



Recognizing National Family Caregivers Month



On November 30, family caregivers from The Arc of New Jersey spoke to dignitaries and decision-makers about the challenges they face and their priorities for the service delivery system and policy that will impact their loved ones with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The virtual event included Department of Human Services Assistant Commissioner Jon Seifried, Senate President Steve

Sweeney and Assemblyman Dan Benson (pictured above). Families discussed a wide-range of issues including employment, the Direct Support Professional workforce, funding needs for next year's budget and access to behavioral supports. We thank all of our honored guests who helped us acknowledge this important occasion. If you are a family caregiver in need of support or assistance navigating the service delivery system, please visit The Arc of NJ's Family Institute website [here](#) or email the director at Lford@arcnj.org. To read our Family Caregivers Month special edition newsletter [click here](#).

Meet The Arc of NJ's New CJAP Dir. Robyn Holt

The Arc of New Jersey is pleased to introduce Robyn Holt as our organization's new Criminal Justice Advocacy Program Director. Robyn started with The Arc in September. She has experience as a clinician and program director for Medallion Healthcare, Catholic Charities and St. Joseph's Health. Here we take a few minutes to learn more about what led Robyn to The Arc of New Jersey and what her plans are for the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program.

1. Where did you work prior to The Arc of NJ and what attracted you to the Criminal Justice Advocacy program?

Much of my experience leading up to my work with the Criminal Justice Advocacy Program was dedicated to working with individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. After supervising at a partial care center, my journey led me to supervising a Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT). During this time, I gained invaluable experience working with individuals with psychiatric illness and co-occurring disorders. My time with PACT allowed me the initial glimpse into working with individuals that have become involved in the criminal justice system. Although somewhat unexperienced in the realm, I learned through trial and error and networking with those in the justice system on how to best assist the consumers in navigating what can be an extremely overwhelming and complex system. To continue reading our Q&A with Robyn, [click here](#).



Sweeney for Years of Support



Senate President Steve Sweeney, who was not re-elected last month in the third district, has done incredible work throughout his tenure in office on behalf of people with IDD and their families. As he finishes his final weeks as Senate President before the new legislative session begins in January, The Arc of New Jersey wanted the opportunity to thank him for all his many accomplishments which will continue to have long-lasting impacts on those we represent. To read Executive Director Tom Baffuto's letter to the editor about Senate President Sweeney, which was printed in the Star Ledger last month, [click here](#).

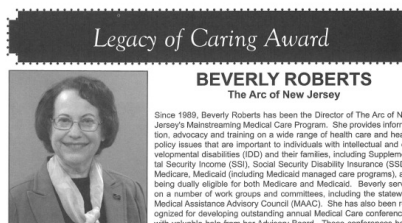
(Pictured left, Senate President Steve Sweeney with Self-Advocate Barbara Coppens at the State House in Trenton)

The Arc Mercer Celebrates Honorees with Galathon



The Arc of New Jersey congratulates The Arc Mercer on their outstanding 2021 Galathon which took place on November 19 at the Nottingham Ballroom. The event, which included a 70s theme, recognized a number of wonderful award recipients. This included Department of Human Services Assistant Commissioner Jon Seifried (pictured above, center) who was honored with the 2021 Community Partner Award. Also pictured above is The Arc of New Jersey's Executive Director Tom Baffuto (left) and The Arc Mercer's Executive Director Steve Cook (right).

ASAH Bestows Legacy of Caring Award to Beverly Roberts



Since 1989, Beverly Roberts has been the Director of The Arc of New Jersey's Mainstreaming Medical Care Program. She provides information, advocacy and training on a wide range of health care and health policy issues that are important to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicare, Medicaid (including Medicaid managed care programs), and being dually eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. Beverly serves on a number of work groups and committees, including the statewide Medical Assistance Advisory Council (MAAC). She has also been recognized for developing outstanding annual Medical Care conferences, with valuable help from her Advisory Board. These conferences have attracted prominent speakers who are leaders in the field of health care for individuals with IDD.

Because individuals with IDD who want to receive DDD services must have NJ Medicaid, it is important for families and staff to understand the differences in various Medicaid programs, and which one is most appropriate for each individual. Beverly has learned the fine points of all of the NJ Medicaid categories, and she provides this information in a clear and understandable manner.

For more than 30 years, Beverly has provided information and assistance to families and staff from across the State, and she is often asked to give presentations in her areas of expertise. These presentations were done in-person in the past, but since March 2020, the presentations have been done via Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the years, Beverly has given presentations to thousands of families, and she has received enthusiastic feedback from the attendees. She is laser-focused on her work – helping individuals with IDD and families, and advocating for systemic improvements in health care for individuals with IDD.

The Arc of New Jersey congratulates Beverly Roberts, Director of the Mainstreaming Medical Care Program, for receiving the Legacy of Caring Award from ASAH. ASAH is a not-for-profit organization of private schools and agencies which provide specialized services to infants, children and young adults with disabilities. Beverly was recognized for her incredible advocacy and assistance for families as it relates to health care, Medicaid, SSI, SSDI, and more. This is a well-deserved honor for all of Beverly's great work.

