Achieve

The Arc
Bristol County

Save the Date
Wednesday, June 13, 2012
The Arc of Bristol County 53rd Anniversary Celebration
Holiday Inn Taunton, MA
Details will be announced as we get closer to the event, and posted on our website www.arcnbc.org.

Nominate a hero for The Arc’s Annual Awards. See page 6 for more information.

The Arc of Bristol County will participate in All Aboard The Arc for the first time on Sunday, April 29. An annual statewide fundraiser to benefit chapters of The Arc of Massachusetts, All Aboard The Arc efforts by The Arc of Bristol County will benefit our chapter. The morning of April 29 will start with send-off regional celebrations, with riders from each chapter boarding motor coaches destined for the John Hancock Hall in Boston. At about noon, a celebration in Boston will be held raising awareness and cheering our accomplishments. All Aboard The Arc has a dual purpose: to raise awareness of The Arc’s mission and to raise funds to support our mission.

Do you want to be a rider? Would you like to join us on April 29 for the ride in and back from Boston, along with the celebration? Each rider should register on www.allaboardthearc.org. Ask friends, family and co-workers to sponsor you. They can pay you in person or online www.allaboardthearc.org. Please send any payments to The Arc of Bristol County, 141 Park Street, Attleboro, MA 02703. You can raise funds in other ways too, such as a yard sale.

Do you want to start a team? Register your team on www.allaboardthearc.org. Let your team members know to go to www.allaboardthearc.org to update their pages. You can challenge other teams to beat your goals if they can.

Would you like to sponsor other riders or teams? You may make a donation directly with a rider or team you know or make a safe online gift at www.allaboardthearc.org in the name of a rider, team or for The Arc of Bristol County.

Please contact Pat Kirby if you are interested in sponsoring a banner for the bus, or make another in-kind contribution (for example: food for the send-off).

Achieve with us.
Welcome

Dear Friends of The Arc,

Happy New Year! For those of you who have been associated with The Arc for a while, you realize how incredibly proud I am of our organization and the amazing work we do. Our devoted staff, our wise board of directors, our trusting families, our determined individuals and our generous friends combine to form a powerful place which allows people with challenges to achieve.

This year, The Arc of Bristol County is joining with 17 Chapters of The Arc of Massachusetts in a movement called All Aboard The Arc (AATA). You will find more details about this effort and how you can be involved elsewhere in this newsletter or on the website www.allaboardthearc.org.

I am excited that The Arc of Bristol County has committed to AATA because:

• AATA gives our organization a chance to be part of the state-wide effort, combining our mutual passion for the welfare of people with disabilities.
• AATA is a fundraising effort much like a walk or other pledge drive, so those who can only give a little to help, will make a great difference because of our combined efforts.
• AATA is asking people to become Riders for a state-wide event on April 29. Each Arc will fill motor-coaches and ride into Boston as champions of our cause. As a rider you can ask people to sponsor you, form a team to raise funds, or sponsor another rider or The Arc of Bristol County as a whole. April 29 is an opportunity to witness how our cause resonates across the state.
• Though AATA is a state-wide effort, donations made in the name of The Arc of Bristol County will benefit our Arc, impacting the people you know and the region you live or work in.
• Donations to The Arc are as urgently needed now as never before. Daily we wait for news from the state house of potential cuts which will affect people with disabilities and our families. Embarking on this fundraising quest will empower everyone to have a part in helping individuals receive the quality and life-enhancing services The Arc provides.

I sincerely hope you will join us in this effort. Together we can bring light to our cause, strengthen our organization, and include people of all abilities on our quest to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families.

Make a statement: I care about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Make a pledge: Large or small, your donation, your team, your commitment will impact The Arc

Make a difference: We need you to be part of our cause, and AATA is a way to show your support

Hope you enjoy reading about the exciting happenings at The Arc in the rest of this Achieve newsletter.

