

Challenger

A NEWSLETTER THAT CONNECTS, ENGAGES AND INFORMS

Journey of Hope Riders

The Arc of East Central Iowa was thrilled to once again host the Journey of Hope bike riders as they biked from San Francisco to Washington DC to promote disability awareness. (That's 4,000 miles of biking!) The bikers, who are all members of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity and attend colleges and universities from all over the country, spend their summer traveling to dozens of disability service groups spreading awareness. In return for a meal and a place to sleep and shower, they spend quality time with our participants who are in the building for programming. This year, they also participated in our softball game. We loved feeding them a very-Iowa meal complete with maidrites, corn, Jello salads, scotcheroos and much more. We are already looking forward to them returning next summer!



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From the Director's Desk

Hello Arc Friends and Family!

Summer programming has come to an end and we are so grateful for our ability to serve children and families! Thank you to everyone who made a successful summer possible, including all of our dedicated staff, wonderful families, and for summer daycare- Veritas Church who opened their space so we could host our entire child summer programming in one place.

Serving children and adults has been the highlight of the past several months. We keep our vision and mission front of mind, especially when dealing with loss and change. Our focus is to keep providing quality services and helping our participants achieve their goals. Even when faced with state service changes (discontinuing Integrated Health Homes [IHH] our most recent program addition), we rallied to find positions for most of that team and helped one secure a position with another organization. In change comes opportunity, and we are assessing our capacity to offer new services that can still support the IHH population so they can remain safe and healthy.

Our work is not done. We are unsure what other program changes or funding loss will come our way, but we will not go down without a fight. Our leadership is advocating for the needs of the people we serve in hopes that funding for Home and Community Based Services-HCBS (Waiver services for children and adults with disabilities) will not be cut or only experience minor impacts. But we still need your help.

Decisions on Medicaid funding are solely being decided by Iowa Medicaid Enterprises, DHHS, and state leadership. We urge you to write letters, send emails, or make calls to urge them to carve out HCBS and keep funding for children and adults with disabilities.

Here's who to contact:

DHHS & Medicaid Director Kelly Garcia

director@hhs.iowa.gov
(800) 972-2017

Office of Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds

You can write an opinion: https://iqconnect.lmhostediq.com/iqextranet/EForm.aspx?_cid=FSL_IA_GOV&_fid=100007&iframe=Y
Or call (best option): 515-281-5211

We will not go back! Thank you all for your support of the people we serve and for the programs and supports The Arc of East Central Iowa offers to our communities!

With appreciation,



Theresa Lewis,
Executive Director



Theresa Lewis

Summer 2025

Summer 2025 at The Arc was a blast! Here are some highlights from this summer...



The Arc Summer Program served over 90 participants this summer at Veritas Church!



We added two additional Day Hab groups for this summer and these 2 groups consisted of two staff and 11 participants each day! We provided 10 weeks of programming for these individuals!



Each summer classroom went on over 35 field trips this summer!



We employed over 50 staff for The Arc Summer Program!



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, September 26th 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Eastern Iowa Arts Academy
2630 B Ave NE
\$35 per person

Get Your
Tickets
Here:



Curl Jam

Twelve teams will learn how to curl and will compete the same day in Curl Jam 2025, organized and sponsored by Cedar Rapids Curling!

Curling is a sport for everyone...

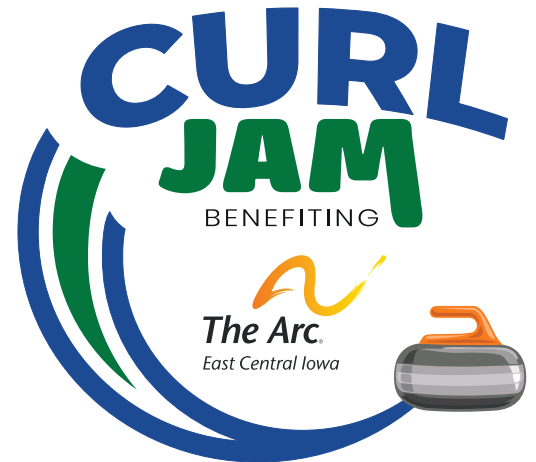
- It's unique!
- It's inclusive!
- It's social!
- It's fun!
- And... Funds raised will support The Arc of East Central Iowa!

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/curljam2025/> to learn more and sign up! No experience is necessary...just bring your enthusiasm (and rubber-soled shoes!)



Friday, October 3rd
11:00 AM – 4:30 PM
ImOn Ice Arena

Get
Registered
Here:



TOUCH-A- TRUCK

Our 2nd annual Touch -A- Truck was a great day! So many great vehicles and so many wonderful people joined in the fun. The Arc is so grateful to all the businesses and vehicle owners who stepped up to support this event through their gifts of time, talent and treasure. Many thanks to our Presenting Sponsors (UFG and Van Meter), Location Sponsor (Kirkwood Community College) and our Media Sponsor (Don Hummer Trucking).

Many thanks to all the local businesses who shared their vehicles and their gifts of time. Many companies brought more than one vehicle!



319 Jeeps
Area Ambulance
Atlantic Bottling Company
Cedar Rapids Fire Department
Cedar Rapids Police Department
Cedar Rapids Public Library
City of Cedar Rapids Dump truck
City of Cedar Rapids Snow Plows
City of Cedar Rapids Bus Transit
City of Cedar Rapids Street Sweeper
City of Cedar Rapids Garbage Truck
Danielle Zwiefelhofer

Darrah's Towing
Don Hummer Trucking
Duane Smith
Eastern Iowa Health Center
Express Limos
Fed Ex
Hawkeye Ready Mix
Hite Crane & Rigging
Horizons
Iowa National Guard
Kazimour Farms
Kirkwood Agricultural

Kirkwood Food Service
Kirkwood Livestock
Kona Ice
O'Connell Transport
Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile
Outlaw Towing & Recovery
StoryMaker w/ PaperPie
Tegler Wrecker & Crane
Van Meter
Z102.9



Participant Spotlight



Mason Ray Kirchhoff

About Me.

