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2019

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

TORCH LIGHT

The Arc Community Advocates Newsletter - Winter 2018/19


The Arc
Community Advocates

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

By Susan Rush, Executive Director

As we look to 2019, it is important to stop and celebrate the 2018 victories that individuals with, and affected by, a disability made through speaking up about human rights and policy which can have a detrimental outcome for those who depend on assistance and supports to live a “quality” life in the community.

If you are like me, you may feel exasperation about America’s moral compass and the fact that the current advocacy is just to keep the progress we’ve made and limits the cause moving forward. Sometimes it may feel better to just pull a blanket up over your head and disengage!

BUT, that is what individuals who support harmful policy want you to do! I say to you, now is NOT the time to retreat or give up, now IS the time to shape this country and policy that is for all people, that sets a minimum standard for ALL people to live the American dream.

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DISABILITY
RIGHTS
are
HUMAN
RIGHTS

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Have you considered
remembering The Arc
Community Advocates in
your will?

A bequest or planned gift
is a simple way to make a
tremendous difference for
years to come. For more
information please contact
Susan Rush at srush@communityadvocates.org
or 269.342.9801 x 103.



12TH ANNUAL INCLUSION CONFERENCE

Advocate. Educate. Empower.

On March 27th, individuals, families, providers, educators, professionals and other community members will come together for the 12th Annual Inclusion Conference hosted by The Arc Community Advocates and sponsored by Eaton.

A wide-variety of topics and presenters will be on hand with the latest best practice and supports that make the most impact for choice and inclusion for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Self-Advocacy, Employment, Transition, and Autism are the breakout topic areas with a variety of exhibitors & entrepreneurs. Join us as we support each other in the journey for a truly inclusive community where everyone is connected and valued.

For more information please visit: <https://communityadvocates.org/inclusion-conference>

MISSION

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



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To stand up and say NO, we will not allow our most vulnerable citizens to be targets for a balanced budget or policy change that relegates individuals to substandard living because they have a disability.

As sappy as it may sound, we have each other to move together for the common good. At the Arc Community Advocates, you have our commitment to stand with you to advocate for what is right, good and remove barriers to fundamental civil rights like self-determination, healthcare, education, community-living supports, fair wages for direct care workers and meaningful employment of individuals with disabilities to name a few.

Many don't realize what they have in their community until it is gone. It is our

responsibility as advocates to continue to speak up and speak out for decency and equality! Let's turn our anger and fear into action! We have each other - are you in?



“Be an advocate for the people and causes important to you, using the most powerful tool only you have—your personal stories.”

— John Capecchi and Timothy Cage

www.communityadvocates.org



COMMON ADVOCACY MISTAKES

Did you know The Arc Community Advocates have been advocating in a variety of life areas for over 65 years? Our advocates are constantly mindful of their role and the trust parents place in them. We take a “solutions” based approach which calls for a certain level of diplomacy, cool headedness and informed understanding of the situation.

Often times, individuals and families are referred to us with misinformation and intense emotion that can be detrimental to the process and outcomes. We understand the trust parents put in us and are careful to review all the elements of their situation before we make a recommendation. Below is some great information by Robert Crabtree and came via Wrights Law Training:

The more serious mistakes non-lawyer advocates may make are generally ones of excess - excessive emotion that clouds judgement; excessive advice in areas beyond the advocate's expertise; excessive involvement in a case when

the parents would be better off doing things for themselves; raising parent's expectations excessively; and feeding parents a sense of outrage rather than a calm, persistent approach. Here are some common mistakes:

1. Using personal experiences to guide their advocacy.
2. Not enough sharing of information in a timely manner.
3. Assumptions.
4. Raising parents' expectations too high.
5. Being habitually confrontational.
6. Becoming too chummy with special education administrators.
7. Failure to learn about the child from the school personnel who work with him/her
8. Not staying informed of the special education process, laws procedures and substantive requirements

For more detailed information and to learn what The Arc Community Advocates does differently in order to limit these advocacy mistakes please visit:

<https://communityadvocates.org/find>

COMING UP

12th Inclusion
Conference:
SAVE THE DATE
March 27, 2019
WMU Fetzer Center

COMMUNITY EVENTS:

The Rise & Triumph of the Disability Rights Movement - an ALL NEW Disability Rights Workshop from Disability Network.
January 23, 2019
2:00-4:00 p.m.
Disability Network
517 E. Crosstown Pkwy. FREE!

Lunch & Learn at Disability Network - Intelligent Lives
February 11, 2019
11:30-1:30 p.m.
Disability Network
517 E. Crosstown Pkwy.

VALUES

As an affiliate member of The Arc, Community Advocates believes:

- Everyone is a valued, contributing member of their community.
- The Arc helps self-advocates and their families by creating opportunities, so that they can achieve their goals.
- The Arc fosters respect and protects the human rights of people with I/DD and their families.
- For over 65 years, The Arc has been a family-focused, grass roots organization.
- The Arc is the resource of first choice for people with I/DD and their FAMILIES regardless of the diagnosis and at all stages of life.

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