Our call to action and the guiding light of our work this year has been driven by the creativity and strength of YOU. Through everything we have encountered over the past year, we have proven Resilient! We don't and won't ever stop working for what is right. Sometimes the path to our goals takes unexpected turns, but the ultimate direction in which we are going is solid, and we will continue to lead on.

The word Resilient, which first made its themed appearance this year in The Arc's 2021 Maryland Legislative Calendar, proved fitting for who we are. There are 18,000 people with IDD in Maryland who receive Developmental Disabilities Administration services, a third of whom are supported by the ten local chapter organizations of The Arc. Several thousand more people with IDD and their families receive information and other services through our network, created and designed seven decades ago by parents.

Together, we represent a united and strong network. Between last year and this year, we have made significant adjustments to our daily lives. We have forged new friendships and have lost loved ones to a pandemic that we could not have imagined. As the sun rises on a new day, we look to the future with a renewed faith in knowing we are strong and will get where we want to be,... together.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the government leaders, organizations, schools, employers, and individuals who are being honored. Each is being recognized for exemplifying excellence and working to create a world where everyone has opportunities to live, work, and play in their communities. To our Awards Event attendees: we are pleased to present to you some of Maryland's finest!

Thank you for being here to experience this with us!

Sincerely,

Ray Marshall, Board President
Ande Kolp, Executive Director

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Legislators of the Year

This award is presented for outstanding leadership in the Maryland General Assembly on behalf of the rights of persons with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Honorees are selected by the President, Executive Director, and Co-Chairs of the Governmental Affairs Committee of The Arc Maryland.

Delegate Michael Griffith, District 35B, Cecil and Harford Counties

Delegate Mike Griffith has lived a life of public service. From serving in the United States Marine Corps to leading in local Harford County politics, he has shown dedication to his community and a selfless heart. Appointed to his position in the State Legislature in early 2020, he continues to advocate for bi-partisan and common-sense solutions. During this past Legislative Session, Delegate Griffith pushed hard for extended school opportunities for students unable to fully access their educational programs during the pandemic. The education and awareness that came from these advocacy efforts helped ensure some of the federal funding received by the state would be devoted to addressing learning loss and compensatory education. He co-sponsored the Special Education – Individualized Education Programs – Educational Evaluations bill (HB0716), which has now become law. We appreciate Delegate Griffith’s steadfast support to The Arc NCR and all Maryland chapters of The Arc.

Delegate Michele Guyton, Ph.D., District 42B, Baltimore County

Delegate Michele Guyton has been a champion for people with disabilities and their families for over 25 years. In 2015, she was appointed by Governor Hogan to the Maryland State Board of Education, overseeing an annual budget of $8 billion, providing oversight to local education agencies, and making policy decisions affecting public education in Maryland. Since being elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 2018, Delegate Guyton has proven to be a compelling leader, a fierce advocate, and a public servant with a strong moral compass. Her dedicated work in Annapolis included sponsoring legislation to address a variety of unmet needs this session, especially with the Special Education – Learning Continuity Plan (HB0714). Delegate Guyton’s tenacity and education of fellow legislators are helping to move the dial forward on disability rights matters in the general assembly. We admire Delegate Guyton for her countless efforts to improve the lives of all Marylanders, including those in the IDD community.

Senator Douglas J.J. Peters, District 23, Prince George’s County

Senator Douglas J.J. Peters is a lifelong resident of Maryland, a decorated military combat veteran, and a successful small business owner in Prince George’s County. Senator Peters is also an active member of the Board of Directors for The Arc Maryland. Upon his entry into the Senate in 2007, he was appointed to the Senate Budget and Tax Committee, making decisions on the Developmental Disabilities Administration Budget and the State Education budget. During his tenure as an elected official, Senator Peters has served with distinction on the municipal, county, and state levels. This past session, he sponsored three priority bills for The Arc, two of which advanced, becoming laws. Under Senator Peters’ leadership, the legislation helped improve access to education evaluations for children and ensure that parents are active participants in the IEP process during times of emergency. We are truly grateful to Senator Peters for his drive and advocacy on behalf of Marylanders with IDD and their families.

