

Challenger

A NEWSLETTER THAT CONNECTS, ENGAGES AND INFORMS

Summer Fun At The Arc With Daycare & Dayhab



Daycare had six full classrooms of programming.



Each class went on 38 field trips out of 40 days.



Daycare provided programming to 75+ kids each day this summer.



We employed over 50 staff each day.

Summer Day Hab provided nine weeks of programming.



Added 12 individuals that made up two summer Dayhab groups.

Some fun outings the groups took this summer that they enjoyed included: going to the libraries, enjoying the outdoors at Bever and Morgan Creek Parks, riding bus route 2 as the roads are very bumpy!, riding bus route 7 as we saw places we have never seen before, and going to Veritas Coffee Shop to play cards and do crafts.



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From the Director’s Desk

Hello Arc Friends and Family!

On behalf of all of us at The Arc, we would like to thank the parents and caregivers who entrusted the care of their child to us this summer. We are honored. Our team worked hard to give each child and adult we served wonderful experiences and memories to last a lifetime. We are also so appreciative of those who attend our programs year-round, whether it is afterschool, day programming, evening and weekend respite, or those getting skill building or employment supports, thank you for choosing The Arc.

If you have not been monitoring the Iowa HHS HOME project, we were recently notified that additional delays in implementation will be forthcoming. The HOME project is the process the state is using to combine the 7-Waivers we have today into a Child, Adult, and Elderly waiver system. According to HHS, these changes will make the waiver system easier to understand, help people get services based on needs, and improve the assessment process across the state. It is unclear what will be delayed further in this transition, but by October 2026, HHS had planned to transition all enrolled on the Children’s Mental Health (CMH), Health and Disability (HD), Physical Disability (PD) and AIDS/HIV (HIV) waivers into the Adults with Disabilities (AD) and Children and Youth (CY) waivers. In 2027, HHS was then going to transition those on the Intellectual Disability (ID) and Brain Injury (BI) waivers into the HOME waivers. The Arc will continue offering services and supports as we have always done. Once we are notified about the transition, we will do our best to be a resource for you and help make the transition as smooth as possible. To learn more, visit <https://hhs.iowa.gov/medicaid/about-medicaid/medicaid-projects/home-project/what-home-project>.

On a happy note, The Arc is the beneficiary of not one, but TWO golf tournaments in September! A big thank you to Skogman Realty and Mid-American Aerospace for selecting our agency to be a part of your event and celebration. If any of our supporters are interested in golfing or coming by to cheer the golfers on, contact us for dates and locations.

Thank you for your continued support of The Arc!

With appreciation,



Theresa Lewis,
Executive Director



Theresa Lewis

Happenings

Journey of Hope

On July 14th, The Arc was thrilled once again to serve as an overnight host for the Journey of Hope bike riders as they ride their bikes from San Francisco to Washington DC to raise awareness for disability needs. The 30 young men who visited us come from all corners of the United States and are all members of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity. After eating an “All-Iowa” dinner, the riders spent the evening playing softball with our Arc participants. We are so grateful for their effort and their kindness.



Softball

This summer, The Arc proudly fielded two softball teams: the Arc Angels and the Arc Aces. Softball continues to be one of the most beloved activities for the individuals with disabilities served by The Arc, providing opportunities for recreation, teamwork, and personal growth.

Throughout the season, our teams competed against players from Cedar Rapids Jefferson and Cedar Rapids Kennedy. While the games offered plenty of excitement on the field, the true highlight was the spirit of encouragement shown by everyone involved. Players, coaches, families, and fans cheered enthusiastically for all athletes, regardless of which team they represented.

The focus of the program is creating a fun, inclusive, and meaningful experience for every participant. Watching the smiles and friendships that develop throughout the season is a reminder of the positive impact community sports can have on people's lives.

Special Thanks

A special thank you goes out to the coaches who helped make this season such a success. The Arc Angels were led by Jay Smothers and Erica Smothers, whose enthusiasm and encouragement helped create a positive experience for every player. The Arc Aces were coached by Amy Schramp, Max Newman, and Kyle Schramp, whose commitment and support made the season both enjoyable and rewarding for the team.

The Arc is grateful for the time, energy, and heart that these coaches invest in our athletes. Their dedication helps ensure that every player feels valued, supported, and celebrated both on and off the field.

A heartfelt thanks also goes out to Jim Messina for his many years of capturing the moments that bring happiness to so many.



Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts are among the most meaningful donations The Arc receives. When a family chooses to honor a loved one by supporting The Arc, it is often because the organization has played an important role in their lives. Behind every memorial gift is a story of support, connection, and lasting impact.

One such story is that of the Barnett family.

When Della Barnett passed away in June, her daughter, Peggy Zalesky, chose to direct memorial gifts to The Arc of East Central Iowa—a tribute that reflected both her mother's values and their family's lifelong connection to the organization.

Peggy's sister and Della's daughter, Cathy, was born in 1953, the very same year The Arc of East Central Iowa was founded by a small group of parents determined to create opportunities for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Diagnosed with down syndrome, Cathy became one of The Arc's earliest participants.



Cathy Barnett as a young child.

For the Barnett family, The Arc was more than a service provider. It was a place where Cathy was welcomed, supported, and given opportunities to learn, grow, and belong. It also became a source of encouragement and community for the entire family as they navigated a world where resources for children with disabilities were still very limited.

"The Arc was such an important part of our family's journey," Peggy shared. "Choosing The Arc for Mom's memorial gifts felt like the perfect way to honor both her life and everything The Arc meant to us."

The Barnett family's generosity is a beautiful reminder that a legacy is measured not only by the lives we touch directly, but also by the opportunities we create for future generations. Memorial gifts ensure that families like theirs will continue to find the support, acceptance, and hope that have been at the heart of The Arc's mission since 1953.



Anytime that you shop at a Cedar Rapids or Marion HyVee or HyVee Drugstore save those receipts! Turn them into The Arc and we will turn them into cash for our daycare!

Parent Pathways

Are you a parent or caregiver of a child ages 0-5 who has been diagnosed (or likely to be diagnosed) with a disability?

If so, **Parent Pathways** is for you. This program is a FREE 6-week training and connections series at The Arc of East Central Iowa designed to mitigate the stress, social isolation, and burnout caregivers raising a child with a disability experience at much higher rates than other parents. In Parent Pathways, you will:

- **Learn About Lifelong Supports** – understand the programs, services, and resources that can support your child from early childhood through adulthood.
- **Build Meaningful Connections** – meet other parents and caregivers with similar experience, hopes and dreams for their child, in a safe, understanding environment.
- **Strengthen Your Confidence** – gain practical tools and trusted information to help you be the best parent for your child and to make informed decisions for your family.

To learn more about Parent Pathways and to register for an upcoming training session, go to: <https://arceci.org/programs-services/parent-pathways/>

You don't have to figure out caregiving alone.



Art Without Limits: A Celebration Gala

Join us for an unforgettable evening celebrating the creativity and talent of some of our community's most inspiring artists.

The Eastern Iowa Arts Academy and The Arc of East Central Iowa are proud to present Art Without Limits: A Celebration Gala, featuring the incredible artwork of adults from The Arc's Day Habilitation program. This joyful partnership shines a light on the voices and visions of these talented individuals through a vibrant showcase of their original art. *(Some art may be available to purchase from the artist.)*



Guests are invited to dress up for the occasion, enjoy delicious appetizers and mocktails, and experience the power of art to connect and uplift. The evening will be filled with color, laughter, and heart as we honor the creativity of this remarkable group.

Come and show your support for an event that celebrates inclusion, self-expression, and community. Your presence will help demonstrate that every artist matters and every voice deserves to be seen and heard.

Friday, November 6th • 6:00 – 8:00 PM

**Eastern Iowa Arts Academy
2630 B Ave NE**

\$35 per person

**Tickets will be available
starting mid-September.**

**Watch our Facebook
page for details.**

Participant Spotlight



Carolynne Goodall

About Me.

I am 19 years old and live in Cedar Rapids. I have one sister and lots of nieces and nephews that I love to hang out with. I always try to be kind and enjoy making people smile.

Favorite Arc Activity?

I enjoy attending group respite on the weekends. One of my favorite groups was Playtime Poppy and going out to eat with friends.

Favorite Outdoor Activities?

I enjoy walking and swimming!

Favorite Arc Memory?

This is my 2nd year at The Arc's Summer Dayhab Program and I really enjoy hanging out with my friends and going out into the community!

Favorite Hobby?

I really like technology! I enjoy spending time on my phone and ipad.

Favorite Foods?

Pasta and chocolate ice cream.

I also enjoy shopping, music, dolls, horses, and my "pet" dog, Blacky.