Sincerely,

Michael Andrade
President & CEO

The Arc of Bristol County

The Fall River Resource Center is located on 182 North Main Street in Fall River. Our program offers a variety of recreational, social, and educational activities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Over the next months we will offer weekly bingos, movie groups, Wii activities and a variety of classes will be offered. Theme parties like a Mardi Gras celebration in February are enjoyed. Outings to area plays, parks, museums and the civic center in Providence are also offered. Call The Arc of Greater Fall River today for more information: 508-679-0001 or visit our website www.arcnbc.org.
The Arc of Bristol County Receives Accreditation  By Lesley Azzinaro

The Arc of Bristol County might have a new name and logo, but when put to the test by The Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services Office of Quality Enhancement, The Adult Services Department passed with flying colors. This was the first time since the merge with The Arc of Greater Fall River and The Arc of Greater New Bedford that the surveyors were reviewing not just Residential and Individual Home Support Services but Employment and Community and Day Supports.

The new Licensure and Certification process went very smoothly and they gave feedback after each audit which was highly positive.

The team worked very hard to achieve this great success. I would like to thank the team supervisors (Karen Fournier, Karen Grant, Doreen Mallette and Marge Valm) for their continued dedication and commitment. We are also very grateful to Trudy DeSignore, Sandy Fournier, John Neill, and Linda Lawn for their help and support.

Some of the positive feedback from our surveyors is as follows:

“Supporters are commended for ensuring that written and oral communication about individuals is respectful and promotes a sense of equality between individuals and those that support them.”

“The agency and its staff are commended for supporting people to realize their desire to live in settings that promote privacy, e.g. living in their own apartments or living with a spouse.”

“Staff are commended for their thorough familiarity with people’s unique needs, which was often enhanced by their longevity, as well as for their ability to advocate for people based on this knowledge.”

“The agency is congratulated on earning a two year license and in achieving a number of commendations in areas relating to licensure. Especially noteworthy has been the agency’s ability to maintain the overall quality of its supports as it has expanded in size.”

We look forward to The Office of Quality Enhancement’s return in January 2014.

Valerie Zagami of the Board of Directors commented, “I just wanted to take a moment and send my own congratulations to Lesley and the entire Adult Services team as well as all of The Arc for their incredible work and deserved acknowledgement by the surveyors. I am very proud to be on the board of such a wonderful agency and thank you all. I know you are all employees with distinction!”

Staying Fit at the Old Colony YMCA Middleboro

By Aaron Amaral and Justin Wilder

Participants at The Arc of Bristol County Day Habilitation Program in Middleboro are working hard to maintain their health and stay fit by watching their diets and getting ample amounts of exercise. The individuals just so happen to be fortunate enough that The Old Colony YMCA Middleboro Branch is located directly down the street.

Staffed by friendly, helpful people who know all of the individuals on a first name basis, the YMCA in Middleboro is an excellent resource for maintaining physical fitness and having some fun in the process. Participants enjoy utilizing all of the features available to them at the YMCA including various exercise equipment, treadmills, exercise bikes, weights, track, a brand new basketball court and even a swimming pool! The participants always feel welcome and accommodated when visiting the YMCA in Middleboro and that has made exercising not just a chore, but a happy, healthy hobby.
Winter isn’t a time to just stay indoors and wait for spring. Someone has to shovel the snow, right? Once outdoors, however, take precautions to keep your family safe. In ice and snow, accidents can occur easily, and before you know it you might be on your way to the emergency room. It’s easy to keep safe — and stay fit — during the cold months. By following a few tips, you can have a great time, no matter how much white stuff piles up outside.

Cold-Weather Hazards
Certain injuries are more common in the winter because cold-weather activities like ice-skating, sledding, snowboarding, and skiing can lead to accidents. Some illnesses are more common when the weather turns colder. Respiratory ailments, especially viruses like the flu, are prevalent because people stay indoors more and thus are exposed to more airborne germs. Wash your hands frequently and remember, it’s not too late to get a flu shot if you haven’t already received one!

At Home
One way to stay healthy while cooped up inside is to make sure your family washes their hands. It’s especially important to wash after sharing items, coughing, and blowing a runny nose to help prevent the spread of viruses.