The Arc Maryland Spotlight: Legislative Wrap Up Report

The Arc Maryland Public Policy Team, Governmental Affairs Committee, and partnering Coalitions covered several bills affecting the lives of Marylanders with IDD, their families, and support staff during the 2021 Legislative Session. Some presented challenges, while others presented opportunities propelled by the visibility of equity disparities and the experiences of families. You can read about the legislation we followed, our activities, and the final outcomes of our efforts in our Legislative Wrap Up Report! Check Out the Report at www.TheArcMD.org/Policy or Scan Me!
Outstanding Advocate of the Year

This award is presented for advocacy leadership on behalf of persons with IDD and their families, including systemic change, legal advocacy, and professional endeavors that increase the rights of persons with IDD to inclusive lives.

NaToya Mitchell

NaToya Mitchell has helped advance critical services for Marylanders with IDD as the Statewide Coordinator of Self-Directed Services (SDS) with the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). NaToya has focused her efforts on making SDS a more accessible option for people with IDD and families to achieve greater independence and control of their services and supports.

With an increasing number of Marylanders choosing to self-direct each year, Ms. Mitchell has worked to streamline training for Support Brokers, Coordinators of Community services, and other vital personnel desperately needed in SDS. NaToya has also updated key resources for people who self-direct, including the SDS Handbook, SDS Budget Spreadsheet, and Support Broker Listings.

During her time with DDA, NaToya has assisted thousands of people with IDD through her focus and tenacity to improve services, remove barriers, and increase opportunities. We appreciate NaToya for her commitment to partnerships.

The Arc Maryland Spotlight: Partners in Policymaking

Partners in Policymaking®, an initiative funded by the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, is a program that prepares adults with IDD and family members of children and adults with IDD to be effective advocates at the local, state, and federal levels.

Each year in Maryland, approximately 30 participants are selected from a competitive application process to take part in the year-long program. Partners graduates go on to change the future through their advocacy!

Learn More at www.TheArcMD.org/Partners or Scan Me!

Dorothy B. Plantz

Since her son, Matthew, began receiving supports from The Arc Howard County in 2003, Dorothy Plantz has been an active and vital volunteer with The Arc. She has served in numerous leadership roles for The Arc Howard County, including Board President, and is currently the Co-Chair of The Arc Maryland’s Governmental Affairs Committee. During the 2021 legislative session, Dorothy played an instrumental role in advocacy, which resulted in additional slots for Maryland’s Autism Waiver. She organized families and partner nonprofit representatives to write letters to legislators outlining the importance of the waiver and other initiatives of the Maryland Department of Education. She also advanced her advocacy skills in 2021, graduating from Maryland’s Partners in Policymaking Program® alongside Matthew.

Dorothy is a purposeful and deep thinker that can see things from multiple angles. She is a true defender of individual rights and is a champion with and for people with IDD to live their best lives.
Matthew Plantz is a lifelong advocate for Marylanders with IDD. Recently, Matthew has focused on vaccine advocacy, encouraging people with IDD to get the COVID-19 vaccine. He is a Board Member of the Howard County Autism Society, a graduate of Maryland’s Partners in Policymaking® Program, and a well-known member of The Arc Howard County’s community. His friendly presence and eagerness to strike up a conversation make Matthew hard to forget!

Matthew is also a regular in Annapolis, participating each year in Calendar Day and Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature, where he strengthens his personal relationships with legislators. During any call for action during session, Matthew is on the front line of the grassroots advocacy, eager to know more about what steps to take to advocate with and on behalf of Marylanders with IDD.

Bed Bath & Beyond, Bel Air

Bed Bath & Beyond in Bel Air has been an ideal employer for The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region (NCR) to partner with over the past year. They have been an excellent employer to two individuals supported by the chapter’s Employment Services program. Throughout the pandemic, Bed Bath & Beyond remained flexible and accommodating with their training, communications, and work schedule for employees.

Their staff and environment have been friendly, supportive, and positive, creating wonderful employment experiences for the supported individuals. When there are any needs, concerns, or praises, Bed Bath & Beyond has been quick to communicate with the Employment Services Team at The Arc NCR. The Arc NCR is incredibly thankful for their partnership and outstanding support!

Stanley S. Sidle/William Ohge, Jr. Memorial Citizenship Award

This award honors an individual with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (who is affiliated with The Arc) for outstanding participation in or contribution to their community. Achievements may include community leadership, contributions to their community and/or self-advocacy.

Matthew Plantz

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Tyler Aughenbaugh & Sebastien Dorris, Autumn Woods Co.

Autumn Woods Collective, a Woodworking Shop in Westminster, has been a member of The Arc Carroll County’s community since 2018. During that holiday season, they hired an individual the chapter supports to their production team in a temporary role. It did not take long for Autumn Woods to upgrade the employee to a permanent position after seeing the artistic skills and the value the employee brought to the team.

