based curriculum features exploration and discovery as a way of learning.

Banners and signage are being developed to promote enrollment openings at KFICCC, along with a Family Referral Bonus program. To kick off the back-to-school season, JCPenney generously donated backpacks (pictured right), which were distributed to students at KFICCC and After All.



## EMPLOYMENT & DAY SERVICES

As COVID-related restrictions begin to ease, programs are starting to reopen. Around 30 people are regularly participating in their pre-pandemic activities. A phased-in reopening schedule, which will begin on or about November 1, 2021, is being developed, with plans to move forward as long as it is safe to do so and COVID rates remain low. Biweekly updates are being provided as reopening plans are evaluated and modified.

Most employment sites are fully operational, however, some people supported have chosen not to return to work during the pandemic. DSPs from the day program continue to cover daytime hours in our Community Living homes. Virtual supports, as well as limited in-home supports, are also continuing.



## INCLUSIVE LIVING SERVICES

Inclusive Living Services continues to support 115 people in Community Living, and 108 people in personal supports. No new COVID cases have occurred since July, and employees are awaiting guidance on vaccine booster shots for people supported.

Through a corporate donation from A.R. Bancroft Community Development Corporation, new common area furniture was purchased for six homes. Two homes have received their furniture, and the others will be delivered in the next few weeks.

Personal supports are being provided in people's homes, virtually, and in the community services. Some families are continuing to provide supports as independent contractors.

## ADMINISTRATION

The Arc Montgomery County Headquarters at Calhoun Place reopened to employees on July 1, 2021. While working at HQ, all people (both vaccinated and non-vaccinated) are required to wear masks. Visitors to HQ are encouraged to make appointments, but walk-ins will be assisted. All visitors are required to use the COVID screening device and wear masks to enter HQ.

The FY21 financial audit was completed, with no findings or significant deficiencies noted. Migration to Office 365 continues for Headquarters employees as new software becomes available. The Center for Leadership and Innovation at UMBC has been awarded the contract for our upcoming Strategic Planning process.

Effective September 13, 2021, Human Resources launched a new in-person onboarding and orientation process.

Training will be completed over three days and include the "Inclusion is Not a Place" class and IT training. Upon completion of orientation requirements, including pre-employment trainings, new hires will receive a \$100 bonus.

In order to protect our workforce and the people we support, The Arc Montgomery County will move forward with mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all employees. By November 15, 2021, all employees, regardless of their position, must be vaccinated against COVID-19 with either two doses of Pfizer or Moderna or one dose of Johnson & Johnson. New hires who have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 will be asked to bring proof of vaccination to orientation and will receive a \$25 stipend.



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*These individuals and organizations generously donated from January 1–June 30, 2021*

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## Tributes

**In Memory Of** Susan Alexander, Esperanza Barrios, Nancy Clarke, John Estampador, Dorothy Kent, Judith Pauley ■

**In Honor Of** Kari Borgealt, Daria Cervantes, Mark Cloherty, The Evans Family, KFICCC Teachers, Respite, Gia Richmond, Room 3 & Room 14 Teachers, Liron Sharon ■

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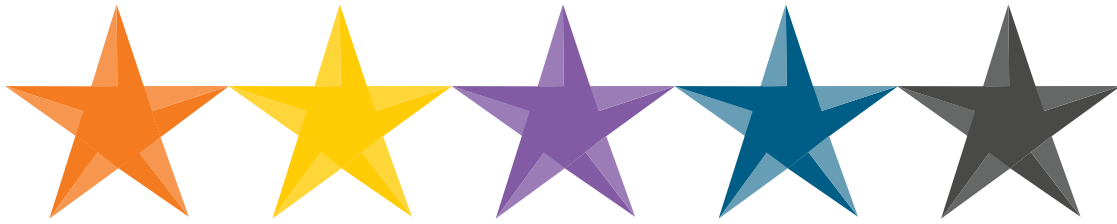
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# FY21 Community, Staff & Volunteer Awards

## Going beyond expectations. Rising above obstacles.

On October 6, 2021, special awards were presented to community partners, volunteers and employees who demonstrated their commitment to supporting individuals and families affected by intellectual and developmental disabilities. These unsung heroes are making a difference in people's lives and we extend our thanks to each of them!

### SELF-ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

#### Empowering Partners

Mat Rice & Aileen O'Hare

Mat and Aileen are the driving force behind Empowering Partners. They raise awareness about the value of self-advocacy, and work to strengthen self-advocacy groups throughout the state.



### COMMUNITY PARTNER

#### The Greater Silver Spring Civitan Club

The Greater Silver Spring Civitan Club works to make literacy accessible to all and to assist individuals with IDD to live fuller lives. They have helped create initiatives with positive impacts within Montgomery County.



