

How People with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Benefit from the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Access to comprehensive, affordable health care coverage can make or break the lives of any American, but particularly people with I/DD. The ACA, which Congress is threatening to repeal, included an option for states to expand Medicaid which has helped millions of people, including individuals with I/DD. Access to consistent and reliable healthcare is imperative for individuals with I/DD, and the ACA created a much needed reform to health insurance, addressed systemic discrimination, and expanded coverage.

ACA improved affordability of health insurance through tax credits and cost-sharing assistance for low moderate income individuals. ACA also requires a comprehensive benefit package which includes rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices, mental health and substance abuse disorder services including behavioral health treatment, and prescription drug coverage.

ACA expanded access to health insurance in a number of important ways including:

- Expanding mental health parity provisions.
- Requiring coverage for dependents until age 26.

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- Improving accessibility of medical diagnostic equipment.

ACA also expanded access to long term supports and services by:

- Creating the Community First Choice Option allowing state to provide participant-directed home and community based attendant services as part of their state Medicaid plan.
- Extending the Monday Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration.
- Creating the Balancing Incentives Program to incentivize states to increase access to non-institutional LTSS.

The ACA has unquestionably improved access to care for people with disabilities and chronic conditions to help them live healthy, independent, and fulfilling lives. To eliminate the ACA without simultaneously replacing it with a functionally equivalent alternative, jeopardizes this progress and puts consumers' ongoing access to comprehensive, affordable coverage at risk. It is critical that the I/DD community is a part of any discussion about the repeal and replace to ensure that any changes meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Do you know someone with an intellectual or developmental disability? Maybe you know someone who does. They may be your friend, neighbor, schoolmate, co-worker or someone else who is an important part of your life. Perhaps you've wondered what you can do to help them lead lives of full participation and inclusion in the community. If you have an interest in getting involved, The Arc can help you. The Arc is an advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, preserving and protecting fundamental rights through advocacy and action in support of legislation for civil rights, employment, housing, and numerous supports. We connect people with disabilities, their families, professionals, and others (like you?) to create hope, growth, and change. This is your chance to join us as an advocate, not only for the person you know, but for millions of people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We'll work with you to make a difference with a clear, strong, collective voice.



Letter From the Director

It is *almost* spring...though it felt like spring for most of February! Most of you know that spring means a very busy time at The Arc as we start practices for five different sports; wrap up our winter sports with a trip to Iowa City; host our annual fundraiser, Viva la Arc; and try to add other advocacy events important to the individuals and families we serve.



Please keep in mind our upcoming "Raising Awareness" event (details page 3) and our Project SEARCH graduation. We couldn't be more proud of our initial four students who took part in the inaugural Project SEARCH program and are on their way to employment in the community. Iowa State has signed on to host a second year of the program, and we will announce the four new students later this spring.

As we close on another Viva la Arc fundraiser, we look forward to the development of our fall fundraiser, The Arc March, to be held at North Grand Mall in Ames October. The Arc March will serve as a community awareness event for National Disabilities Awareness Month and an additional fundraiser for The Arc of Story County. Our athletes, members, and families will gain pledges for the march, while raising money and competing for prizes.

Thank you to those of you who have supported The Arc these last few months with your time, talents and resources. We wouldn't exist without you.

Tricia Crain
Executive Director

The Power of Community Partners



The Arc of Story County is grateful to have so many strong community partners. Through these partnerships, our mission to support individuals with intellectual and related disabilities can become a reality. The Arc is very thoughtful about how financial resources are utilized; both the reimbursement from ASSET funders and those provided by sponsors, personal donors and grantors.

It takes non-government funding to research and implement new programs and to meet the growing needs of the individuals served by The Arc. The Arc has introduced Project SEARCH. This investment of time and resources has been met with great response. The Arc has filled a much needed gap in our service coverage and we don't plan to stop there.

The Arc believes that many people with intellectual disabilities have both the desire and ability to be employed in the community. The Arc is committed to researching and implementing programs to realize these opportunities. Your support has allowed The Arc to bring more valued services to the community and are humbled by the trust you have placed in The Arc.

As The Arc looks ahead and plans for the future, we hope to continue with your partnership and support to help us reach new heights. **Thank**

Annual Award Winners!



The Arc of Story County recognized its 2017 award winners at the annual Viva la Arc family celebration night March 4th. Pictured (l to r): Professional of the Year: Anna Enabnit; Self-Advocate of the Year: Marianne Russell; Direct Support Professional of the Year: Brian Ouverson; Cy; Super Sibling of the Year: Logi Lager; Volunteer of the Year: Cami McColley

Upcoming Events:

Spring Dance— Thursday, May 4; 6:00-8:00 p.m., Moose Lodge

Bocce, Track and Field, Swimming, Cycling, and Soccer begin—March

Spring Special Olympics Competition—Saturday, April 8, Marshalltown

Raising Awareness—Special Needs Trusts and the ABLE Act, Thursday, March 23, 6:30 p.m. City Church of Ames—2400 Oakwood Road, Ames

Project SEARCH Graduation—Thursday, April 27, 4:00 p.m. , Reiman Gardens, Ames

State Special Olympics Competition—May 25-27 in Ames

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*Service and support for people with
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Inside:

The ACA

Letter from the Director

Upcoming Events

Annual Awards

Community Partners

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