Following a pause in work and an ownership change during the pandemic, Tyler Aughenbaugh, the Director of Operations for Autumn Woods Collective, wanted to ensure their employee was set for a successful return. He welcomed the supported individual back to the team with natural supports to thrive in the changing environment. Tyler offered new opportunities for the employee to showcase their skills!
Outstanding Employee of the Year:
Administration/Program Management

This award is presented to an employee of The Arc in Administration/Program Management at the state or local level who has made the greatest contribution to their organization and the mission of The Arc through both personal and professional efforts. This award recognizes the vital role The Arc employees play in complementing volunteer efforts.

Lori Miller, The Arc Baltimore

Lori Miller, Director of Support Management at The Arc Baltimore, plays a major role in the chapter’s Community Living program where she has worked for over two decades. Quick to familiarize herself with home residents, their families, and staff, Lori has been a constant support they can rely on. During the pandemic, Lori supported the organization however possible: she scoured for cleaning supplies, covered overnight shifts, and provided emotional support to residents and staff.

As the year went on and community needs shifted, Lori, too, adjusted her focus and skills to wherever she was needed. She helped train new staff members, communicated the needs of supported individuals with the DDA, and volunteered at seven vaccine clinics held by the chapter. Lori’s determination to provide the best support possible makes her invaluable to the chapter, their staff, and the many people they support.

Professionals of the Year

This award recognizes an executive/manager of a community service program or community professional. Honorees’ work will have direct relevance to people with IDD. They may have demonstrated sensitivity and the ability to provide outstanding quality services, which results in increased independence and inclusive lives for people with IDD.

Ilva L. Richardson, Frederick County Public Schools

Ilva Richardson is a Teacher Specialist for Frederick County Public Schools. Along with her many responsibilities, she has served as Frederick County’s Autism Waiver Program Manager for nearly two decades, supporting the initial implementation of the Waiver Program. Ilva created and now sustains organized efforts to educate teachers about the importance of supporting children to apply for the Autism Waiver Registry as early as possible. With each passing year on the job, families under her guidance have gained access to needed waiver services earlier and earlier.

To support students on the Autism Waiver Registry, Ilva partners with The Arc of Frederick County to connect families with resources during their wait. Together, they provide information on DDA services, access to alternative supports, and parent and sibling support groups. With Ilva going above the call of her duties, we are honored to celebrate her impact on the Frederick County community.

Therese Thiedeman, Southern Maryland Community Resources, Inc.

Therese Thiedeman is the Program Director with Southern Maryland Community Resources, Inc. (SMCR), where she works to include people with IDD in the community through a variety of social, recreational, and educational opportunities. With participants at home due to the pandemic, Therese quickly developed creative services to keep participants engaged and continue their progress.

Through a partnership with a local artist, SMRC developed an eight-part, virtual "Arts4All" program. With supplies sent to participants, each week featured an exciting new project to see different perspectives, appreciate art, develop their fine motor skills, confidence, and learn to take charge as an artist! We thank Therese for her dedication to program participants and for recognizing the value of their creative expression during difficult times.
Chapter Volunteers of the Year

This award is presented for dedication to The Arc’s mission to create a world where children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities have and enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

**Thomas Sand, The Arc Baltimore**

Tom Sand has been a valued member of The Arc Baltimore’s Board of Directors since 2010. While initially recruited for his financial expertise, his impact has been far broader. Tom has been a generous supporter of their annual golf tournament and Art in the Round events. He has been a key contributor to their strategic planning process, executive transition, and search for their new CEO.

Over the years, Tom has served in a variety of roles: Board Treasurer, Vice-President, and, most recently, President. He has provided a great deal of support as The Arc Baltimore has faced challenges brought on by the pandemic. The Arc Baltimore is incredibly fortunate to have Tom’s commitment to leading the Board, and most importantly, his commitment to the people they support!

**Sherri-Le Bream, The Arc Carroll County**

Sherri-Le Bream is an active Board Member with The Arc Carroll County, who served as their Board President from 2017 to 2020. During her tenure, The Arc Carroll County updated its strategic plan to reflect a transformational move away from facility-based services to more community-focused opportunities. Sherri-Le also directed a review and update of The Arc Carroll County’s bylaws.