### PUBLIC SERVICE

#### Dr. Michael Greenberg

Dr. Greenberg's services to the IDD and provider communities was never more important than during the pandemic. He worked to ensure that people with IDD and their DSPs were kept at the forefront of Montgomery County's response to COVID-19 and vaccine roll out plans.



### ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

#### The Gaither Team

Jacquelyn Martin, Solomon Merugu, Divine Metuge, Michael Odum

Divine, Michael, Solomon, and Jacquelyn are a vigilant team of advocates! They recently worked together to make sure one of the people they support received the medical care he urgently needed. Their united front, communication, and intuition helped to save his life.



### PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR

#### John Gould

John Gould was a steadfast advocate and concerned citizen who firmly believed that his voice made a difference. By leaving a portion of his estate to The Arc, he continues to further our inclusion mission.



### BOARD MEMBER

#### Stephanie Katz

Stephanie Katz, Past President, has served on The Arc Montgomery County's Board of Directors since 2014. She is committed, insightful, and innovative – a natural leader. Stephanie goes above and beyond to bring in new volunteers, donors, sponsors, and employees.





### YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

#### Our Lady of Good Counsel High School

Each year, OLGCHS student volunteers do yard work at KFICCC during their family service days. Over the course of nearly ten years, they have volunteered more than 1,300 hours of service.



### VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

#### Colleen Scanlon

Colleen Scanlon organizes Holy Cross Catholic Church's Christmas Giving Tree program. Last holiday season, she creatively adapted the program so that the people we support had gifts to open during the holidays.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

#### William Astrove

Known at KFICCC as Mr. Billy, he helped students ease back into the classroom during the pandemic. He is patient and creative with the students, helping them grow and succeed, and families praise his positive outlook.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR INCLUSIVE LIVING SERVICES

#### Bernadette Fontem

Bernadette goes above and beyond when caring for the people she supports. She is persistent in advocating, providing reassurance and comfort to people supported and their families.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR EMPLOYMENT & DAY SERVICES

#### Mbenda Faye

Mbenda is dedicated and admirable use; and in the rise of COVID-19, she stepped up and volunteered to work at Montgomery County Correctional Facility. She is loved and respected by the staff at the facility and the people she supports.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

#### Richard See

Richard has not only helped transformed the Urban Thrift storefront, he has also secured partnerships with major vendors, and helped obtain a grant to make significant infrastructure and equipment upgrades to the store.



### RISING STAR

#### Emily Bloch

Emily started working with KFICCC in the spring of 2021. She is willing to go to any classroom where she may be needed, and eager to work her way up as a teacher assistant. She is patient, kind, thoughtful, and a team player.



### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

#### Caroline Barrett

Carrie is an excellent employee, a team player, and always goes above and beyond to lend a hand. When the pandemic hit, Carrie worked tirelessly to help The Arc Montgomery HR team navigate through the uncharted territory.



### PRESIDENTS AWARD

#### Daria Cervantes

Daria Cervantes was asked to lead The Arc Montgomery County during an extremely challenging time. She faced tremendous obstacles, including the need to protect people supported and employees from COVID-19, and a significant financial deficit. She made critical decisions and implemented new policies which position the organization for future success, and offered reassurance to all constituents, gaining and holding their trust.



## IMPROVING EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION

In September 2021, The Arc Montgomery County launched its Group Text Messaging platform. This new service is designed to supplement email and other communications, keeping employees connected and informed. Messages can be sent to all employees or select groups of employees, providing real-time and immediate access to information.

In addition to text messaging, the Engagement Department is working to ensure that employees are aware of upcoming events, trainings and key news. All employees, as members of the organization, also receive monthly e-news communication and two printed newsletters each year.

Hard copies of the updated Employee Handbook were recently distributed and will be available electronically through ADP and the website portal. News from The Arc Montgomery County is being regularly posted and updated on the ADP homepage.

Two **Discussions with Daria** Zoom webinars were held exclusively for employees on Friday, October 22, 2021, and Saturday, October 23, 2021, providing them an opportunity to engage directly with CEO Daria Cervantes.

All of these efforts support The Arc Montgomery County's strategic goal of becoming the employer of choice by ensuring employees have the information they need and opportunities to feel valued in their roles. Additional improvements will continue to be implemented over the coming year.





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# Coffee & Conversation

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## THANK YOU SPONSORS, SPEAKERS & SUPPORTERS!

On May 25, 2021, The Arc Montgomery County held its first **Coffee & Conversation** virtual business-to-business networking event. Over 100 attendees participated in educational workshops, interacted with local business leaders, Board Members and Leadership, and learned about the organization's programs and services.

Attendees who registered prior to May 14 received a goodie box to enhance their event experience. The event was a success, thanks to our knowledgeable presenters and enthusiastic attendees!

Through contributions from sponsors and supporters, this program raised nearly \$60,000 to continue The Arc's mission connecting people of all ages and abilities with their communities to build inclusive and fulfilling lives.