Be sure to have your emergency supplies ready in case of a severe snowstorm. Blizzards and severe snowstorms have been known to knock out power for several days!

Decided you’ve had enough of the indoors and you’re going to get the family outside to shovel the snow? Take care! Snow shoveling is strenuous work. Always exercise caution when doing strenuous outdoor activities and be aware of pre-existing illness like heart disease, diabetes and seizures. Check regularly to make sure that mittens are dry and warm and noses aren’t too red.

Dressing for the Cold
If you’re going outside in the cold, stay safe — and warm. Make sure your everyone has a snack before going out. The calories will give their bodies energy in the cold weather.

And protect your faces with sunscreen. The idea of a sunburn in January can seem odd, but snow can reflect up to 85% of the sun’s ultraviolet rays.

Everyone should dress warmly in layers of clothes. If the top layer gets wet from snow or freezing rain, they can peel off some clothes down to a dry layer. Stick with wool or other fabrics and try to avoid cotton. Dress in long underwear, a turtleneck, and a sweater and coat. Add more layers depending on the temperature. Waterproof pants and jackets are great top layers! Don’t forget warm socks and boots to keep feet dry and a hat! It helps to have an extra pair of gloves or mittens tucked into your pockets if they plan to be outdoors for a while.

Winter Sports Safety
If you decide to go sledding for the day, make sure you know about the hill where you will be playing. Watch out for hills with rocks or those near busy roads. Sledding injuries can be very serious, so always exercise caution and never sled alone. If there isn’t a local skating rink, always be wary of frozen ponds and only skate on ice that has been declared safe.

Winter Travel
Always be sure to have a first-aid kit, extra blankets, and gloves in your car as well as extra healthy snacks and drinks and check your cell phone to make sure it’s fully charged!
proAbility Holiday Celebrations for All!  By Darlene James

Adults and children alike had a great time celebrating the holiday season.

Nearly 80 adults attended a great Holiday Party on Dec 9th at the Sheraton in Warwick. Everyone enjoyed a terrific evening of great food, dancing, and the company of friends, staff, and family.

Food, fun, and holiday games set the stage for the Children’s Services Party held at the proAbility office on Dec. 10th. Nearly sixty children (including siblings of children we provide services to), parents, and HBTS and PASS support staff attended the afternoon party.

A very happy group of children enjoyed the afternoon that included a special gift for each child!

Families, children, and proAbility staff enjoyed the opportunity to spend time together.

A Big Thank you to all the staff and other volunteers who pulled the parties together and manned the activity stations at the Children’s Party! A Special Thank you to Deb Wood and Owen Williams for donating their time and resources to make the parties happen!

Why support group is important to me  by Cindy Fredrick

Editor’s note: This article was written by one of the parent’s attending our Mom’s Group, organized by The Arc’s Family Support Center.

Going through the motions of IEP meetings, doctor’s appointments or the frustrations of not getting that doctor on the phone when you need answers.

Or when your just feeling overwhelmed with your daily life, lonely, helpless or afraid for your child’s future.

We all feel so much and need an outlet at times. So a support group on Wednesday night? Sometimes I’m just too tired from being up all night with my kid or mentally too exhausted to give. But I go anyway and it’s one of the best things that I can do for myself & my family.

When I go to the support group I feel a warm welcome from moms who “get it”. Some moms may be in different situations or have a different diagnosis but the compassion, empathy and understanding that the moms share is very helpful. This past year the support group has helped me get to a stronger level to handle my daily life. I leave feeling encouraged and refreshed. And I also have made some really great new friends.

Thank you to The Arc for putting this together!!!
Recognize someone who’s provided extraordinary dedication to those served by The Arc...

If you know a person or organization that has made a difference in support of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families; please consider nominating them for any one of The Arc of Bristol County’s 2012 Annual Awards listed below:

Sandra Andrade Self Determination Award: honors an individual with a disability who has demonstrated exemplary self advocacy skills for themselves or on behalf of others.