While Sherri-Le brought strong administrative leadership to the board, she was also an active participant in any community-building event she could attend. She volunteered at countless holiday parties, staff recognition events, and fundraisers. Sherri-Le and her husband are also generous financial supporters to The Arc Carroll County and its mission. Outside of the organization, Sherri-Le is a champion advocate on statewide issues, talking directly with local delegation members and writing letters of support to government officials. The Arc Carroll County is proud to have someone as engaged and dedicated as Sherri-Le Bream as a volunteer leader!

**Josh Miller, The Arc Central Chesapeake Region**

Josh Miller has been an outstanding volunteer with The Arc Central Chesapeake Region (CCR) for over a decade, serving on their Board of Directors since 2009. During his tenure, Josh has served on The Arc CCR’s Quality Committee, which focuses on ensuring the people they support can live self-determined lives, a position he holds with great honor. Josh’s commitment to both the Board and Quality Committee is evident, as he has rarely, if ever, missed a meeting; even amidst the pandemic, he continues to attend every virtual meeting.

With Josh wrapping up his service to the Board in June, his presence and impact will be missed dearly. The Arc CCR wants to ensure Josh’s dedication to its mission does not go unrecognized. Thank you, Josh, for your continued support of people with IDD across Anne Arundel County and the Eastern Shore.

**Rose Froelich, The Arc of Frederick County**

Rose Froelich has been an incredible volunteer with The Arc of Frederick County during such an uncertain year. Rose, a psychology student at Walla Walla University, completed her internship with The Arc of Frederick County, which including leading a ten-week virtual class, focusing primarily on farms. She carefully planned zoom sessions and coordinated with expert guest speakers, much to the excitement of participants. Rose’s successes were evident in the increasing popularity and attendance of the classes, inspiring the chapter to incorporate guest speakers into their other virtual offerings.
Matthew Hart, The Arc Howard County

Matt Hart of Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab has opened new doors as a volunteer with The Arc Howard County. Working with Project SEARCH, Matt helped create a virtual internship for aspiring professionals during the pandemic. When on-site internships with the Howard County Government were brought to a halt, Matt was the catalyst in bringing APL Managers on board to volunteer as intern mentors.

Matt was also a great ambassador for the program, spreading the word of its mission. With the successful launch of the program, Matt and The Arc Howard County hope that the mentor/mentee relationships continue after the year’s program completes, leading to a better understanding of the abilities of people with IDD and increased employment opportunities. For his program leadership and commitment to advancing employment, Matt Hart is incredibly deserving of this award.

Donna DePamphilis, The Arc Maryland

Donna has been an outstanding volunteer with The Arc Maryland, serving on our Board of Directors for two terms. During her volunteer service to The Arc, Donna has served on the highly committed and important Governmental Affairs and Education Committees, bringing both professional and personal experience and expertise to the table when considering important statewide issues that would impact children and adults with IDD. Donna’s commitment to the organization is clear; She shared perspectives that challenged thinking and made us better as a result. She rarely, if ever, missed a meeting and signed up to be an Ambassador from The Arc Maryland with one of our partner Chapter organizations. As Ambassador, Donna ensured that communication was enhanced and critical information was shared between state and local chapter partners, strengthening our relationships.

With Donna’s board service ending, we have no doubt she will continue her volunteer service through committee work and perhaps board servitude elsewhere. We are appreciative of Donna’s commitment to our mission and the organization’s work over the years. Her presence and thoughtful contributions to our board will be missed.

Stephanie D. Katz, The Arc Montgomery County

Stephanie Katz has been a Board Member with The Arc Montgomery County since 2014, serving as the President for the last four. Stephanie takes her commitment as a leader seriously, leading Board meetings and attending almost every Committee meeting. She asks insightful questions and frequently offers suggestions that help solve outstanding issues.

Stephanie’s commitment to the organization goes well above and beyond her Board service. She works diligently to connect people to The Arc Montgomery County as volunteers, donors, sponsors, and employees. Stephanie always shares her experience with people she meets through networking groups and at her work as a Human Resources Consultant. On a personal level, she sets an example for other Board members by supporting the organization’s events and fundraising appeals. Stephanie’s dedication and devotion are unmatched, and she is unquestionably worthy of being The Arc Montgomery County’s honoree.
The Leonardtown High School National Honor Society has been a welcome addition to The Arc Southern Maryland’s community. Members of the National Honor Society began delivering meals to individuals the chapter supports through their Meals Made with Love Program. During the holiday season, ten high school students and their families prepared delicious meals and delivered them to each of The Arc Southern Maryland’s houses in Saint Mary’s County. Students’ involvement with the agency quickly expanded with the introduction of a Pen Pal Program. As students and individuals supported by the chapter began writing with each other, great relationships were formed! Each participant now eagerly awaits the next message from their new friend. The Arc Southern Maryland greatly appreciates the efforts of Leonardtown High School’s National Honor Society for creating a more welcoming, unified community in Saint Mary’s County.