The Arc Montgomery County is seeking sponsors for next year's Coffee & Conversation, on **Wednesday, March 30, 2022**. Contact Dawn Draayer, Director of Engagement, at [DawnD@arcmontmd.org](mailto:DawnD@arcmontmd.org) or 301.984.5777, x1274 for more information.

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## Your Membership Counts!

Your membership creates positive change in your community, and helps The Arc stand beside your children, neighbors, friends, and colleagues as they strive for complete inclusion in every aspect of community life. Because of your membership, we are able to provide support services for nearly 1,100 children, youth, adults, seniors, and their families every day.

- Fully-inclusive child care with preschool, special education, and nursing support
- Youth after-school and summer programming
- Work skills training and other employment services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
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- Disability benefits counseling
- Coordination of respite care for unpaid, live-in caregivers of children/adults with disabilities and frail senior citizens

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*At The Arc, everyone's talents and abilities are appreciated and celebrated!*

## FY2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The newest Board members were voted into office at the membership meeting on June 24. Voting was conducted using electronic ballots (hard-copy ballots were available upon request). The Officers and Directors for FY2022 are listed below. James Seaton and Lizette Hoffman were elected after previous appointments, and Katherine O'Connell was elected to a first term.

### Officers

Eugene Mark, Jr., President  
 Raymond Davidson, Vice President  
 Philip Golrick, Secretary  
 Sarah Cato, Treasurer  
 Stephanie Katz, Past President

### Directors

|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Kerinne Browne  | Katherine O'Connell |
| Flavia Favali   | Aileen O'Hare       |
| Kathy Ghiladi   | John Olenick        |
| John Gould      | Mark Rittenberg     |
| Lizette Hoffman | James Seaton        |
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## THE ARC MARYLAND 2020 AWARD WINNERS





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## APPENDIX K FLEXIBILITIES

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration developed a document titled Appendix K to accelerate emergency changes to home and community-based services waiver operations. This document allowed implementation of several critical flexibilities which helped to keep The Arc and other providers operational and to ensure people supported and employees were as safe as possible.

Flexibilities offered included the following:

- Providing day habilitation supports in the family home and remotely;
- Retainer payments to providers even when a full day of service was not possible;
- Support with Personal Protective Equipment and assistive technology costs;
- Telehealth services for nursing support;
- Temporary waiver of some training requirements and granting of extensions for expiring training certifications;



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In addition, Appendix K provided the option for family members to provide support services and for services to be provided in alternative settings such as the family's home instead of the provider-licensed site.

Even though the Federal state of emergency is still in place, the state of emergency announced last year by Governor Hogan has ended in Maryland. This means the flexibilities available in Maryland through DDA's Appendix K are coming to an end. Effective December 31, 2021, family members will no longer be eligible for payment when providing support services.

We anticipated this outcome for later in 2022, but recent discussions between provider organizations and the Maryland Department of Health have verified this accelerated timeline. As we work through this process, our teams will assist families in understanding options and transitioning people supported to virtual services and/or new staff.

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## URBAN THRIFT GETS A FACELIFT!

Like many retailers, Urban Thrift was closed at the beginning of the pandemic. Store Manager Richard See used this time to remodel, reorganize and re-inventory, creatively revamping the store to allow for steadily increasing sales when Urban Thrift reopened to the public. In addition, Richard's involvement with the Kensington-Wheaton Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Silver Spring Civitan Club helped secure a major grant from the Foundation for Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities which was used for infrastructure and store equipment upgrades. The physical renovations are well under way and should be completed in the coming months.



**Fun fact!**  
Did you know that Urban Thrift also carries new items through partnerships with major vendors like Macy's, Target, Manna Food Center, and World Market?



**FCIDD** Foundation for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities



Kensington's Best Kept Secret!

# URBAN THRIFT


**Great Styles • Great Finds • Great Deals • Great Cause**

10730 Connecticut Avenue in Kensington |  
301.933.5666

Follow us on







*Helping people of all ages and abilities build inclusive lives in their communities.*



## Calendar of Events

October 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022

### Holidays - Offices Closed

- Thursday, November 25
- Friday, November 26
- Thursday, December 23
- Friday, December 24
- Friday, December 31
- Monday, January 17

### Discussions with Daria

Children & Youth Services  
Families  
Friday, October 29

### Discussions with Daria

Self-Advocates  
in Adult Services  
Friday, November 5



### Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, November 30

### Tenure Recognition Ceremony

Wednesday, February 9

### Coffee & Conversation Virtual Networking Event

Wednesday, March 30

Detailed information for all events including location and registration is available at [TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org](https://TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org)



The Arc Montgomery County  
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Together we give.

# GIVING TUESDAY



## UNLEASH GENEROSITY

Generosity gives everyone the power to make a positive change in the lives of others and is a fundamental value anyone can act on.

November 30, 2021