Sephora Includes NJ Self-Advocate in #GivingTuesday Video

In honor of #GivingTuesday, Sephora partnered with 12 organizations to take over their Rewards Bazaar. This meant people could use the points they earn from purchases at Sephora to donate money to organizations they care about. To help promote this initiative, Sephora released the following video which included Self-Advocate Barbara Coppens. Some of the footage from the video took place in The Arc of New Jersey's North

Brunswick office so be sure to click the video to view Barbara's great appearance in the compilation.



Tell Your Senators: Pass the Build Back Better Act



On Friday, November 19th, the House of Representatives passed the Build Back Better Act ([H.R. 5376](#)) by a vote of 220-213. The House version includes many of The Arc's policy priorities including historic funding for home and community-based services, paid leave, reforms to Supplemental Security Income, education, housing, and much more. We need you to act now! Tell the Senate to Pass the Build Back Better Act. [Click here to take action.](#)

News You Can Use!



1. The New Jersey Legislature passed a law that requires the NJ Department of Human Services to study social isolation among four groups: seniors age 65 and older, individuals with disabilities, individuals with mental illness, and those who have served or currently serve in the military. All individuals in these groups are welcome to complete the survey, regardless of whether they consider themselves socially isolated. If you identify with one or more of these groups, please consider completing the survey. If you care for or communicate with people in one or more these groups, please provide individuals with the Survey Monkey link and consider assisting them with completion of the survey. The survey can be accessed at <http://tiny.cc/njsocialisolation> and will be open until February 28, 2022.

2. COVID-19 booster doses are now available for all adults, age 18 or older as long as it has been at least six months after their last Pfizer or Moderna shot or at least 2 months after their one-dose Johnson & Johnson shot. [For more information, click here](#)

Upcoming Virtual Events!

Click below to register for one of our many upcoming virtual events/webinars. And be sure to check out our [calendar](#) for other future events.



The Family Institute Fireside Chat (*NEW* A series of chats with experts in their field as it relates to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities)

- December 15 at 6 pm: [With Beverly Roberts](#)

Webinars:

- December 8 at 6 pm: [Navigating PerformCare and the Children's System of Care](#)
- December 14 at 6 pm: [Yes! Your Child Can Work](#)

- December 15 at 6 pm: [Helping Your Student Build Social Skills](#)
- December 16 at 2 pm: [Equal Justice Talks: What You Need to Know About Municipal Court and Disorderly Persons Offenses](#)

Stay Healthy at Home - a webinar series hosted by the NJ Self-Advocacy Project - every Tuesday at 2 PM on GoToWebinar

The webinar series covers a variety of topics related to advocacy, life skills, employment, and civic engagement. Sessions are designed to be accessible to self-advocates, parents, and support staff. Live viewers can share comments, ask questions, and access resources.

- December 1: [So Relatable! Everyday Self-Advocacy](#)
- December 8: [Did You Know Your iPhone/iPad Can Do That?! Using iPhones/iPads to Promote Independence](#)
- December 15: [Overview of Supported Employment](#)
- December 22: [Mundane Objects, but Real Gains: At Home Workout Tips](#)
- December 29: [Still More to Come! NJSAP & NJSSAN in 2021](#)

Healthy Lifestyles Project LIVE! - every Wednesday at 11 AM on Zoom

This interactive series of events is hosted by the NJ Self-Advocacy Project and focuses on activities to promote health and wellness education for students and adults with I/DD. Live viewers will be able to share comments, ask questions, and participate in activities led by professionals *in real time*.

- December 2: [Food For Thought: Nutrition Guide and Winter Smoothie Recipe](#)
- December 9: [The Right Fit: Find Your Exercise with Adaptive Fitness](#)
- December 16: [Work it Out: Virtual Pilates Class](#)
- December 23: [Hindsight is 2020: Ugly Sweaters and New Year Nutrients](#)
- December 30: [Music to My Ears: A Collaborative Song-Writing Session](#)

We also have Fitness Fridays at 1 PM: [Click here to register](#).

A Message from The Arc of New Jersey

Thank You

Thank you to all our generous donors who, over the past number of months, have made donations to support us. These critical funds will help us in our efforts to assist individuals with I/DD and their families, as well as our local county chapters, through the COVID19 crisis. To put your donation to work for individuals with I/DD and their families, [click here](#).

If you have questions or need assistance, our staff is here to help. [Click here](#) to access information about our Programs.

Use Your Amazon App to Support The Arc of New Jersey

If you are an AmazonSmile customer, you can now support The Arc of New Jersey, Inc. in the Amazon shopping app on your Android device! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. If you have the latest version of the Amazon Shopping App, open the App on your Android device.
2. View Settings and select AmazonSmile.
3. Follow the in-App instructions to complete the process.

If you do not have the latest version of the Amazon shopping App, update your App. Click [here](#) for instructions.



Need help or more information? Want to become active in our advocacy network?

- **Visit our website** to access lots of great information that can help you navigate service systems, find resources and keep you informed as to the important issues facing children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.
- **Join our advocacy network** to add your voice to the thousands who are working hard to promote

and protect the quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

[Visit our website](#)

[Join an Advocacy Network](#)

[DONATE NOW!](#)

STAY CONNECTED



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