

Achieve

Fall 2024



The Arc
Bristol County

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Creating a Focused Path in Job Preparedness

By The proAbility Employment Team

Employment, while often seen as the ultimate goal and a symbol of independence, is frequently a long-term journey in progress. To support this work, our employment department designed a course for people interested in pursuing work, aimed at gauging their readiness and defining their next steps. Funded through the Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitative Services (ORS) Workplace Readiness Training, the objective was to identify where each person stood on their path toward employment and to determine a clearer personal roadmap for everyone. Each attendee received a certificate of completion at the end of the class.

In partnership with Special Olympics Rhode Island, we were fortunate to use their meeting space as an educational workspace for four hours a day, three days a week, for one month. This setting offered a new professional environment to attendees, subtly emphasizing the importance of work-life balance.

The person-centered course work helped introduce participants to the work environment through activities like resume development, preparation for job interviews, personal hygiene, appropriate attire, and workplace etiquette. The course



included engaging games like Jeopardy to evaluate retention and understanding different topics like job skills versus natural talents.

Our Employment Support Professionals (ESPs) attended to assist participants through the course. Activities were hands-on, providing an opportunity for real-time feedback. One of our ESPs, Brianne, came with tutoring experience and was the course instructor. Brianne reported that she was extremely impressed by the job interview skills of several who attended.

An added goal of this class was to create a general course outline other agencies could adopt, and tailor it to the needs of their participants. Overall, the framework provides a great starting point for future use at The Arc of Bristol County proAbility!



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Can you imagine a society without the services The Arc provides?

The Arc of Bristol County began 65 years ago out of the love parents had for their children and from frustration of lack of opportunities. Parents of children with disabilities were not satisfied with the suggestions from medical professionals to place their children in the hands of state-run institutions. They loved their children and wanted the best that life could offer them, as any other parent would feel.

Fighting and advocating for their child's right to opportunity was the first step in a long journey towards removing barriers in accessing education, employment, and healthcare. So many of the protections for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are in part due to The Arc's continuous

lobbying. Without The Arc's efforts, innocent people would most certainly suffer an increase in discrimination and exclusion in a place that should be their safe space, their own communities.

With your support, The Arc of Bristol County dba proAbility can offer essential services designed to give people with IDD an opportunity for a happy, fulfilling and meaningful life, something we all want and deserve. Without our programs, people would have a more challenging time finding services to learn how to dress themselves, cook their own meals, live independently or get a meaningful job. Our services provide families with guidance on educational and legal rights and provide resources to start on the right path towards a fulfilling life. With your assistance, our community intergration and social activities allow individuals

to develop social skills, form meaningful relationships and friendships, avoiding isolation. Your contributions help create a more diverse, inclusive, and compassionate society.

Please, be a champion for those who need The Arc and its programming. Your support is more crucial than ever. Thank you for considering us in your end-of-year contributions. You can donate by scanning the code with your phone, or by going to www.arcnbc.org and clicking DONATE. Our Annual Report can be found on our website.



Best wishes to you and your families throughout the upcoming holiday season and next year!


Michael Andrade
President & CEO

End-of-Summer Celebration

We enjoyed a beautiful August day with nearly 200 guests, including families, people we support, caregivers, and staff, at The Overlook at Meehan in North Providence. The venue provided ample green space and accessibility for various outdoor activities like corn hole, dancing, and Drums Alive®. These gatherings are cherished opportunities to celebrate and connect with those we don't see often. Thank you to our great vendors including Spike's Junkyard Dogs, John's Dream Ice Cream, The Overlook at Meehan, and music by Ryan. We want to acknowledge all the staff who contributed to the organization and implementation of this outstanding event! We look

forward to connecting with everyone at the next celebration to be announced in the coming months.



ArcStrong Striding for Inclusion & Empowerment

On a breezy, chilly, clear autumn morning, people from all over New England met in Natick, Massachusetts with one purpose- to support families affected by autism and developmental disabilities. The Arc of Bristol County proAbility had the opportunity to be a Charity Partner of the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism. As the Flutie Foundation celebrated its 25th Annual 5K, we were honored to host our annual ArcStrong: Walk, Run, & Roll 5K with them. Our presence included a team of walkers, runners, and in-person supporters, inspired by donors near and far.

We were honored to participate in the only sold-out 5K in the Flutie Foundation's history. The day began with entertainment from Flutie's Spectrum of Sound, amping the crowd for the festivities. Runners, walkers, and rollers from all walks of life cheered each other through the race donned with signs of uplifting messages, color-coordinated team t-shirts, and creative costumes.

The annual 5K is designed to be accessible to all, allowing people of varying abilities and ages to participate, from parents with strollers or wheelchairs to runners chasing their personal bests, and a kid's fun run. This year a new category was added as an inclusive competitive division for athletes with autism and related disabilities- the Chirichella Adaptive Division.

Overall, the event celebrated community, inclusion, and resilience, offering participants, parents, and supporters a

chance to mingle and network with over 40 agencies providing services and resources to members of the community.

We appreciate the outstanding efforts by our staff to coordinate fundraising efforts in their respective departments to meet their identified needs and goals. Without supporters and generous donors like you, we would not be able to provide meaningful, enriching care and services for the people we support.