Welcome to The Arc



Hi, I'm Kris Lindemann and I'm a new Service & Support Coordinator.

Prior to joining The Arc, I worked for seven years at a similar agency in Iowa City and I'm excited to be taking on a more person-centered role. I am an Iowa transplant - I grew up in Minnesota, and my wife Jess and I have lived here for nearly twenty years. We have three handsome cats that I am always happy to share pictures of. In my spare time I like to read, do crossword puzzles, attend musical theater performances, and play tabletop roleplaying games.

The Arc of East Central Iowa

ANNUAL MEETING



Monday, September 28th at 6:30 PM

Hybrid – In Person OR Online

**Cedar Rapids Public Library
Whipple Auditorium**

Please join us as we celebrate the success of the past year and recognize the wonderful award winners that help make a difference in our community and at The Arc!

If you will be attending online please RSVP to Theresa at tlewis@arceci.org for the link at a later time.

You Make a Difference

Thank you for all of your continued generous contributions to The Arc. This edition of the Challenger recognizes volunteers, donors and members who generously supported The Arc from May through July 2026.

Thank You

General Donations

Alliant Energy Foundation, Donelle Baker, Joshua Bean, Andrew Bentz, Jane Bockenstedt, Cargill Incorporated, Cobb Legacy Fund of the GCRFC, Community Action of Eastern Iowa, Kean Drake, Scott & Wendy Draper, Equitable Foundation, Jessica Fahey, Grandon Charitable Foundation, RJ & Ruth Hojka, Joseph & Ann Jeffries, Jeff & Angela Keslar, Lynette Marling, Jim & Laura McDonald, McIntyre Foundation, Nicole Ohrt, Julie Parrott, Jessica & Ryan Pleggenkuhle, Susan Polglaze, James & Suzanne Potts, Raytheon Technologies/RTX, Jess Rockwell, Rotary Club of Cedar Rapids - Daybreak, Ann & Ted Ruske, Tiffany Salz, Tony Schwendinger, Alysia Sprague, Ralph & Vicki Standley, Jake Stigers, Clinton Stone, Tawnya Stone, Shelly Strellner, Marchia Stubbe, Brenda Taylor, Joseph Terfler, The Standard, The Starbucks Foundation, Clint Wade, Walter & Ida Kansky Charitable Trust, Chris White, Nikki Wilcox

Memorials

Della Barnett

Janet Scharnberg & Joel Carl, Mary Fitzgerald, Kathryn & Christin Lamb, Pete & Kris Larson, Carla McMillan, Michael & Susan Scott, Frank & Mary Swiderski, Jo Anne & Craig Thrap, Bill & Kim Utterback, Barb & Ken Wright, Lawrence & Laura Zalesky

Mary Anne & Joseph Matejka

Tom & Jody Case Giving Fund (Michael Case)

Sara Smith

Ryan Smith

Volunteers Hours -73

Katie Beckman-Shaull, Jeff Corrigan, Chandler DeWees, Kelly Dyvbig, Jessica Fahey, Jordan Feldman, Terese Fisher, Maria Gaffney, Nate Haas, Brad Hauge, Christopher Johnson, Shawn Knighton, Shelby Kobliska, Jeff Koffron, Sara Kruse, Ali Limbert, Cherri Lock, Tiffany Lownes, Kaylee McIntire, Carol Meade, Josh Mills, Ben Mulholland, Candice Murphy, Jackie Nau, Michael Neuerburg, Doug Neumann, Jessica Pleggenkuhle, Sam Rechkemmer, Danielle Rodriguez, Hailey Rutherford, Kristin Schaefer, Mindy Sorg, Shelly Strellner, Cheryl Tuttle, Sam Tvedt, Nikki Wilcox

Membership

Arc Angel

Mindy Kruckenber

Arc Builder

Mark Hanrahan (MidAmerican Aerospace), Jim LeMaster, Clint & Gale Mote, Pete & Delaine Petersen

Arc Friend

Dale & Judy Fitzgibbons, Kathleen Good, Eric & Ann Hearn, Verne & Joyce Hosek (Bill & Judy King Memorial Fund), Larry & Angie Ihnen, Dale & Debra Rettenmeier, Bob & Jane Stolen

Arc Advocate

Mary Florang, Ron & Pat Gonder, Laura Grempe, Margaret Kenney, Doriene Loomis, Edna Lyons, Dawn McArtor, Bill & Sandy McVicker, Michelle & David Pfoff, Ted & Nancy Priebe, Scott & Terrie Seibert, Kathy Shelton, Tim & Sue Winegarden

Wish List

From every day items to special requests. We are always in need of items to keep our office and programs running. Donations can be dropped off at The Arc's main office M-F 9 AM - 3:30 PM or shop our [Amazon Wish List](#).