Family Leadership Choice Award: pays tribute to the commitment of our organization’s founders. The award honors an individual and/or family member who has provided exemplary support, guidance, and advocacy to and on behalf of families.

Community Excellence Award: recognizes outstanding accomplishments by community members who embody practices that promote inclusion and integration. This award is presented to an individual or community organization that has shown an outstanding commitment to the principles of The Arc.

Arc Spirit Award: recognizes a volunteer and/or employee who had advanced the mission of the organization. An individual’s contribution must have a large impact for those supported by the organization.

Awards will be presented at The Arc of Bristol County’s upcoming Annual Celebration to be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at the Holiday Inn, Taunton. We ask that all award recipients are available to attend this event.

Nominations must be received by May 1, 2012. If you have any questions, please contact Patricia Kirby at (508) 226-1445 ext. 3111 or pkirby@arcnbc.org.

Instructions: Nomination forms are available on our website www.arcnbc.org or contact any Arc office. Please complete the nomination form and submit with a letter of nomination by May 1, 2012. Letters of nomination must include specific examples of how and why the candidate qualifies for this award. Please limit all letters of nomination to one (1) page. Candidates will be evaluated on the basis of how they consistently demonstrate excellence, creativity and commitment in the award category.

Mail, fax, deliver or email nomination by May 1, 2012 to:
Patricia Kirby
The Arc of Bristol County
141 Park Street, Attleboro, MA 02703
Fax: (508) 226-1476
pkirby@arcnbc.org
Social Security Benefits
Speaker: Kim Thacker, Disability Specialist
Mass Rehab Commission (MRC)

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 at 6:30pm
The Arc of Bristol County
141 Park Street, Attleboro, MA 02703

• Come and learn about disability benefits and how they pertain to people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.
• Discuss what your son or daughter may be entitled to including work incentives and how to save.
• Learn the difference between Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability (SSDI)

If you are interested in attending, please contact your Family Support Coordinator or your AFC Coordinator by February 16th at 888-343-3301 or 508-226-1445. If childcare or transportation is a barrier for your attendance to this training, please let us know.

Jodi Van Nieuwenhuyze
Employee of the Quarter

Jodi actively works with the HBTS team at proAbility to continually shape the client’s HBTS treatment plan so it will reflect the individual’s progress and continued needs. Jodi asks thoughtful questions, accurately collects data on the client’s abilities each day, and is stellar at following our policies and procedures. She has a genuine, quiet enthusiasm about her and is obviously dedicated to the family with whom she works.

The nominating family states: “Our family is very fortunate to have Jodi as our HBTS worker. Our daughter’s ability to do so many things independently has grown tremendously. This is directly due to Jodi’s ability to provide the right balance of encouragement and discipline so that our daughter is able to achieve her goals. Jodi goes above and beyond to keep her motivated and focused on her tasks. She is very creative in coming up with new ways to entertain our daughter and trying new ideas. Her patience and dedication to our child is very heartwarming to watch. Jodi evokes a great deal of professionalism and work ethic. Jodi takes great pride in our daughter’s success which has led to a great relationship. In summary, we believe Jodi deserves to be Employee of the Quarter because of her patience, enthusiasm, and dedication.”

Brother & Sister Group!
For children ages 7-11, who have a sibling with special needs!

Join us every 3rd Friday of the month from 4:00-5:30 pm
The Arc of Bristol County
141 Park Street
Attleboro, MA 02703

Come join us for activities, crafts, games, & lots of fun!!!
A donation of $5.00 would be appreciated to cover supply costs.
Contact Amanda Masi at 508-226-1445 or 1-888-343-3301 extension 3130.

Families from The Arc of Greater New Bedford enjoy holiday celebrations.
save the date

29th Annual State Representative Cup

The Arc
Greater New Bedford
a division of The Arc of Bristol County
to benefit the Advocacy Resource Center of Greater New Bedford

Monday, June 4, 2012 • 12:15 PM Shotgun
Country Club of New Bedford
North Dartmouth, MA

Please call Lisa Furtado at 508.996.8551 for more information.