

Annual Membership Campaign

The Arc of Chemung recently hosted the **2nd Annual "Shot on Goal" Membership Campaign Kick-Off Event** at the First Arena in Elmira, NY to kick-off its Annual Membership Campaign. The 2nd Annual "Shot on Goal" Membership Campaign Kick-Off Event was presented by Elmira Structures, Inc.; The Hilliard Corporation; and Mengel Metzger Barr. Additional event sponsors included: Barrett's Bow Hunting; Cameron Manufacturing and Design; Chili's Grill & Bar; Hair Hut; Hesselson's; Horsehead's Do It Center; Oak Ridge Game Calls; Outback Steakhouse; Perry & Carroll, Inc.; Platinum Salon; Stoney Ridge Orchards; Sweet Frog; Walmart, Big Flats; and Yankee One Charter.



into a new decade, our agency continues to face enormous challenges given the current economic climate of our state and nation. It would be helpful for our advocacy with legislative and government officials to have the largest membership ever.

Enroll in The Arc of Chemung's Annual Membership Campaign online or contact Nikole at 607.734.6151 ext. 129 for more details.

Did you know that 92% of funds raised directly supports one of the nearly 800 individuals supported by The Arc of Chemung? Consider a gift to The Arc of Chemung today and help to create opportunities for individual successes.

Why is The Arc of Chemung's Annual Membership Campaign So Important?

Your support and inclusion in the agency helps people with disabilities become more independent, productive and integrated in our local community. Without your help, there is less opportunity for personal growth and achievement.

Membership provides our agency the ability to advocate legislatively at the state level. As we move

Pathway to Employment

Shawn recently started a 20 hour community based volunteer experience with photographer Tracy Parker of High Image Photography. Shawn will be learning about basics of photography, how to use various cameras and lenses, lighting options, what to consider when composing a photograph, and generally exploring the field!

Shawn's enthusiasm was priceless! He asked many questions of Tracy, listening intently to his responses. Then, Shawn asked if Tracy would shoot his photo. After the photograph was taken, Tracy demonstrated how to edit the picture and gave Shawn copies. The next visit is already scheduled and Tracy has asked Shawn to bring his own camera along so he can teach him how to use some of the features. In future meetings, Tracy will also be including Shawn in some photo sessions scheduled with customers.

This opportunity has been made available through Shawns participation in the Pathway to Employment program through The Arc of Chemung. Beginning in July 2015 and extending for one year, Shawn is working closely with a vocational job coach to discover more about the world of work, while identifying specific career options that interest him.

Pathway to Employment is a service available to individuals who are OPWDD HCBS waiver eligible who have a valued outcome of employment. Individuals will spend 278 hours of discovering interests, exploring careers, learning about work readiness skills and spending time participating in a variety of career opportunities through community-based volunteer experiences.

The outcome of this service is the Discovery Report which synthesizes the information learned and identifies a career goal though this exploration; providing the individual supported with the opportunity for informed choice in the world of work.



If you're a business and would like to offer an individual the opportunity to shadow, please let us know by contacting Diane at 607.734.6151 ext. 164

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Founded in 1953, The Arc of Chemung is a person-centered, not-for-profit organization committed to meeting the needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in the Chemung County area. The agency provides quality supports and opportunities for individual growth for every person supported by means of education, increased community acceptance, and participation.

The Arc of Chemung supports more than 800 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families annually. Learn more at ArcofChemung.org. The Arc of Chemung is a chapter of the state agency, NYSARC, Inc. and is nationally accredited by The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL).

President's Letter

The Arc of Chemung has provided exceptional services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for more than six decades. Currently serving over 800 individuals and their families here in Chemung County, the Agency's success is largely due to the collaborative efforts of our committed and dedicated staff, an inspiring and knowledgeable leadership team and the passionate involvement of our board and committee volunteers. However, we also rely on the generous support of community members throughout the year – and especially during our annual membership campaign!

Our 2016 initiative is underway, and the goal is to have another record-breaking year by achieving 3,500 members – but we need your help!

As a community organization committed to meeting the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities, we need the community's engagement to realize the fulfillment of our vision: an environment where every person we support is individually valued as a productive partner in the community. Your membership is critical to The Arc of Chemung's ability to support individuals as they grow personally, achieve new levels of independence and productivity and continue to make contributions to the local community.

