

## CHANGE = CHALLENGE + OPPORTUNITY

Moving a large organization with a 60-year history of supporting people with and without disabilities who range in age from six weeks to 101 years old into a new decade is very challenging! It requires careful handling and thinking differently about the services provided. It also requires responding to the demands of external stakeholders, especially in an organization where 90% of funding comes directly from those stakeholders. And of course, the ultimate beneficiaries must be the children, youth, adults and seniors we support.

Over the past nine months, The Arc Montgomery County has undergone many changes, and there will be more to come as we are pushed by our funders and other outside stakeholders to become more accountable and to do more with less revenue. As the minimum wage increases in Montgomery County, we not only have to ensure all staff are above the minimum, but we have to increase wages of those staff higher up due to wage compression. Wage compression occurs when there is only a small difference in pay between employees regardless of their skills, experience or seniority. In addition, we will be required to implement a new reporting and payment system through DDA. LTSS (Long Term Services and Supports) will radically change how we bill DDA for services and how DDA pays us for those services. More information about LTSS can be found on page five.

This past June, we combined our Residential and Family & Community service divisions, the first step toward bringing all adult services under one umbrella. Combining our adult services will eliminate duplicated administrative positions, increase opportunities for employees to work across departments, and ultimately, provide more holistic services to the adults we support. Instead of one team knowing "daytime John" and another team knowing "night time John" with a handoff in between, we are working toward having the same regular staff support John for his entire service period. We believe this will

reduce staff turnover and correspondingly improve the quality of life for the people we support.

In August, we relocated our administrative offices. The new headquarters building is located just off Gude Drive in upper Rockville, and is a much larger, fully-accessible space with many meetings rooms. We hosted an open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 31 (left), inviting people we support, their

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**Achieve with us.®**

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## From Our Leadership

### THREE CHEERS FOR DSPs!

As we approach the second anniversary of our appointment as CEO and COO, we find ourselves returning to one particular sentiment: **gratitude**.

Although this past year has been professionally and personally challenging, we are grateful for the opportunity to make improvements in the lives of people supported by The Arc. We are grateful for leadership team that supports us and keeps operations running smoothly. We are grateful for a Board of Directors which is invested in the organization's success. We are grateful for peer leaders who share their wisdom and insights and offer moral support. And we are grateful for employees who have shifted into remote work and taken on additional duties during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Most importantly, we are grateful for Direct Support Professionals. As this is written, our DSPs are on the front line of a pandemic. They are literally risking their own lives to make sure that the people we support in 36 homes stay safe and healthy. The passion and integrity they demonstrate every single day leaves us in awe, and sometimes in tears. Two of our DSPs were recently interviewed for a Washington Post article, and their commitment to the people they support is a shining light during a dark time.

DSPs are the backbone of provider agencies like The Arc. They represent almost 75% of our total employees. Many work for relatively low pay, because there is not enough funding from the government to increase their salaries to an appropriate level. Despite the fact that their work requires complex skills, thoughtful compassion, diverse care, and deep medical knowledge, there is a systemic failure to recognize this position appropriately. Their work is not even qualified by the Department of Labor with a professional standard occupational code. And yet, these amazing people come to work every day and do their best to provide comfort, support, and encouragement.

DSPs make a difference every day in the lives of people with disabilities, and in our lives, and we are profoundly grateful.

-Chrissy Shawver, CEO and Daria Cervantes, COO



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families, and other stakeholders to tour the new space. It was a lovely day celebrating how change can help us all move forward in a positive direction!

All operations from our Southlawn location have been joined with those from Nebel Street, and in the new building, staff from all divisions are intermixed and able to collaborate easily. The Southlawn building will be sold, with funds reinvested into current programs.

This relocation will actually save money, as the cost of the new space over the next 10 years is less than the cost of staying in our old Nebel Street building. Additionally, all of the workstations and much of the furniture was donated by the former tenant, further reducing our occupancy costs. ■



## More Open House Photos!



Photos by Ann Maas Photography

# Profiles of Exceptional Staff

## Gorvergo Kollie

Support Professional

Vocational & Day Services



## Marcenia Jenkins

Lead Teacher

Children & Youth Services



## Solomon Merugu

Community Living Manager

Inclusive Living Services



## Shawnetta Henderson

Support Services Counselor

Inclusive Living Services



### How long have you worked at The Arc Montgomery County?

For about 9 years.

For 20 years.

For almost 4 years.

For two and a half years.

### What inspired you to work in the field of developmental disabilities?

Providing care and support to someone who needs it and helping them become confident and independent inspires me. It's life-fulfilling to have a profound impact on someone's life.