This year, each department within our agency identified unique needs for donors to support. With your generosity and hard work from our

departments, we are proud to say this was one of our best years for fundraising with the Annual 5K. We are humbled by the charity of our major sponsors who continuously support our mission and efforts: Bristol County Savings Bank, Bristol Wealth Group, and Starkweather & Shepley Insurance. We would be remiss without acknowledging our additional sponsors: Alliance Business Products, PEX, Rockland Trust, and S&W Appliance as our Arc Team sponsors, and ALCOR Scientific, Cardi's Furniture, E.A. Dion, Economised Time Services, Ocean State Signal, The Okonite Company, and STEPKA Security as Arc Sponsors.



Enriching Lives in Seasonal Activities

Summer and fall are two of the best seasons in New England. This past summer and early fall provided excellent weather for outdoor activities and experiences. While many of the people we support joined us for our End-of-Summer Celebration, several had participated in other seasonal activities.

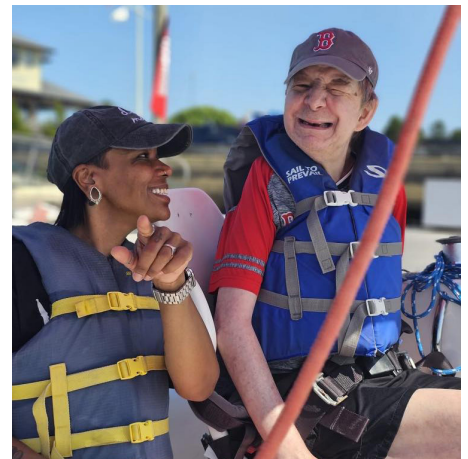
Thomas, Martin, and David of our Residential Program in Rhode Island enjoyed a unique opportunity on a beautiful July day. They sailed Narragansett Bay with the Sail to Prevail program in Rhode Island. This program provides therapeutic sailing, and sailing instruction, for people with disabilities. Thank you to Carol, Rebecca, Domingas, and Craig for supporting our individuals during their trip.

Our Attleboro and Taunton Day Habilitation programs participated in some fun fall activities by painting and carving pumpkins graciously donated by Briggs Nursery in North Attleboro. Once pumpkins were carved, the seeds were harvested

and everyone had the opportunity to enjoy a healthy snack!

Many of our staff and people supported in Rhode Island gathered to enjoy a day of costumes and a fall potluck. A few people and their staff also visited a pumpkin patch together and enjoyed the amazing fall weather we had in October.

With November in full swing, we are already planning more activities around the upcoming holiday and seasonal celebrations!



Empowering Independence: How Technology is Redefining Community Living

By Craig Simmons, Director of Day and Community Services

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear “remote supports”? Breaking down the simple phrase, you may picture “remote” as something you use to control your television or distance, like remote learning or remote working. “Supports” might bring a picture of crutches, structural support in a building, or your social support network. At The Arc of Bristol County proAbility we have a new connotation for the phrase remote supports, where we can picture individuals we support living their most independent lives.

In 2023, we ventured into Remote Supports and Monitoring (RMS) with our first member, Joseph. He lived with his mom and dad, but they wanted to increase and maximize Joseph’s independence. He was on the housing waiting list, and his chance came sooner than they expected. Not wanting to miss the opportunity, the family decided to move forward with the new apartment for Joseph but knew he would need additional supports. Joseph was already receiving some in-home supports through The Arc of Bristol County, but moving out alone would mean those supports would not continue.

As the Community Living team simultaneously became aware of Joseph’s situation, they knew The Arc of Bristol County was venturing into RMS. The team seized the opportunity to pilot this initiative with Joseph. The Community Living team set him up with SafeinHome, the facilitator of RMS, and Joseph has thrived. With a transition and adjustment period, Joe settled into a routine utilizing remote supports. He went from having overnight staffing multiple nights a week to minimal staffing in the afternoons to assist him with some daily living skills, such as cooking and cleaning. Joseph continues to grow daily, and that progress would not be possible without SafeinHome.

Our second resident, Alexander, was referred to The Arc of Bristol County by DDS. His parents were looking for support so they might enjoy time away from home on weekends. Remote supports and monitoring seemed like a great possibility to assist them. The family was set up with SafeinHome to provide RMS for Alexander. The transition is going well, and Alexander’s family enjoys time out of the house with the comfort and confidence of knowing he is safe.



Our third and currently the last person to receive remote supports is Carl. Carl received many years of support through the Individual Supports program. This program supports people living in the community, often alone, with assistance in the needs of various aspects of their lives. Within the past year, on a couple of occasions, Carl missed taking his medications. This prompted his staff to come up with a perfect yet simple solution. With RMS, Carl has medication reminders and daily check-ins through SafeinHome. This service has allowed Carl to keep his independence with minor adjustments to his regular daily living habits.

While independent living may not always be an option for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc of Bristol County proAbility is rising to the challenge and providing flexible options with the help of resources like SafeinHome. You can help support the future of this valuable initiative by going to our website and clicking DONATE.



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Annual Golf Tournament Drives Support for Educational Advocacy

On Monday, September 23rd, with more than 20 registered teams, we held our 41st Annual State Reps Charity Golf Tournament. The golfers and sponsors commented on the outstanding opportunity to reconnect after last year's event resulted in cancellation due to the many rainy days New England experienced. We sincerely appreciate all who support our mission of Educational Advocacy throughout Bristol County. Thank you to the State Reps and our planning committee for organizing a great event, complete with over 20 raffles and prizes.

This year's event also acknowledged the retirement and service of Representative Paul Schmid of Westport. We sincerely appreciate his



decades-long career, his education, healthcare, and elder affairs efforts, and his love, commitment, and passion for agriculture and natural resources.

We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's golf tournament.