I am 4 years old and live in Cedar Rapids. I have been living with my new family since April 2023. I have a mom and dad, four brothers, and two foster brothers that have come and gone. I was finally adopted April 2025 on my 4th birthday!

In the past two years I've learned to roll and sit independently. I'm always asking for food and even started to eat food and decrease my formula through my g-tube. I love to talk!

What Do You Love About The Arc?

All the things we get to do! I go to bed knowing where we will be going the next day and when I wake up in the morning the first thing I say is that I'm ready to go on that said adventure.

Favorite Arc Memory?

Being with my favorite Arc worker and my cousin on all the field trips.

Favorite Arc Activity or Event?

Making cloud dough and playing with it.

Favorite Hobbies?

Singing and dancing! I can not wait for dance parties at The Arc. I hear they are so much fun!

Favorite Outdoor Activities?

I enjoy swimming and swinging.

Favorite Foods?

I really like pizza and french fries AND anything dipped in avocados or ranch.

Welcome to The Arc



Hi, I'm Odessa Zahradnik and I am a new Employment Specialist.

I started working with The Arc as a Day Hab team member a year and a half ago. Although I enjoyed the Day Hab program I wanted to challenge myself in a new environment. I have a dog named Sadie and she is my pride and joy! I enjoy reading, coloring, listening to music, and spending time with my family in my free time.

I am happy to be a part of the Employment Specialist team.

The Arc of East Central Iowa

ANNUAL MEETING



Monday, September 29th 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 2025.

Thank You

General Donations

Andrew Bellagamba, Ryan Bentz
Jane Bockenstedt, Andrew Boone,
Jody Bridgewater, Cargill, Crystal
Group, Daybreak Rotary, Jessica
Fahey, Maria Gaffney, James
Griffin (Crescent - Janko Masonic
Foundation), Louis Harvieux,
Todd Henry, Stan & Dawn
Herkelman (Herkelman Legacy
Fund), Ruth Hojka, Ann Jeffries,
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(Walter & Ida Kansky Charitable
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Memorials Ryan Corrigan

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Jonathan & Sarah Bengston, Brad
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Tracie Koepp, Paula & Chris
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Thurber, Philip White, Marjorie
Zach, David & Cynthia Zenk

Bihari Richards

Douglas & Maya Richards

Sara Smith

Ryan Smith

Cody Whittaker

Cheri Whittaker

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Fahey, Terese Fisher, Maria
Gaffney, Nathan Haas,
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Koffron, Sara Kruse, Cherri Lock,
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Michael Neuerburg, Jessica
Pleggenkuhle, Leah Rodenberg,
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Bob & Kay Spading, Tim & Sue
Winegarden, Judy Woods

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
Snack Crackers & Chips - Variety Packs

General Supplies

Baby Wipes - Unscented/Sensitive
Bandages - Assorted
Deodorant - Travel Size (Men & Women)
Hand Lotion - Travel Size
Hand Sanitizer Refills / Hand Wipes
Kleenex/Tissues (Cube Boxes)
Lint Rollers
Reusable Hot/Cold Packs
Shampoo/Conditioner
Tide Pods - Free & Gentle
Toilet Paper
Toothbrush & Toothpaste - Travel Size

Office Supplies

#2 Pencils
Ball Point Pens (Blue or Black Ink)
Batteries (AAA, AA, C & D)
Construction Paper (Black) 9" x 12"
Dry Erase Markers & Washable Markers
Highlighters / Sharpies / Post-it Notes

Program Needs

Card Games
Coloring Books - Adult & Children
Crafts / Perler / Fuse Beads
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
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

Blankets / Pillows
Clothing - Sweatpants, T-shirts,
Sweatshirts, Athletic Shorts - All Sizes,
Youth & Adult
Compact Laundry Bags
Hats & Gloves - Adult
Socks - Ladies & Mens, Size 8-11
Towels - Kitchen & Bath



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

680 2nd Street SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Phone: 319-365-0487
Fax: 319-365-9938
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



Raffle for a Cause

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We have many great packages up for grabs!

1. Backyard Camping Adventures
2. Bowling, Bouncing, Basketball & Bread
3. Build Your Game Room
4. Cookies Without The Chaos
5. Fast Food Frenzy
6. Is That A Sweet Treat?
7. Iowa Women's Basketball: Drive, Dine & Dunk
8. Local Love: The Best Of Cedar Rapids & Marion
9. Nordstrom Shopping Spree
10. Pamper Package: Body, Car & Cravings
11. Pit Boss-Level BBQ And Cooler
12. Staycation Cedar Rapids

Package descriptions are available at arceci.org.

There are many ways for you to purchase your raffle tickets.

- Buy them online at arceci.org.
- Stop by The Arc's main office
Monday - Friday from 9:00 - 3:30.
- Purchase them from
any office staff member.
- Purchase them from
an Arc Board Member.

Drawing will be held
Tuesday, Oct. 7th via
Facebook Live. Need
not be present to win.



TICKET PRICING: 1 - \$5.00 • 3 - \$10.00 • 10 - \$25.00 • 50 - \$100.00