I enjoy working with children, they inspire me in every way and form. I also accept the challenges which motivate me to push harder.

I have a cousin who has disabilities and taking care of him has made me learn to care for, provide for, and understand people with similar developmental disabilities.

My aunt has a developmental disability. I learned a lot from helping her to be independent and navigate her way around the community.

### What has been your greatest challenge at The Arc Montgomery County?

Occasionally, I have to deal with challenging behaviors from people I support. A range of training content and processes are used to prepare workers for this issue.

Getting to know each child as an individual. No 2 children are the same, so finding the perfect balance to help each child reach their potential is a challenge.

Well, every day is a new challenge. It's all about learning something new about the people we care for and evolving to provide the best help and support.

The greatest challenge is getting an individual to believe they can do what other people do- get out into the community, go to the movies, or go bowling with friends.

### What has been your greatest success at The Arc Montgomery County?

I believe people are defined by what they can do, not by what they cannot. Every significant and sustainable positive impact made in someone's life is a great success.

I consider my greatest success learning how to work with children with different needs. It is a challenge, but deeply rewarding.

Learning to understand an individual who cannot speak or hear, by subtle, calm looks. Also, seeing gratitude and acceptance in those eyes.

A call from the Director and Assistant Director passing on word that an individual's parent had told them I was doing a good job.

### What have you learned since starting work with The Arc Montgomery County?

I've learned how to relate to others. I've also learned to see people differently and value open-mindedness and creativity.

I've learned that each child is an individual, each is different in their own way, and each brings amazing gifts to the world.

Patience is a virtue- practice it, express it, and pass it on. Also, service to mankind is service to God- respect and treat people accordingly.

I've learned that The Arc Montgomery County cares deeply about the individuals it supports.

### What advice would you give to a new staff member?

Have a passion and love for what you do in life. That's so important, especially in the field of developmental disabilities.

Keep a positive attitude each day, and remember that it's all about the children!

Enthusiasm, devotion and positive mind- bring them with you every day and see the positive impact you create.

I would suggest they have patience. Also, in an emergency, remain calm—that helps the person you support to feel safe.

### What would other people be surprised to learn about you?

I wake up at exactly 6 a.m. daily, without an alarm.

I'm very outgoing and easy to communicate with.

I'm a nature lover, artist, and social worker.

I go out of my way to help others to succeed.

## LTSS CHANGES

Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) refers to the services provided by The Arc and other organizations to support people with disabilities living in Maryland. These services are delivered under authority of Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), as defined in federal Medicaid statutes. Due to changes in the federal statutes, corresponding changes are required at the state level, profoundly impacting how providers like The Arc deliver services and receive payment.

Currently, DDA pays a reimbursement rate to the provider for rendering services. These rates are based upon a complicated matrix and funding structure, which hinges on the state minimum wage and a person's matrix score (from 1-5). For Fiscal 2020, this rate is \$12.51/hour for all staff, regardless of seniority or higher local minimum wage. (Montgomery County's current minimum wage is \$13/hour.) The rate does not account for overtime, even though providers are averaging a 16% vacancy rate, which must then be filled by staffing working overtime hours or higher-paid staffing agencies. The low wages paid to Direct Support Professionals are directly linked to the high vacancy rates.

DDA pays providers up-front for services, with a large payment on July 1 and subsequent billing submitted monthly based upon the person's attendance. At the end of the fiscal year, payment and billing are reconciled. This rate structure has been in place for decades and providers are assured of at least flat funding, and sometimes a small annual increase. Intense advocacy work in Annapolis is typically required to secure the rate increases.

Moving forward, DDA will implement a new rate structure called a "brick" which is supposed to include everything a person needs to be included in his/her community. Rates for the "bricks" have not been released; preliminary rates were low for some services and high for other services. The true cost of service is likely to be considerably higher than what will actually be funded. Even if the "brick" rates are correct, the state legislature may not approve the amount needed to fund all services.

In addition, providers will be paid on a fee-for-service basis. Providers can submit weekly billing and expect to receive payment 30-45 days after services are rendered. The new LTSS system requires documentation of services provided, including start and end times and activity notes, in order to generate the billing data. Some services will be documented in quarter-hour increments instead of daily. This requires Direct Support Professionals to utilize an electronic database for starting and ending the service, and requires them to write notes about the service which are correct and billable under the Medicaid requirements.

Other changes are specific to particular programs. For Employment & Meaningful Day, the number of people supported in a group will impact the amount of funding for each person (more people=less funding). Employment staff will be required to pass a CESP exam and group employment will only be available if the person-centered plan identifies it as a service for that person by June 30. Transportation will be a stand-alone billable service *only* for follow-along job supports.

