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Attention!

**ALL PAST
AND
PRESENT
BOARD
MEMEBERS**

We are working on a Record Collection Book to honor those who have served on The Arc of Butler County's Board. We need your help. Please be on the look out for a letter and questionnaire in the mail sometime in the next few weeks - if you know someone who has served on the board, please share the information with them.

Questions? Email Mary at mkrewduk@arcbutler.org



PICTURE FROM THE 2019 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Making the Most out of the Holiday Season

Although this holiday season looks much different, The Arc of Butler County is working hard to make this a special time for the individuals we serve.

Check out what the Activity Program is up to on **Page 7**.

Christmas Cheer

A LETTER TO YOU FROM OUR CEO, JOHN LINK.

With the holiday season upon us we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday season! Although we are all staying apart to best protect our most vulnerable individuals, we can still celebrate and enjoy these next weeks. Phone calls, virtual meetings, and Christmas cards are excellent ways to spread cheer with loved ones this year. Something as simple as a phone call can lift spirits and remind people that we are still connected to each other.

We all wish we could be together and enjoy each other's presence, until then, reach out to your loved ones, friends, and neighbors, check on each other. Celebrations may look different, and occur over the phone or on a screen, but celebrate we will and must!

God Bless and Merry Christmas!

Holiday GIVING



CELEBRATE WITH THE GIFT OF GIVING

Help us bring **JOY** to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

DID YOU KNOW?

CARES ACT encouraging charitable giving in 2020

To encourage more charitable giving in 2020 and to help charitable organizations recover from the pandemic, the CARES Act provides additional tax relief for donors on their 2020 tax return.

FOR INDIVIDUALS:

- Creates a temporary universal deduction of charitable contributions with a cap of \$300 for non-itemizers
- Lifts the existing deduction cap on charitable contributions from 60% of adjusted gross income (AGI) to 100% of AGI for itemizers

FOR CORPORATIONS:

- Increases the deduction for charitable contributions from 10% to 25%
- Increases the deduction for charitable food donations from 15% to 25%

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

Consider making a donation this holiday season.

Sometimes it's easy to overlook the importance of giving gifts to those in need (not just the ones you know personally). The ultimate motivation of any charitable gift should always be that you support the mission and vision of that particular organization.

2020 has been a financially difficult year for many organizations. For us, it meant spending a significant amount of money on Personal Protective Equipment, Cleaning Supplies, Technology, and other Activity supplies to keep our staff and the individuals we serve, safe, happy, healthy, and engaged.

We don't know what 2021 brings for us, but with your help, we can get through it together. Please consider making a donation via mailing in the Gift Envelope or visiting arcbutler.org.

Thank you for your support

SUPPORT US WHEN YOU SHOP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Buy your gifts and holiday essentials at smile.amazon.com.
You shop. Amazon Donates.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.



AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of your purchase on all eligible products to your charity of choice. This may not sound like a lot but if you're like many others who prefer the convenience of ordering gifts and other product online, imagine how quickly it can add up!

virtual ATF Music Therapy

WITH SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

Back in 2019, ATF (The Arc's Adult Training Facility Program) partnered with Slippery Rock University's Music Therapy Program to bring Music Therapy Services to The Arc.

Once we started bringing individuals back to program, after the shutdown due to COVID-19, a plan was in place to continue music therapy services virtually – and it was a success! Three students from SRU, provided weekly, 1-hour long, music therapy sessions to about four ATF program participants.

Via Zoom, the group was able to learn and experience different therapy techniques such as song writing, movement to music, and lyric analysis.

The individuals participating in Music Therapy were excited to see the students face to face. They became active and engaged with each session.

The Arc of Butler County is happy to see the efforts from the Music Therapy department to adjust to the changing times and be able to deliver these services virtually.

“The individuals have benefitted from music therapy because being able to listen to music and play music related games really made their Friday’s. Seeing the SRU students made them very happy as well. Music time is always fun for them.”

Angela Dugan, ATF Supervisor



INDIVIDUAL SPOTLIGHT

MEET LINDA

2020 has been a good year to pick up a new hobby and spend time revisiting old hobbies. Linda, an individual living in one of The Arc's Residential Houses, has been using her hobbies of knitting and cross stitching to keep her busy during these unprecedented times.

Linda said that knitting is something that gives her purpose and comfort. When asked how long she has been doing it, she said her grandmother taught her at a very young age. She still uses the same patterns and techniques that were first taught to her by her grandma.

Not only does Linda knit for her own happiness, but she also shares her knitting creations with others. Linda said most of the items she knits (blankets, scarves, hats, and dolls), she gifts to her friends, family, and caregivers. She also donates items to The Church of God Prophecy, which is a local church here in Butler.

We asked Linda if she would ever consider selling some of her items. She seemed excited about the thought of profiting from selling her handmade products. We thought it would be great to feature some of the items she has for sale here. Please see below for pricing and contact information.

"Linda is a wonderfully pleasant and talented woman. She enjoys spending her time working on her crafts such as crocheting, embroidery and making dolls. She has a lifelong love for needlework and is very proud of what she can accomplish. During COVID, Linda has made a bad situation into a positive by keeping herself busy and doing what she loves. We are very proud of Linda."