Bob Bodell, The Arc Washington County

Bob Bodell has been part of The Arc Washington County’s Board of Directors since 2015, serving as their President since 2017. During Bob’s tenure, The Arc Washington County has seen advances in service quality and financial stability that have solidified the organization as a provider of choice in Washington County. Under Bob’s Guidance, the chapter has seen an 87% decrease in hands-on behavioral interventions, the establishment of The Arc Washington County’s Endowment, and a Capital Campaign that raised over $5,750,000 to renovate more than 30,000 square feet of facilities. The Arc Washington County is eternally grateful to Bob for his dedication to The Arc Washington County’s mission and people!

Sloane Gabrielle Butler, The Arc Prince George’s County

Sloane Butler has been more than a dedicated volunteer at The Arc Prince George’s County. Every Monday over the past several months, she assisted with the chapter’s food distribution program for individuals with IDD and senior citizens in the county. In addition to volunteering at the chapter’s vaccination clinics, she helped coordinate visits from Governor Hogan and Congressman Anthony Brown when they toured the clinics. Sloane has also offered stellar administrative support as she prepared hundreds of tax receipts for mailing and adeptly managed a gift package mailing for holiday donors. While volunteering, Sloane has demonstrated a level of maturity and selflessness that extends far beyond her years. She is a passionate, detail-oriented, focused, and calm leader. Sloan has exceeded expectations for every task with enthusiasm and laser-like focus. The Arc Prince George’s County is more than pleased to recognize Sloane for her giving spirit.

Lt. Hugh John Dougherty, The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region

Lt. Dougherty has been a volunteer with The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region (NCR) over the past four years. As the Chair of their Standing Committee during that time, Lt. Dougherty has required that he sign all the incident reports that are sent to the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Lt. Dougherty’s support to the agency has, however, gone beyond his Board contributions. In the past, a new person the chapter supported was struggling to adjust to their new environment. Knowing their love for the Police and Fire Department, Lt. Dougherty decided to visit them, much to their excitement! Lt. Dougherty has also assisted The Arc NCR navigate issues with supported individuals and in their Community Living homes. He is always more than willing to share guidance, resources, and his network. He has been an invaluable community leader for The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region!
School Inclusion Awards

This award recognizes a school, teacher, educator, administrator, support personnel, or other education professional who has demonstrated excellence in providing quality inclusive educational opportunities for students with IDD, reflective of The Arc’s position on education and inclusion of students with IDD.

Sara Wagner, Folger McKinsey Elementary School

Sara Wagner, a Special Education Teacher at Folger McKinsey Elementary School, always has the students’ strengths in mind as she helps build out their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Before the start of the school year, Sara has even sent out personalized notes to incoming students detailing each step of the school day to ease their nerves and get them excited for what’s to come!

Sara has been a breath of fresh air to parents going through the IEP process, consistently collaborating with parents, which became increasingly vital in virtual learning. Sara has also fostered an inclusive culture in the school through “the Positivity Project.” The inclusion and acceptance seen by students under Sara’s guidance are a direct testament to her work, and for that, we cannot thank her enough!

Merrideth Wile, Northern Middle School

Merrideth Wile, an Eighth Grade Counselor at Northern Middle School in Hagerstown, has been an instrumental advocate for inclusion at her school. She is a dynamic and motivating counselor who is dedicated to her students. Merrideth has organized and incorporated The Arc Maryland’s “Together We’re Better” program into school activities during each of the past two school years. She organized a school-wide assembly for the student body to learn from advocates with IDD about inclusion in school and the community.

Merrideth also set her sights on taking these lessons beyond the classroom. She has shared program resources on posters throughout the halls and encouraged students and parents to get involved in the program’s artwork contest. Her guidance was on full display in 2021, as a Northern Middle student took first place in the middle school art contest! Thank you, Merrideth, for championing school inclusion efforts at Northern Middle School.