For Personal Supports, any hours unused at the end of a month will be forfeited. In addition, EVV (Electronic Visit Verification) will be required for every service date. Direct Support Professionals will be required to use a fob or phone belonging to the person supported to record the start and end of the service. EVV will be effective by the end of 2020.

In Community Living, every person will have the same daily base rate. What is currently referred to as 1:1 support will become "dedicated hours" which are billed at a separate rate. The number of dedicated hours per home will be limited. Dedicated hours are not guaranteed to fully cover the cost of services provided.

Because understanding these changes is important, we held Family Forums in early March to share this information with our families and to address their questions. Additional Family Forums will be held later this year for families who were not able to attend previously. The most important thing to know is that the way The Arc delivers services will be changing to meet the requirements outlined by DDA. ■



## CONFERENCE ROOM SPONSORSHIPS

One of the wonderful features of our new headquarters is the quantity and variety of conference rooms. There are huddle rooms that accommodate a small group of three to six people, mid-sized rooms that accommodate 10-12 people, and spaces large enough for a gathering of 50. In addition, there is a special room set aside where employees can take a short break during the day to catch their breath and rejuvenate. The room names all represent something related to Maryland—from the state capitol to the state cat.

As part of our grand opening, we offered sponsorship opportunities to our vendors and other donors.

Each sponsorship covers a period of two years and includes decorations which reflect the theme of the room and a plaque recognizing the sponsor. We are very grateful to the organizations and individuals who generously supported The Arc, a number of whom are Respite Consortium Members.

There are still two conference rooms available for sponsorship, the Chesapeake and Skipjack. Both spaces are designed to hold 6-10 people; the cost of sponsorship for these rooms is \$1,000. Contact Deborah Mark for more information, by email [DeborahM@arcmontmd.org](mailto:DeborahM@arcmontmd.org) or by phone 301.984.5777 x1245. ■



## *Thank you to our Sponsors!*

Annapolis Conference Room .....	CETA Benefit Consulting
Montgomery Conference Room .....	Advanced Nursing + Home Support
Black-Eyed Susan Conference Room .....	Constance Battle, MD
Calico Conference Room .....	SYNERGY HomeCare
Patuxent Conference Room .....	JK House of Grace
Potomac Conference Room .....	Ursula Battle
Staff Rejuvenation Lounge.....	Alta Healthcare Services
Blue Crab Huddle Room .....	My Sister's Place, LLC
Oriole Huddle Room.....	Anonymous In Honor of Eugene Mark, Jr.
Retriever Huddle Room.....	Advanced Nursing + Home Support
White Oak Huddle Room .....	JK House of Grace

# URBAN THRIFT

**Open Daily 11 am to 6 pm**  
**10730 Connecticut Avenue in Kensington**

**GREAT STYLES!**

**GREAT FINDS!**

**GREAT DEALS!**

**AND A GREAT CAUSE!**





# #ADayintheLife



**Social  
Media  
Blitz  
Sharing  
Our  
Work  
in Action**



Last June, we presented special awards to 16 community partners, volunteers and staff who demonstrated our commitment to supporting individuals and families affected by intellectual and developmental disabilities. There are many more unsung heroes making a real difference in people's lives and we extend our thanks to each of them also! View more photos from this event online at [www.TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org/connect/photo-gallery](http://www.TheArcMontgomeryCounty.org/connect/photo-gallery).

## ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

### Ande Kolp

As Executive Director of The Arc Maryland, she guided state chapters through a challenging 2019 legislative session, meeting with elected officials, advising staff and self-advocates and organizing group rallies. Always, she worked diligently to protect the rights of people with disabilities.



## SELF-ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

### Harold Wertz

An extraordinary volunteer known for his outreach to others in the office, Harold teaches his co-workers how best to communicate with him. His dedication and enthusiasm both lighten the workload and enrich The Arc's headquarters family.



## PUBLIC SERVICE

### Tim Wiens

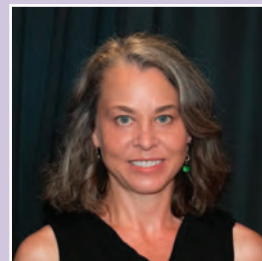
He worked in Montgomery County for 40 years, encouraging innovative housing models that fostered inclusive lives for people with disabilities. His collaborative spirit and hard work to increase county funding for disability causes profoundly impacted this community.



## COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION

### Susan Greifer

She engages children with disabilities in cooperative learning with their typical peers. Her ability to recognize each student's strengths creates a remarkable classroom atmosphere. Always a community builder, she shares hands-on techniques and behavioral strategies.



## COMMUNITY INCLUSION

### Dentistry for Children—Olney

For several years, Dentistry for Children has visited KFICCC to address concerns, calm nerves and make a game out of caring for teeth. Dr. Jenny Rhee and her colleagues use a big puppet, a giant toothbrush and a sensitive manner to foster the health of all children.



## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

### Carey Dwyer

Passionate and dedicated, this mother of three and MCPS employee chaired the KFICCC Parent Advisory Committee and engaged others with funny yet direct appeals. She strengthened the community by encouraging all KFICCC families to be involved.



## BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR

### Raymond Davidson

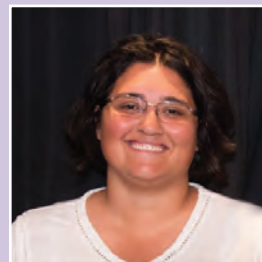
Always present and engaged, he goes the extra mile whenever needed. His board leadership and intensive committee involvement have helped to sculpt programs that provide personalized, inclusive services to the people we support.



## RISING STAR

### Anna Lopez

She helped to pioneer the Medical Appointment Technician position and continued to develop and refine the job duties over time. A positive role model and mentor to others, she is focused, diligent, thoughtful, and radiates inclusiveness.



## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

### Maria Dudish

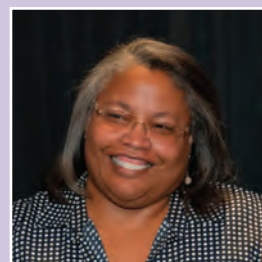
An advocate, role model, parent, and consummate professional, she champions the rights and independence of people with disabilities. She leads the charge for inclusion, taking initiative to improve services and delivery.



## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

### Elisa Ellis

A strong advocate and direct and fair professional, she promotes employment goals and outcomes that match peoples' interests and lead to successful and fulfilling opportunities.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT

#### Raphaelia Johnson

She always knows what's going on with her staff and the people they support, and she's known by everyone. She models teamwork, communication and dedication to the mission, all with a big smile that exudes a spirit of community and inclusion.



### YOUTH VOLUNTEER THE YEAR

#### Shannon Scott

On her first day at KFICCC, she met a student who communicates in sign language. That night, she began learning sign language online and continued all summer. Her initiative and desire to meet the students on their terms epitomizes the spirit of inclusion.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

#### Marcenia Jenkins

She nurtures her students, adapting lessons to the needs of each individual child and preparing children for success when facing new experiences. She shares her knowledge with other teachers and parents, empowering everyone.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### Shawnetta Henderson

Her dedication is apparent in her work ethic and encouragement of others. She fosters independent living skills and engagement, and her outreach to families, extraordinary empathy, and professionalism exude quality support.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR COMMUNITY LIVING SERVICES

#### Solomon Merugu

He is humble, inspirational and ensures the best quality of life for the people he supports, even pursuing extra training when beneficial. The tremendous, positive impact he has comes from a devotion to the dignity of all people.



### EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR VOCATIONAL & DAY SERVICES

#### Gorvergo Kollie

His energetic, respectful, and resourceful attitude helps the people he supports become the best version of themselves. He trains his crews, adapting his teaching style as needed, to foster strong skill development and independence.



## President's Volunteer Service Awards

The President's Volunteer Service Award is a national honor administered by the Points of Light Foundation which recognizes individuals who have achieved certain hours of volunteer service over a 12-month period. The level of award is based upon the age of the recipient and the total hours served.

#### Bronze Level

Jose Camacho  
Madeline Cohen  
Sofia Donohue  
Gabriela Ellison  
Jennifer Jones  
Dahn Kim  
Chris Sankoh  
Dorothy Slavcoff  
Lucy Ventimiglia

#### Silver Level

Irene Figueroa  
Anasha Morrison  
Donald Wertz  
Harold Wertz

#### Gold Level

Harrison Nchinda  
Irene Qi  
Robert Tievsky



# Thank You for Supporting The Arc Montgomery County!

*These individuals and organizations generously donated from April 1 - December 31, 2019*