Kitchen Needs

Cascade Dishwasher Pods
Kitchen Garbage Bags
Paper Plates & Paper Towels
Plastic Disposable Cups
Plastic Spoons & Forks
Ziploc Bags - Reg & Freezer (Gallon, Quart)

Snack & Cooking Activity Items

Applesauce
Canned Fruit & Vegetables
Cotton Candy Machine
Fruit Snacks / Granola Bars
Ice Cream Maker
Juice - 100% Apple or Grape
Mac & Cheese Cups
Snack Crackers & Chips - Variety Packs

General Supplies

Baby Wipes - Unscented/Sensitive
Bandages - Assorted
Deodorant - Travel Size (Men & Women)
Dryer Sheets
Hand/Body Lotion - Travel Size
Hand Sanitizer Refills / Hand Wipes
Kleenex/Tissues (Cube Boxes)
Lint Rollers
Liquid Body Wash
Mouthwash
Reusable Hot/Cold Packs
Shampoo/Conditioner
Tide Pods - Free & Gentle
Toilet Paper - 4 Pk or Ind. Wrapped
Toothpaste - Travel Size

Office Supplies

#2 Pencils
Ball Point Pens (Blue or Black Ink)
Batteries (AAA, AA, C & D)
Dry Erase Markers & Washable Markers
Highlighters / Sharpies / Post-it Notes

Program Needs

Card Games
Coloring Books - Adult & Children
Craft Felt Fabric Sheets & Pipe Cleaners
Digital Kitchen Timers
Fidget Toys - Pop-its, Stretchy Toys, Noodles, Dimples, Fidget Spinners, etc.
Fine Motor Skills Toys
Gift Cards - Aldi, Walmart, HyVee, Gas, Hair
Gift Cards (Community Activities) - Sky Zone, Potters Obsession, Speedeez, Fun Station, Air Fx, etc.
Googly Eyes - Various Sizes
Kinetic Sand & Sand Toys
Painting Canvases - All Sizes
Play-Doh
Safety Bands
Suncatchers

Clothes/Textile

Clothing - Sweatpants, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Athletic Shorts - All Sizes, Youth & Adult
Compact Laundry Bags
Pillows
Winter Gloves - Adult



*For people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities*

Member of The Arc of Iowa & The Arc of the United States

The Arc of East Central Iowa

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www.arceci.org

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Mission Statement

The Arc of East Central Iowa empowers individuals with disabilities and their families to engage in lifelong opportunities to live, learn, work, play, and advocate with full dignity and inclusion in their communities.

Make a Difference
Donate at www.arceci.org



JOIN US FOR CURL JAM 2026!

Twelve teams will learn how to curl and will compete the same day in Curl Jam 2026, organized and sponsored by Cedar Rapids Curling!

Curling is a sport for everyone...

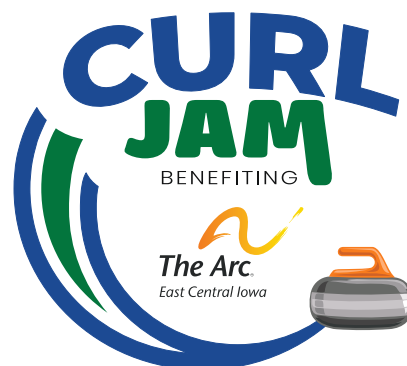
- It's unique!
- It's inclusive!
- It's social!
- It's fun!
- And... Funds raised will support The Arc of East Central Iowa!

Only 12 Teams will Participate – Space is limited so register today!

4 or 5 Members per Team (Teams of 5 will rotate players.)

Registration Fee – \$1,000 per Team.

If you'd like to consider joining us for this special event that really puts the FUN in FUNdraising, go to: <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/curljam/event/curljam2026/> to learn more and sign up! No experience is necessary...just bring your enthusiasm (and rubber-soled shoes!)



Friday, October 9th
11:00 AM - 4:30 PM • ImOn Ice Arena

**Get Registered
Here:**

