

We exist as an advocacy organization to make it possible for each person with a developmental disability to participate fully in all aspects of the community and to support the effort of each individual to determine his/her own future.



Strengthening our local identity
Focusing our programs and services
Improving agency financial stability
Extend programs and services - collaborate
Refining practices, policies, and expectations

Annual Meeting 2020
Proposed Slate of Board of Directors
Term 2020-2023

John Argo

One of the advocacy things I have done in the past is give speeches and presentations about autism. I have spoken to local police agencies about how to work with people who may be on the autism spectrum.

I currently am a peer mentor with Integrated services of Kalamazoo. I've been doing this for 5 years. With that position I am able to help individuals learn to be more independent in the community.

Lastly I think I would be a good board member because of my experience with advocacy and my life experiences.

Sarah Carmany

I want to join the Arc community Advocates board as a self-advocates with a disability is cause I myself have been a self-advocate since 2012 and I have been self-advocating with the Developmental Disabilities Council back when the Regional Inclusion Committee Coalition (RICC) where known as the statewide self-advocacy network and have been advocating at the state level up to the present. I have advocated for public transportation, Employment for people with developmental disabilities and to end sub minimum wage, Employment first etc. I have. Help get the autism insurance bills in law. And. Helped. The Medicaid freedom to work bills get into law. I have testified in front of the transportation committee of the Michigan House of Representatives to keep the transportation funding as is. I have also been in many Developmental Disabilities Council trainings and events as well. Another thing that I have attended since I have started to advocate is the annual legislative day event now called self-advocacy day event which is held in Lansing. It's a day where self-advocates make appointments and go up to Lansing and talk to their legislators about issues that effect persons with disabilities. I think that I could help the community advocates board by helping the to self- advocate in your work. I can also help other persons with disabilities learn to be good strong self-advocates also.

D'Jaris Coles-White

I am seeking to join The Arc Community Advocates Board because I have an interest in service and would be honored to work with you in identifying partnerships, support and/or addressing problems (including drafting or modifying policy and procedures) that may affect persons with disabilities and their right to participation fully in the community. Over the span of my career, I've had the opportunity to work as a speech-language pathologist, clinical supervisor, academic instructor, and researcher. I believe that my experiences have prepared me to serve on this board. Some highlights include my knowledge of federal and state laws governing special education and my experience with navigating services and support for my son with Autism so that he may participate in school and community activities. I also have grant writing experience and have had to manage the documentation and responsibilities that come with receiving a grant.

I have lived in Kalamazoo with my husband and triplet boys since 2015. I love this community and would love to be a part of making it a community that welcomes (and can support) all of its citizens.

Allison Hammond

Allison Hammond, Ed.D. is a longtime resident of Kalamazoo who has served on many local boards as well as the Association of Junior Leagues International. In addition, Allison is a Registered Parliamentarian. These experiences help her to understand the role of a Board Member. Allison also has 8 years of experience facilitating PATHS/ MAPS and received training in 2012 by Jack Pearpoint and Linda Kahn. Her gifts include active listening and being open to various voices while focusing on the issues at hand. Allison is also passionate that people who experience disability have the right to live life in the community as they chose.

Jenn Nap

The ARC holds a special place in my heart, as Anne was a great partner in working with the public school system for my son Hunter. I am an Autism Momma of a teenage boy age 15, with a Autism and Epilepsy label. I have been advocating for Hunter and his peers for 11 years through behavioral schools and public schools. I have found a network of families to lean into during hard times and times of victory. I am a believer in seeing the person not the label. I would love the opportunity to share my own personal journey with the board and help to increase the services available to families in the Kalamazoo area. Currently Hunter and I are spending some time apart after experiencing caretaker fatigue. Our family has found that no matter how much work I tried as Hunter's mom, that a team approach is the best way to handle the additional demands placed on our family by the world of Autism. I have been an active member of the Kalamazoo Community all of my life.

Proposed Executive Committee Officers

Board Chair 2020-2022

Dr. Vickie Edwards-Director since 2018

I am new to the Kalamazoo area and have been looking for a way to better integrate myself with the local community. I believe that the Arc provides a significant value to the community, both for the children and families it serves directly, but also to the broader community by ensuring a diverse and better-integrated community. I hope to bring my experience and knowledge from fifteen years of working in the nonprofit sector and the energy of my students at WMU to help the Arc continue to grow in the years to come. I am an Assistant Professor in the School of Public Administration and Affairs at Western Michigan University.

Executive Board-Secretary 2020-2021

Teresa Tucker-Director since 2018-

As the parent and guardian of a young adult recovering from a Traumatic Brain Injury, navigating the world of services and advocacy is woven into my daily life. In the last eight years, our family has experienced the challenges of finding resources and advocating for our son. My background includes twenty years of classroom teaching high school science and serving as the department chair. I currently teach science online, working with at-risk learners in six different states, and I am the Science Content Lead, helping my cohorts identify high quality resources. It is an honor to serve on the ARC Board and I look forward to advancing opportunities available for families in our community.

Current Executive Officers

Treasurer-David Ullrey

Chair Ex-Oficio-Kelley Howard

Vice Chair-Vacant