Julia Abate, Amanda Abernathy, Rohan Abeyesundere & Diana Alegre, Simal Abeyesundere, Ron Adams, Ibrahim & Jane Ades, Advanced Nursing & Home Support, Clyde Agnew, Demian & Natalia Ahn, Michael Ahn, Anne Albright, Richmond & Seulhee Allan, Barbara Allen, Allied Pharmaceutical Services, Inc., Alta Healthcare Services, LLC, Amazon Smile Foundation, America's Charities, AMR Commercial, LLC, Amanda Anderson, Anonymous, Lee Arbetman, Patricia Arellano, Michael Arenstein, Richard Astor, Robert & Lyda Astrove, Lucas & Mandie Aubrey, Bahadori Accounting & Tax Services, Inc., Donyetta Bailey, Jana Balic-Dicen, Thomas & Andrea Bamrick, Laura Barry, Daniel Bates & Sheila Kragie, Constance Battle, Jeff & Betty Baumann, The Benevity Community Impact Fund, Harry Benoit, Sue Berger, Philip & Nanette Bevan, David Bilker, Justin Black & Elizabeth Angerman, Shirley Blackmon, William & Shirlee Blanken, Emily Bleimund, David & Carrie Booth, Pratima Bose, Mary Boylen, Michael Bradley & Ginny Colten-Bradley, Dan & Miyuki Britton, Charles & Susan Brome, Kenneth & Gail Brown, Chris Brown, Kerinne Browne, Marcia Buehner, Kathleen Burke, Terence & Sarah Byrne, Quincy & Vaughnetta Caldwell, Cambria Hotels, Capitol Office Solutions, a Xerox Company, Joan Carragher, Case Management, Tommy Cecil, Daria Cervantes, CETA Benefit Consulting Group, LLC, David Checcino, Claudia Chen, Vanessa Chicas, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Susan Ciolino, Robert & Asha Clark, Doug Clarke, Robert Clayton & Jennifer Woods, Cheryl Colandreo, Joe & Karen Colandreo, Anna Colandreo, Ralph Colleli, Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area, Bernard & Jean Cooney, Linda Corso, Costco Wholesale Corporation, John & Elizabeth Costello, Barry & Sharon Covington, David & Ellen Crandall, Evan & Lindsay Crowell, John & Barbara Cummings, Sharon Cyr, D.C. 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Gardner, Belue Geb, Lois Geller, Cheryl Geske, Kathy Ghiladi, Cindy Gianiny, Benjamin & Kristine Gielow, Jared Gigliotti, Devin Gingrich & Sarah Borron, Lee & Emily Glass, Margaret Gold, Scott & Dara Goldberg, Philip & Janet Golrick, Joseph Gootenberg & Susan Leibenhaut, Grace Social Sector Consulting, LLC, Jane Greene, Andrew Grinc, David Gunzerath, Jennifer Gustetic, Marjorie Haire, Joseph Harazmus & Lara George, Allen & Pamela Harp, Robert & Susan Harrison, Kevin & Maureen Hassett, James & Elizabeth Hastings, Kevin & Courtney Hastings, Suzanne Head, Gregory Heckler & Sara Minges, Sharon Hedgepeth, Marion Helfrich, Steve Herberman, Eric Herrmann & Catherine Greene, Ibrahim Hijazin, Matthew & Christina Hinz, Joey Hipolito & Sarah Pauly, Jeffrey & Kathleen Hirsch, Laurence & Patricia Hoard, Scottie Holton, Kenneth & Eileen Hornbostel, Robert Howe & Tamara Baker, HUB International Limited, Stacy Hudgins, Brad Hunt & Sara Lippa, Michael Iannarino, Howard & Trudy Jacobson, James Madison University, JK House of Grace, Jane Johnston, Martha Kahn, Paula Kaplan, Rick Kaplan, Stephanie Katz, Meyer & Linda Katzper, Jared & Katherine Havlock, Steven & Ann Kebeck, Jennifer Kehoe, Kenneth & Susan Kehoe, Jay Keller, Larry & Wendy Kellett, Richard & Peggy Kent, Ramzi Khuri & Marci Giang, Michael Kim, Joey & Loraine Kitchelt, Patricia Koepsel, Michelle Kotler, David & Judit Krall, Tammy Kramer, Rona Kramer, Robert & Lori Krolikowski, Diana Krolikowski, Gerald Kurihara, Bryan Laibson & Larisa Laibson, Jeffrey & Mary Laizure, Angela Lapier, Fanmie Lee, Stefanie Lehman, Trudy Lehman, Jill Lehr, Jeff & Sherry Leikin, Lenovo, Lenovo Employees Care Campaign, Alan Levin & Bonnie Richter, Lena Lewis, Netanya Lichterman, Eric Lienhard, Lisa Lilienfield, Deborah Lim, Marie Logothetis, Benjamin Lopez, Xian Lu, Alissa Lugo, Chelsea Lundquist-Wentz, John & Carolyn Lyman, James & Rosanne Lyons, Jane Mago, Aaron Malofsky, Edward & Mary Ann Maloney, Roger & Carol Marcotte, Eugene & Deborah Mark, Josie Mark, Kathleen Marr, Linda Martin, Dolores Martos, Maryland Charity Campaign, The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, James Mathews, Josie Mayne, Sharon McCarron, Betsey McCoy, Douglas & Marybeth McDaniel, Patrick & Elizabeth McFadden, Kenneth & Susan McGivney, Marie McIntosh, Sean & Melissa McKenna, Pamela McKenney, Daniel & Marie McNamara, Orlando & Monica Medina, Norma Medina, Jason & Allison Meisch, Craig Meklir & Samantha Wallack, Melwood Horticultural Training Center, Inc., Jeanne Mercer, Lancy & Luz Mercier, Brian & Bethany Miller, Matthew & Catherine Minahan, Tri Mobley, Moms Club Belmont Cashell, Robert & Diana Moore, Morgan Stanley, David Mount, Colman Mulkerrins, Joseph Mulligan & Julianne Diamond, Tracy & Margaret Mulligan, Ryan Mullin, Ted Murphy & Jenny Knopinski, Laurie Murphy-Zuiderhof, My Sister's Place, LLC, New Haven, Inc., Fred & Carole Newman, Hanh Thi Nguyen, Aileen O'Hare, John & Gina Olenick, Kelly Oliver, John & Connie Oliver, Donna Olsen, Richard & Carol Osborne, Stephen & Elizabeth Palan, Joyce Palmer, Randy & Mary Parrish, Fred & Sandra Parsons, Jantipa & Anna Patnaik, PBG Best Care, Blair & Brenda Peace, Lisa Peacock, Larry Pearce & Catherine Valcourt-Pearce, Joseph & Victoria Perrault, Brandon & Allison Perry, Annette Pike, Nicholas Pirulli & Brent Almond, Darrell Poe, Stanley & Nancy Pond, Douglas Pond, Zachary Pond,