The Arc Maryland Spotlight: Together We’re Better

The Arc Maryland’s statewide inclusive education campaign, “Together We’re Better,” raises awareness of the value and importance of inclusion of students with and without disabilities.

“Together We’re Better” features in-person and online presentations with advocates, artwork contests, and a Diversity Celebration Toolkit with books, videos, websites, and more!

Learn More at www.TheArcMD.org/Programs/TWB or Scan Me!
Catalyst Awards

This award conveys official acknowledgement, honor, and appreciation from the Association to individuals for exceptional leadership as innovators “a catalyst” of change, making significant contributions on behalf of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Rob Malone, The Arc Prince George’s County

Rob Malone, Executive Director at The Arc Prince George’s County, eased the trepidation and uncertainty brought on by the pandemic in his community through clear communication and quick action. Rob organized countless meetings with chapter staff, supported individuals, and families, along with local and state leaders to share the latest health updates and garner feedback from stakeholders.

With the health of the community in mind, Rob established a COVID Response Team to monitor group homes and started a vaccine clinic that administered over 1,700 doses. He also established a partnership with the County Government to distribute groceries and safety supplies to County residents in need using the chapter’s vans. His quick thinking assisted the greater community and provided the organization with the opportunity to rehire some of their drivers, who were previously out of work. Through tremendous determination, grace, and care, Rob was truly a catalyst for change during the pandemic.

Troy Van Scoyoc, The Arc Washington County

Troy Van Scoyoc, the Executive Director at The Arc Washington County, has been an outstanding leader for his chapter and community during a year of tremendous uncertainty and change. His tireless work to support the individuals they serve, their families, and their staff was extenuated during the pandemic. He helped to ensure clear communications with the community, established an internal task force, held town hall meetings for staff, and advocated for proper PPE for the organization’s staff and supported individuals.

Troy’s efforts extended beyond The Arc and into the greater Washington County Community, as he partnered with the County Health Department to use their agency as a vaccine clinic, open to other provider agencies and the general public, ensuring a safer and healthier community. Additionally, Troy took his efforts statewide, leading The Maryland Conference of Executives of The Arc through a unique year of advocacy efforts and relaying of information. We are grateful for Troy’s resilient leadership and confident it will continue forward in the “new” world.

The Arc Maryland Spotlight: Upcoming Events

Save the Dates for our Upcoming Events in 2021 and 2022!

Fall 2021  
Innovations Event: Highlighting SpArc Tank & Announcing New Funding Opportunity

January 13, 2022  
Legislative Calendar Day (in-Person Event)

February 22, 2022  
Developmental Disabilities Day at the Legislature (in-Person Event)

Late Spring 2022  
The Arc Maryland Annual Convention & Awards Banquet (in-Person Event)
The Arc Outstanding Employee of the Year:
Gilbert John Zucchi Direct Support Professional Award’s

Each chapter of The Arc in Maryland selected one Direct Support Professional for state-wide honor and recognition. The DSP shall be deemed to exemplify the qualities of Gil Zucchi, including superior moral strength and integrity, devotion to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities beyond the call of duty, warm personal relationships, respect, thoughtfulness, and fairness in relationships with persons with IDD. This award is presented to The Arc employees in Direct Support who have made the greatest contribution to their chapters and the mission of The Arc through both personal and professional efforts.

Ephrem Sahle, The Arc Baltimore

Ephrem Sahle has supported an individual with The Arc Baltimore as a live-in residential coordinator for 12 years. Ephrem has been a reliable and constant presence in their life, knowing their likes and dislikes, unique challenges, and physical needs. When the individual whom Ephrem supports was hospitalized, they, unfortunately, developed life-threatening aspiration issues and were placed on a ventilator. During this time, Ephrem took it upon himself to fly to Georgia, where the individual’s sister lived, and drove her to Baltimore to be with her sibling.

Ephrem was invaluable to the doctors due to his knowledge of the patient’s medical history and health. During the hospital stay, Ephrem remained by the individual’s side until their fortunate recovery. Ephrem drove their sister back to Georgia when it was clear they were on the right track. He keeps in touch with her regularly as he continues to support the individual in whatever comes their way.

Hank Cortesini, The Arc Carroll County

Hank Cortesini has worked as a DSP at The Arc Carroll County for almost five years. One of Hank’s biggest strengths is adaptability, impressing his supervisor with how easily he adjusts to working with individuals with varying abilities. Hank is constantly adapting alternative activities to suit the style of supported individuals. He places the utmost value on keeping them happy and involved.