**-Ed Reno,
Residential
Program Supervisor**



Crochet Clown Doll - \$8.00

2 available



Crochet Afghan - \$100.00



Cross Stitch Pillowcases - \$20.00
Set of 2

If interested in purchasing one of these items for sale, to help support Linda, please reach out to Ed Reno, eren@arcbutler.org / 724-406-4340

milestone HCQU West December 2020 - DSP of the Month

MEET TINA STEELE

On November 23, Tina Steele, DSP, was named HCQU's Direct Support Professional of the Month for December 2020. A surprise to her, she was invited to the office for a virtual recognition ceremony presented by Lori Sachs, Behavior Health Specialist for Milestone Centers, Inc. She received a certificate along with a backpack filled with essential items for hardworking DSPs.

Tina has worked for The Arc for 5 years and exemplifies what it means to be a DSP. She gives her everything when she is working.

Not only does Tina complete her regular responsibilities, but she is always willing to provide a sympathetic ear, give advice and guidance, and always advocates for the individuals she supports.

Tina was nominated to receive this honor because she leads by example. She is a dedicated staff, always works hard, and has compassion beyond measure. Tina never hesitates in the face of adversity. Her supervisors say that she is a natural born advocate and is everything a DSP should exemplify.

Thank you, Tina, for your hard work in serving The Arc's mission.

"I take pride in giving my clients the best life possible and being the reason they smile makes my job worthwhile. Clients don't always have a family to fall back on so it's fulfilling to be a source of comfort and support for them."

- Tina Steele, DSP



TINA STEELE, DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL



*Thank
you*

FOR MAKING A
DIFFERENCE

The Arc of Butler County and its Board of Directors would like to thank the following organizations for their support over the past year. Without you, we would not be able to provide the opportunities that we do to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Thank you.

Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust
PNC Charitable Trust
United Way of Butler County
Neil Martin Christensen Foundation
Colonie Luxembourgeoise

Intermediate League of Butler
GFWC Junior Womens Club of Butler
Armstrong Cable Company
Boscov's
Minuteman Press

AERO GOES VIRTUAL

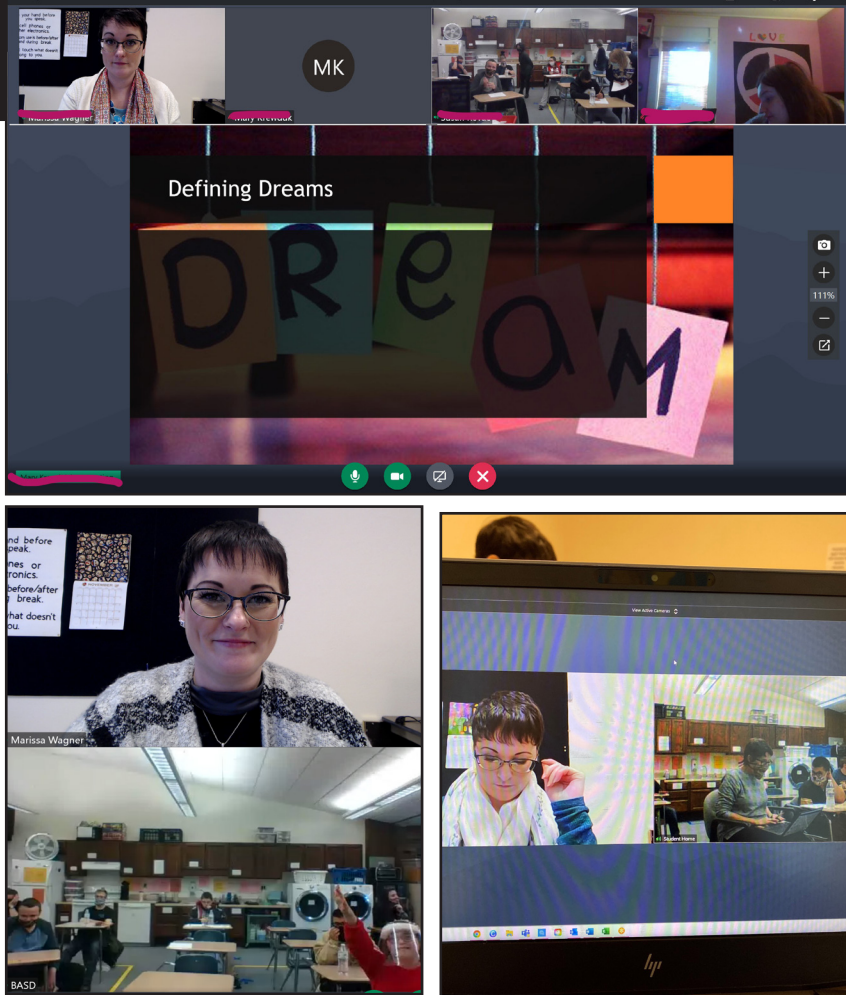
It was near the end of summer when we had to figure out how we could effectively, but safely, run the afterschool transition program (AERO). After meetings and conversations with parents and the school district, we began planning for a virtual version of the program to be offered this Fall.