Alan Pultyniewicz, John & Lynne Raden, Michael & Naina Rakes, Mac Ramsey, Kathleen Rapp, Red Wiggler Community Farm, Robert Redd, Jorge & Maria Reis, Ingrid Reissmann, Anandhi Rengasamy, Marty Reynolds, Tim Reynolds, Liz Reynolds, Daniel Reynolds & Celia Voyles, Margaret Richmond, Right At Home Care & Senior Services, Christina Ritchie, Johnna Robinson, Cathy Rosenfield, David & Esther Ruderman, Sherry Ruiz, Joseph Russo Jr., Kanwaljit Sachdeva, Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, Megan Sanford, Katrina Sarfarazi, Karen Saunders, Carl & Judith Saxinger, Cathy Scarbrough, Robert Schaefer, Dave & Terri Schellhardt, Kurt & Beth Scherer, Rich Schmidt & Diana Lees, Lisa Schumaker, Schwab Charitable Fund, Adam Schwartzman, Mark & Laura Schweitzer, Alan Seifert & Rita Furst Seifert, Gary & Caryn Seligman, Sweet Frog-Wheaton, Frederic & Barbara Anne Shaklan, Joseph Shashaty & Ellen Mowry, Craig & Christina Shawver, Edward & Martha Shields, Ellen Siegler, Gregory Simon, Teresa Simpler, Dana Simpler, John & Dorothy Slavcoff, Tracy Smith, Linda Snook, Debbie Sobrik, Andrea Sokoloff, Joseph & Suzanne Spaniol, Mark Speakman, Al Simons, Robert & JoAnn Sperber, James & Ann Stephenson, Lena Storm, Donna Studer, Steve & Sarah Sullivan, SunnyD, Inc., Brooke Supinski, Bonnie Supinski, SYNERGY HomeCare, Charles Tahan & Erica Johnston, David & Nicole Taylor, Taylor-Leonard Corporation (T-LC), Benjamin Martin, The Welman Group, Joe Thornton, Thrift Recycling Management, Inc., Benjamin Trahan & Jessica Glover, Allen & Marilyn Trainer, Janet Treichel, Truist, Dixie Turner, Twinbrook Baptist Church, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, United Way of the National Capital Area, Juan Vacatello & Jennifer Freedman, Joseph Vanderwalde, Linda Vause, Mariam Veppumthara, Vertovec, Visiting Angels, LLC, James & Mary Voeks, Steve & Mary Walter, Washington Nationals Community Ticket Grant Program, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission United Way Campaign, Peter & Ginny Ann Weinberger, Matthew Welsh & Laura Hoard, Gary & Dorothy Welsh, Barry & Barbara Westreich, Leslie Whipkey, Joseph & Ellen Widoff, Wiley Rein LLP, William S. Abell Foundation, Inc., Michelle Wilson, Matthew Winslow, World Bank Community Connections Fund, Kazuhiro Yoshida, YourCause, LLC Trustee for PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Roy & Teresa Zatcoff ■