One minute, Hank is quietly assisting a gentleman with updates to his blog, and the next, he is singing and dancing with another individual! He is not afraid to embrace the personalities and interests of the individuals he supports. His gentle demeanor and lovely personality make people gravitate towards him. One winter during a snowstorm, Hank even shoveled a person’s driveway to ensure they did not miss out on the activities they love. The Arc Carroll County cannot thank Hank enough for going above and beyond in his support!

Arthur Ellis, The Arc Central Chesapeake Region

Arthur Ellis has been with The Arc Central Chesapeake Region just shy of 18 years! His dedication to The Arc’s mission and his day-to-day responsibilities are evident in his approach, decisions, and the environment that he creates for the staff and the people he supports. Arthur knows the value of knowledge sharing and building others up; he has become a go-to team member for training.

Arthur is always ready to lend a hand. His calm demeanor has proven imperative to the successful operation of a household, especially in times of anxiety and crisis. Arthur also ensures that family members are highly involved and encourages those connections. Arthur’s contributions to The Arc are valued and do not go unnoticed.
Eric S. Green, The Arc of Frederick County

Eric Green has been a dedicated DSP with The Arc of Frederick County for 18 years after being referred to the chapter by the individual’s family. Since then, Eric has developed a strong rapport with the individual and family while providing excellent care. He has spent 40 hours per week with this individual over almost two decades! Through that time, he has supported them through hardships and times of joy and celebration as they continue to strengthen their relationship, rooted in trust.

Eric regularly attended medical appointments to support the individual’s grandmother with in-home follow-through, provided dignified personal care, and implemented new activities for them to enjoy together. Over the past 18 years, Eric has become an integral part of this individual’s life, and his hard work and dedication are celebrated by The Arc of Frederick County.

The DSP Staff, The Arc Howard County

Over the past year, The Arc Howard County knew it would be impossible to pick just one person to receive this prestigious award. The COVID-19 pandemic served to shine a bright spotlight on the work their Direct Support Staff does day in and day out. Staff left the safety of their families and homes to continue to support the people The Arc Howard County serves.

Unfortunately, DSPs dealt with tragedy, waiting in the hospital as the people they have come to know as “family” fought COVID, and in some cases, attending their funerals. Through it all, support staff continued to come to work, took people to appointments, made sure they had food, friends, and fun. Their dedication could not possibly go unnoticed.

Ed Stewart, The Arc Montgomery County

Ed Stewart has been an employee with The Arc Montgomery County for nearly three decades. In his position as a DSP, Ed has proven to be reliable, caring, and professional with the individuals he supports and their families. He desires the best for the people he supports and is committed to having quality and creative interactions daily. He is a mentor and positive role model for his peers throughout his time with the chapter.

Recently, when an individual he supports experienced a heart attack and stopped breathing, Ed quickly put his CPR training into action until paramedics arrived, thereby saving the person’s life. Now, Ed continues to use his skills and experience in one of The Arc Montgomery County’s residential houses. Along with the people he supports, Ed is looking forward to entering back into the community soon.

Ginger Robinson, The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region

Ginger Robinson has been an amazing addition to The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region’s; (NCR) Community Living program, where she began working in March 2020 when her previous program temporarily closed. In her new role, Ginger consistently shatters expectations. Outside of the home she typically staffs, Ginger helps provide support in The Arc NCR’s Community Living homes whenever help is needed.

She has also stepped in to help conduct classes in the agency’s new Virtual Supports program when a trainer becomes unavailable. Ginger takes great pride in her work and genuinely cares about the people she supports. She consistently encourages people to participate in The Arc NCR’s Spirit Week themes, which have kept people engaged and provided a sense of normalcy. She also excels in supporting people to focus and achieve their weekly goals. The Arc NCR is lucky to have a team player who is such a motivated and compassionate person.
Mathew Poku, The Arc Prince George’s County

Mathew Poku currently works as a Residential Counselor at University Park in The Arc Prince George’s County’s Community Living program. He is an outstanding team player who is willing to help in any way possible. Mathew is hardworking and always up for new challenges, which have been plentiful in the past year, putting his resourcefulness on full display.

Mathew did a tremendous job keeping himself and the people he supports safe and healthy during the pandemic. He made careful note of protocols during quarantine and isolation periods. He is also considered a positive role model by many members of The Arc Prince George’s County family. His levels of compassion and dedication are unmatched at his chapter, making him a deserving honoree for this award!