This year, I'd also ask that you tell a friend or family member about the work done by our Agency, and encourage their membership! Support by the entire community is needed to continue our work around quality services, education, advocacy and family partnerships.

Remember, every contribution counts, no matter how large or small – so, thank you in advance for your support and participation!



Susan Post,
Board President

Executive Director's Letter

Our State Budget was passed, and with it, a new "rock and hard place." The "rock" is the minimum wage bill, calling for increases every year until we get to \$12.50 an hour. The "hard place" is not having the wherewithal to pay for it.

At The Arc of Chemung, we've always paid more than the minimum wage, and we plan to continue to do that. But unless the State comes up with more funding, every agency will find itself falling behind, including ours.

This is a perfect example of an "unfunded mandate". While we certainly want to get our staff the compensation they deserve, we can't do what the business sector does when faced with increasing costs and pass them on to the consumer. Almost all of our funding is set by government rates.

So how do we solve this dilemma? Certainly one way is to advocate with the State to provide the funding necessary to increase wages for our staff. This, in the long term, would be the best solution. Every agency, right now, is also looking at ways to become more efficient without adversely affecting the people we support. But that can only take you so far, and by the nature of our work, we are labor intensive.

While we have no easy answers right now, we are okay with the short term and, as always, will continue to advocate for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and our staff who support them. This will be an ongoing issue, and we'll keep you posted.



Michael Doherty,
Executive Director

Celebrating Individual Successes!

Eric was welcomed by The Arc of Chemung in December 2013. Prior to joining us, Eric lived in an "institutional" setting at Monroe Developmental Center, where he was inside the facility 24 hours/7 days each week, and did not go out into the community due to some severe behavioral challenges that he struggled with. After moving into one of The Arc's Individual Residential Alternatives (IRAs), that all changed!

Eric's typical day began with our consolidated support services day habilitation program, which was being offered in his particular residential location due to the severe behavioral challenges the residents are faced with. Staff at the IRA worked closely with Eric and as a result of his hard work and improvements in his physical behaviors, Eric's day programming changed. Eric is now able to be inclusive in the community, with the support of his IRA staff, five days each week and can request where their outings will take them. Some of Eric's favorite outings include: going out for fast food and loves to indulge in McDonald's, Burger King, and pizza places; going to local parks like Chapel Park, Eldridge Park, Mt. Pisca, and many others; going shopping at the area malls and book stores; and going to the Corning YMCA where he goes swimming.

"I think Day Hab is very important to my son. Being able to go out in the community for different activities has had a positive effect on his behaviors. He gets to interact with different people, his negative behaviors have greatly reduced, and his attitude is better and he seems very happy. When he comes home for visits, he is less aggressive and calmer," said Violet, Eric's mother.



Volunteer Spotlight

Residential volunteer, Heather Grinnell, believes it's crucial to give something back to her community. That's what she teaches her students at Elmira College, where she is adjunct professor of Psychology and Child and Adolescent Development, and that's what she does when she leaves the classroom and heads to Wellsburg. There, Heather is a valuable part of the afternoon routine.

"It's funny," she says, the days I volunteer are my busiest days but they are the days I relax the most." Heather enjoys helping people do crafts and make dinner and they look forward to her smiles and gentle encouragement. As she helped Coralie and Dolores put away the bobble heads they had painted together that day, she talked about the importance of leading by example.

"I volunteered for different organizations in the past, and at Elmira College we encourage our students to volunteer. So it only made sense for me to volunteer as well," she said. Heather couldn't talk long – Sarah was eager for her help in the kitchen. It was pasta night!

Wellsburg Residential Supervisor, Ashley Dolinich says they hit the jackpot with Heather. "Our individuals here typically do not warm up to new acquaintances fast – however, they all warmed up to Heather and welcome her each week with big smiles." Ashley says folks sit by the window waiting for Heather's arrival. "When she gets here, you'll know. They'll typically shout, 'Heather is here!'"

Thank you, Heather, for making such a positive impact at the Arc of Chemung!

To learn more about The Arc of Chemung's Volunteer Program, contact 607.734.6151 ext. 128 or email swansj@arcofchemung.org