## Tributes

### Memorial Gifts

Ben Colandreo, Sr., Tara Dudish, John Henry Ebaugh IV, Joan Feldberg, Mark Freund, Frank & Geraldine Lee, Rowena McCrae Masse, Carl D. Osborne, James Pond, Bart Stringham

### Honorary Gifts

Julia Abate, Doug Clarke, Families of Individuals with Disabilities, Sharon Cyr & Sharon Hedgepeth, Kathleen Hirsch, Michelle Kotler & Bassam Annous, Tracy and Margaret Mulligan, Chrissy Shawver, Brooke Supinski, Michelle Wilson

*Your support makes wonderful things happen!*



# STAFF TENURE RECOGNITION CEREMONY

These recognitions are presented annually to The Arc Montgomery County staff for dedicated service to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, in benchmark periods of five years.



**30**  
YEARS

Daria Cervantes, Maria Dudish, Zinnah Fully,  
Alan Higbie, Brian Waring



**25**  
YEARS

Milton Dennison, Elisa Ellis, Deborah Frazier



**20**  
YEARS

Kula Curry, Delroy Dias,  
Marcenia Jenkins, Memuna Mansaray



**15**  
YEARS

Alice Bannerman, Calixta Benitez, Fredrick Bewell,  
Sylbil Decker, Massa Dempster, Georgina Dickson,  
Tenneh Kromah, Dougo Sidibe, Tobias Wiysanyuy,  
Debbie Wong



**10**  
YEARS

Nasim Atcha Oubou, Alice JoAnne Gray,  
Thomas Korvah, Fatoumata Toure,  
Adele Wandji-Nguenji



**5**  
YEARS

Michael Ajayi, Rogathe Alilio, Mavereen Kyle Bactat,  
Abdul Bakarr-Kanu, Cyvonne Clemens, Nathalie De  
Souza, Alicia Dunwell, Berhanu Endegena, Lorie  
Hosseini, Taofeeq Ibikunle, Paula Johnson, Patience  
Neblett, Anastasia Njenga, Simone Nouwezem, Loida  
Prophet, Joan Rose, Rosamond Thomas, Bobby Tyler

Photos by Ann Maas Photography

*Make someones day—Nominate him or her for an Award!*

## 2020 COMMUNITY, STAFF & VOLUNTEER AWARDS

*Nominations Open May 1!*

Each year, The Arc Montgomery County honors our community partners, staff and volunteers. The individuals and groups recognized provide many hours of support, dedication, leadership, and above all, a strong commitment to connecting people of all ages and abilities with their communities to build inclusive and fulfilling lives. This year's awards will be presented in June 2020, representing calendar year 2019.

**Everyone is welcome to nominate a community partner, co-worker, support staff, volunteer, or advocate.** Nomination forms and details are available on our website. Nominations will be accepted until 5 pm on Friday, May 31, 2020 by mail or email to Deborah Mark, Director of Communications & Outreach, 7362 Calhoun Place Rockville, MD 20855 or [DeborahM@arcmontmd.org](mailto:DeborahM@arcmontmd.org).

### Community Award Category

*(Presented only to people/businesses/organizations in the community, outside The Arc)*

Community Inclusion Award, Advocate of the Year, Self-Advocate of the Year, Employer of the Year, Commitment to Education Award, Public Service Award

### Volunteer Award Category

*(Presented only to The Arc Montgomery County volunteers)*

Youth Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Board Member of the Year

### Staff Award Category

*(Presented only to The Arc Montgomery County staff)*

Direct Support Professional Employee of the Year (one from each program division plus one from Administration/Management), Rising Star Award, Distinguished Service Award ■



## CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES



KFICCC submitted its application for accreditation to the Maryland State Department of Education and is awaiting a validation visit. Catherine Valcourt-Pearce, a KFICCC mom, testified in Annapolis to support a Therapeutic Nursery Program bill which would guarantee funding to support programs like KFICCC (*above*).

To celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, children from KFICCC and MacDonald Knolls (the MCPS program which shares their building) joined together to learn about caring and sharing.