John Gough III, The Arc Southern Maryland

John Gough has been employed with The Arc Southern Maryland for a little over seven years as a Transportation Specialist. John is a dependable employee who helps out in the residential homes as well as the vocational programs. He is devoted to providing quality care to the individuals supported by The Arc Southern Maryland. The people he supports are incredibly fond of John. They look forward to every opportunity to spend time with him in the community.

John’s support also stretches to his coworkers within the organization. He is always willing to help them out in whatever ways possible. His reliability, thoughtfulness, giving nature, and respectfulness make him a pleasure to work with. The organization is proud to have John as part of The Arc Southern Maryland Team.

Bonnie L. Bowman, The Arc Washington County

Bonnie Bowman is a legend of a DSP who has been working with The Arc Washington County for over a quarter of a century! Bonnie is compassionate and selfless, working far beyond her job description and offering her heart to her work. Whether she is preparing home-cooked meals, putting together holiday celebrations, or looking out for personal needs, Bonnie always provides high-quality support with grace and skill.

In recent years, Bonnie faced incredible hardship, supporting the needs of two individuals in the last years of their lives. She remained by their sides as a caregiver, family supporter, and, most importantly, a friend. Bonnie was applauded by families for her patience and kindness in their loved ones’ final days: staying up all night, fielding concerns with Hospice, cleaning up personal items, and being an emotional support to fellow residents. It is times like these that her service shines most brightly. She is truly an unsung hero of The Arc Washington County!

Event Spotlight: DSP Appreciation Week

Direct Support Professional Appreciation Week is being celebrated from September 12 to 18, 2021! Please join your local chapter of The Arc during this week as they hold events to show workforce appreciation and honor the individuals who are the backbone of services and supports!
The Legacy Award

This award is presented on those occasions where the individual’s lifetime work leaves a legacy for the future and mission of The Arc.

Sue Rattman, The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region

Sue Rattman has been with The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region for 28 years, dedicating her career to supporting people with IDD and their families. Sue is incredibly proud of the support she has given to students to leave segregated settings and truly thrive in their ideal lives, fully included in the community. She always sees the potential in others, supporting them in molding their vision for the future into a reality, setting personal goals, and recognizing their own potential. Sue has also been a rock for family support services, educating parents on the options and rights of their children. Her resources have been invaluable to over a thousand families, easing them through the anxieties of navigating special education.

While Sue’s roles have changed, her drive and vision remained unwavering. Through countless families supported, program initiatives, trainings, calls, and visions raised to fruition, Sue Rattman’s entire career is a crowning achievement of helping individuals with IDD and their families. Her presence at The Arc will be dearly missed as she retires this month, but the impact she made will be felt for decades.

The President’s Cup

This award is selected each year by The Arc Maryland’s state President and honors those who have contributed to the mission and vision of The Arc by providing exceptional commitment to improve the quality of life for people with IDD.

Beatrice Rodgers

Bea Rodgers has supported thousands of people with disabilities and their families throughout her local community and state over her five decades of service. Early in her career, Bea worked in county and state levels of government, focusing on disability policy, equity, and rights. Later, Bea became the first Executive Director of Resource Connections: a service coordination organization that assisted people with IDD to lead and live their best lives. The organization served as a model for others to follow: embracing a fully person-centered and family-centered approach to care coordination. Following the organization’s establishment and a short-lived retirement, Bea joined The Arc Prince George’s County as a Public Policy Coordinator, facilitating membership participation in governmental affairs activities at local, state, and federal levels. After several years, Bea again retired and re-emerged in the advocacy scene, this time working with the Prince George’s Provider Council to become a leading force of advocacy in the county.

Throughout her distinguished career and life, Bea has been a beacon of hope and support for many people. Her unselfish, untiring, and unwavering commitment to The Arc’s mission and work has resulted in several advances, including increased community funding for services, protections and advancements of rights, reduced barriers to care, and increased measures for government accountability.

With The Arc Maryland, Bea has been an active and committed Board member, serving as the Chair of the Search Committee for the organization’s Executive Director in 2016-2017 and on the Nominating Committee. Currently, Bea is the Board Secretary and Co-Chair of the Governmental Affairs Committee. Over the years, Bea has been recognized with numerous awards for her advocacy with local chapters of The Arc and her support of individuals with Mental Health conditions. While we know Bea feels her work is never done, we cannot honor her enough. She is truly deserving of our highest award: The President’s Cup.