October 26th was the first day of the program and 10 students were enrolled! It was decided it was best to keep students at the school, and with the help of the Butler Area School District, they were able to provide supervision and teacher support from 3 PM until 4:30 PM.

By using GoToMeeting, Marissa virtually teaches the class, plays games, and engages in different learning exercises. Each day the students are excited at the start of program; they are loving the opportunity of doing something different and staying involved.

Program Instructor, Marissa Wanger, said “students with an intensive need for transition services benefit from programs like AERO, more now than ever. With all the school shutdowns in 2020 due to COVID-19, many, if not all opportunities these students would normally have, were also cancelled.” She said, “having AERO operate virtually provides those students the chance to still learn and engage in activities that they otherwise would not be able to do.”

Although the virtual program is a success, we cannot wait until we can safely meet in person again.



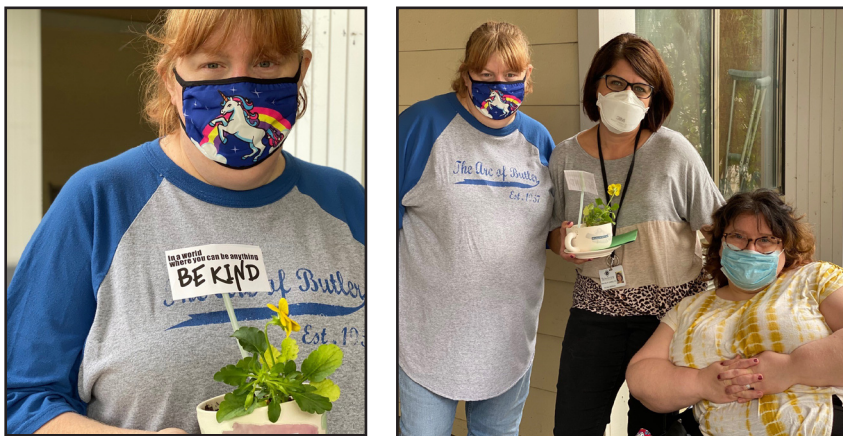
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SUPPORTS, ONLY IN THE COMMUNITY WHEN IT'S SAFE

Over the summer and into fall, CPS services were active, and individuals were able to go on community outings. A lot of effort took place to ensure the outings were safe for the individuals and the staff. While the weather was nice, many outings took place outside - going to the park, blueberry picking, etc. One of the favorite outings from this fall was getting to volunteer at the Kid's Closet (donation center for clothes and other items). Individuals helped sort through clothes and organized the racks.

We look forward to getting back out into the community when it is safe to do so!

AT HOME ACTIVITY PROGRAM, KEEPING BUSY

At the beginning of the pandemic, we acted fast and started an At Home Activity Program for individuals who live in The Arc's Residential Houses and also those in the Life Sharing program. Each week, individuals receive supplies and instructions for 2-3 activities. We are aiming for Virtual Activities beginning January 2020.



ACTIVITY PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS DELIVERING KINDNESS POTS TO SUNNYVIEW CENTER

Calendar of Activities

Virtual Activities Coming Soon!!!

DECEMBER

Christmas Tree Ornaments
Flowerpot Gingerbread House
Christmas Baking
Paper Straw Wreath
Christmas Story Time with Tiffany
(The Grinch)
New Years Eve Time Capsule
New Years Scavenger Hunt



JANUARY

Winter I-Spy
Hot Cocoa Craft
Penguin Puzzle
DIY Snow Globe
No New Sock Snowman
Homemade Grandola Bar
Groundhog Day Craft
Scavenger Hunt
Wine Bottle Light Decor

DECK THE DOORS



HOLIDAY DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

The Arc's Residential Houses are having a door decorating contest!

Judging Categories:

- 1 BEST INDIVIDUAL BEDROOM DOOR
- 2 BEST OVERALL HOUSE DOOR
- 3 BEST THEMED HOUSE DOOR
(EXAMPLE: . CANDY LAND, POLAR EXPRESS, GRINCH)

Prizes will be awarded for each Judging Category!!

Voting will take place on The Arc of Butler County's Facebook Page starting Monday Dec. 21st



This quarterly newsletter is produced by The Arc of Butler County. It highlights the many ways our dedicated staff, volunteers, and generous donors come together to support and empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, work, and participate in their communities.



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**United Way
of Southwestern Pennsylvania**

The Arc of Butler County is affiliated with the United Way of Southwestern PA, The Arc of the United States, and The Arc of Pennsylvania.

Achieve With Us.
For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

HELP US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

The Arc of Butler County is committed to reducing the incidence and limiting the consequence of intellectual and developmental disabilities through:

Advocacy • Education • Support • Service Provision

The Arc of Butler County is committed to securing for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to choose and realize their goals of where and how they learn, live, work, and play. The Arc of Butler County will work toward securing, consistent with the individual's need, maximum personal independence, choices, inclusion, equal rights, and adequate supports, which are all necessary to guarantee a real quality of life to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc of Butler County will provide leadership in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities and develop the necessary human and financial resources to attain its goal.

STAY INFORMED • STAY CONNECTED



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