

Together, We are Stronger!

Dear Family and Friends,

We do hope that you and those dear to you are staying safe and healthy during this unprecedented health crisis. Please know that The Arc Westchester has taken every possible measure to ensure the safety and well-being of our individuals, families, and of course, our incredible employees, as we fight our local battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. The Arc Westchester family is, and always will be, **our top priority**.



Even before the coronavirus reached New York, The Arc Westchester had formed an Emergency Management Team (EMT) to spearhead its response to the crisis. The EMT has been working 24/7 to care for the health and well-being of those we support and the staff who is so deeply invested in them, as well as to keep the lines of communication open with all members of our community.

Because of the past support from our generous donors, we were prepared to respond right away when the crisis began. For that, we are deeply grateful.

However, ensuring a continuum of safe and healthy services for the children, teens, adults and seniors in our programs, has proven to be very taxing on everyone, especially our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), who are on the frontlines of this pandemic.

In the **first 5 weeks** of this crisis, expenses for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), sanitizing supplies, and other household items that are vital to the protection of the 245 individuals sheltering in place in our 44 residences and their dedicated DSPs, have exceeded **\$100,000**.

Our residential and day services employees are going above and beyond to ensure the safety and health of our individuals. In many cases, residential staff is working double shifts to ensure continuity of service, filling in for other employees who are ill or at high risk, and are unable to work. This, and the need to pay DSPs premium salaries to retain them in their vital roles, is going to heavily impact our 2020 payroll budgets.



Our DSPs have been delivering much-needed supplies to our residences throughout Westchester County.



Additionally, all Day Services have been suspended to curtail the spread of COVID-19, creating great uncertainty about the \$15 million of annual funding The Arc Westchester receives from Medicaid.

While we continue to sort through the specifics of this health crisis' financial impact, we ask that you consider making a spring membership gift in support of The Arc Westchester Foundation's **COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund** today. When you help replenish our funds, you enable us to respond to the most critical needs of The Arc Westchester as they arise. Together, we will get through this. Together, we are stronger.

Gratefully yours,

Tibi Guzmán
Executive Director/CEO
The Arc Westchester

Nancy Patota
Executive Director
The Arc Westchester Foundation

P.S.: Stay safe; stay healthy; stay connected. Visit our website at www.arcwestchester.org to make your gift online and read about The Arc Westchester's response to COVID-19.

Thank you for your generosity.

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As an Essential Service Provider, The Arc Westchester is on the frontlines of supporting individuals with developmental disabilities during the COVID-19 health crisis.

The extraordinary acts of kindness and caring displayed by our DSPs on a regular day are nothing short of amazing. But, at times like these, it is abundantly clear that this is so much more than a job to them – and we commend them for their selfless commitment as first responders of this pandemic.



Staff in our Armonk residence continue to prepare nutritious meals for individuals during these challenging times.

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While it feels so inadequate, I wanted to send you and the entire Surrey Way team a note of thanks to let you know how grateful I am for the work you do for my brother Robbie and his housemates each and every day. I know that your jobs have become even more complex and challenging in this environment, and I have the utmost respect and admiration for each and every one of you. You are true heroes, like the other first responders.

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— Adele Rota and the Rigano family



Individuals from our Choices Neighborhood Program participate in a virtual talent show using Zoom.

Here are a few more examples of human resilience and staying the course on our commitment to providing innovative services and supports to people of all ages with developmental disabilities and their families, even during these most challenging times.

- Nurses and other professional staff in the Wellness Center clinic are using Zoom and FaceTime to provide seamless support to individuals with medication, psychotherapy, nutritional, occupational and speech services. Our nutritionist has also launched Quick, Easy and Delicious (QED) Cooking Lessons on YouTube.
- The Children's School for Early Development is holding parent conferences virtually and using Google Classroom to help parents support their children's progress at home.
- Day Services staff, alongside some wonderful volunteers, has been shifting programming to an online format to keep people engaged with their friends and support staff, combatting regression and depression that can result from isolation.
- Individuals in our residences who are unable to volunteer in the community have taken on projects to support their neighbors from the safety of their homes. The staff and individuals in our Scott Place residence have created over 100 masks and plan to donate to Caritas of Port Chester, a Food and Soup Kitchen.