KFICCC and After All families are now using **Bloomz**, an app that helps parents know what's happening in their child's classroom. It works on smartphones and computers, and helps parents receive quick updates from the teacher, see pictures of classroom and community-wide activities, access the community calendars, and even sign-up for conferences and volunteer opportunities. ■

## INCLUSIVE LIVING SERVICES

The newly-combined Inclusive Living Services currently supports 119 people in Community Living and 101 people in Personal Supports. Gia Richmond has joined the team as Director, and she supervises both program delivery models.

Applications for awake overnight funding for staff support in our Community Living homes have been submitted to DDA, in an effort to recoup significant costs for staffing already being provided. Basic database training has been provided to all Direct Support Professionals to prepare them for implementation of upcoming LTSS requirements.

Personal Supports has been encouraging people to participate in their community by taking advantage of local opportunities, such as SkyZone (*right*). The team

## EMPLOYMENT & DAY SERVICES



Employment & Meaningful Day Services currently supports 232 adults, and continues to help people prepare for interviews with local employers like Sam's Club and Regal Cinema. Discussions are ongoing with WMATA and local taxi companies to determine ways to lower transportation costs for the community-based day program.

Last autumn, Delegate Lorig Charkoudian participated in a LEARN visit at Safeway (*above*). **Legislators Experiencing The Arc Right Now** gives elected officials the opportunity to see our programs in action and to talk with people receiving services.

A fee schedule is being developed for The Arc's disability benefit counseling services in order to generate additional revenue for the organization. ■



is working on updated Person-Centered Plans which will reflect the kind of life each person wants to live.

A number of Direct Support Professionals participated in DSP forums with the CEO/COO to educate themselves about legislative issues and to encourage active advocacy. ■

## COVID-19 RESPONSE

Even before the March 12 announcement of a worldwide pandemic cause by the Covid-19 virus, The Arc Montgomery County was already taking action to protect the people we support.

Employment & Meaningful Day operations were suspended to reduce transmission of the virus. As the situation intensified, our KFICCC and After All programs closed. Personal Supports were suspended, except for services delivered in the homes. Community Living homes were closed to visitors and people supported began sheltering in place. Headquarters staff were instructed to work remotely. Everyone was provided with information on hand washing and other preventative measures, to keep themselves and the people we support safe.

At the end of March, Governor Hogan deemed organizations like The Arc **essential**. Knowing that our front-line employees are key to keeping people in our residential homes safe and secure, enhanced pay was put into place for direct support professionals, and hazard pay was instituted for staff working in homes with active COVID-19 cases. Staff were instructed to monitor themselves and the people supported for any illnesses, and to provide daily reports of everyone's condition. In addition, frequent consultations were made with the Montgomery County Department of Health about the best ways to prevent an outbreak.

Unfortunately, the small quantities of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) in The Arc's possession were quickly depleted. Orders placed at the beginning of March for hand sanitizer, gloves and masks were only just beginning to be delivered in mid-April, but there remained a large shortfall from what was actually needed to ensure the safety of every person supported and every staff member. Donations from other organizations and business in our community have been lifelines for our teams (*bottom photo*).

Despite all of our precautions, two people supported in our homes succumbed to COVID-19. Both losses have been deeply felt by all of the staff involved in their care. These individuals did not exhibit the usual COVID-19 symptoms, and neither did the staff who supported them. Additional restrictions on movement were immediately implemented, including limiting staff to working in only one home.

This tragic situation has amplified the critical shortage of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) available to support people with disabilities in the community. We are so incredibly appreciative of all that our DSPs do and of how they are putting their own lives on the line! We are also very appreciative of our supervisors, many of whom have stepped up to work shifts and otherwise taken on additional duties (*top photo*).

We continue to advocate with local, state and federal agencies on their behalf for higher wages and more PPE—**and the respect our Direct Support Professionals deserve.** ■



## Calendar of Events

May-October, 2020

### Holidays-Offices Closed

Monday, May 25

Friday, July 3

Monday, September 7

### Transition Times Meeting

Wednesday, May 13

### Volunteer Orientation

Friday, June 5

### Networking Breakfast

Thursday, June 4

### Membership Meeting

Thursday, June 25

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

## Opening Doors

Networking  
Breakfast  
Sponsorship  
Opportunity



Build your own network and work alongside Montgomery County business owners and make a difference in the lives of children, youth, adults & seniors *with and without disabilities* who are supported by The Arc Montgomery County!

For more information, contact Deborah Mark, [DeborahM@arcmontmd.org](mailto:DeborahM@arcmontmd.org) or 301.984.5777 x1245.

Presented by:



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BUILD INCLUSIVE LIVES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

