



The Arc of Somerset County Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015

The Arc of Somerset County
141 South Main Street
Manville, New Jersey 08835
Phone: 908-725-8544
Fax: 908-704-0850
www.thearcofsomerset.org

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Executive Summary

The strategic direction and goals included in this plan are The Arc of Somerset County's response to its understanding of what its stakeholder's value most about the organization, and current opportunities and challenges for offering a high quality system of support in the community for people with disabilities.

The five-year period of this strategic plan will be a time of assessing and deepening The Arc of Somerset County's approaches to its Advocacy, service provision, and collaborations. Concurrently, The Arc of Somerset County will take more of a leadership role in working with a broader array of community resources partners and volunteers. With a fresh perspective on its mission, understanding what it does well, and the environment in which it operates, The Arc of Somerset County will pursue the following strategic priorities:

ADVOCACY AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

The Arc of Somerset County will monitor the trends in needs of individuals with an intellectual/developmental disability and adapt advocacy efforts and service delivery models to match these trends.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

The Arc of Somerset County believes that a well-trained and dedicated workforce is a primary factor in the agency's ability to deliver compassionate and comprehensive services to the community. The Arc of Somerset County will provide employees with the resources, training, and motivation to foster continued employment and advancement.

GOVERNANCE

The Arc of Somerset County's Board of Directors will provide consistent oversight, cohesive policies, processes, and decision-making based on best practices, compliance, and their fiduciary responsibility.

INCLUSION / INTEGRATION

The Arc of Somerset County believes that all individuals regardless of ability or disability can be valuable and contributing members of their community. The Arc of Somerset County will develop and implement programs to increase the participation of individuals with a disability in their communities and encourage increased community participation in agency activities.

PARTNERSHIPS / SHARED SERVICES

To ensure the most comprehensive services and broadest network of resources are available to the agency and those we serve, The Arc of Somerset County will cultivate and sustain partnerships and collaborations in the community that will assist in the achievement of mission/vision and strategic plan outcomes.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

To sustain programs and services that serve persons with disabilities and their families, The Arc of Somerset County will execute fundraising and development strategies that promote the agency and maximize its financial resources

Lauren Panarella
Executive Director

History and Long Term Accomplishments

The Arc movement began in New Jersey in 1946 when the mother of a child with an intellectual and developmental disability reached out to her community by writing letters to her local newspaper. She wished to keep her child home, rather than in an institution as was the common practice of the day. She asked if other families would be willing to meet to discuss the issues and plan some support alternatives. Eventually local, state, and national groups of concerned families organized into a grassroots movement to address and gain supports for their family members with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To this day, our organization maintains its grassroots beginning with parents and family members being a driving force in our day-to-day operations.

From its humble beginning in 1972 with just sixteen individuals and two employees, The Arc of Somerset County has grown to serving over 1000 persons and families with intellectual and developmental disabilities with over 300 employees. Services to adults include twenty-five residential programs and four employment programs situated throughout the county. Services for children at the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families include an early intervention program, daycare program, an after-school program, a Saturday recreational program and Parents and Children Together (PACT), an innovative program-serving parent with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their children. Camp Jotoni, which operates during the summer, serves children and adults. Family Support Services assists individuals and families in their homes throughout the county.

In addition to providing direct services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc of Somerset County, driven by its founding parents, was, and continues to be, a strong advocate for prevention of disabilities. Through its efforts, in conjunction with state and national organizations, significant legislation passes. This legislation has substantially reduced the incidence of disability related to lead poisoning, phenylketonuria (PKU), and childhood injury related to bicycle accidents.

The Arc of Somerset County serves as a powerful model of individuals working together to effect changes at the local, state, and national levels of government in support of people with disabilities. Several of the chapter's founding parents continue to be vocal advocates for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and The Arc of Somerset County's programs. They and other parents serve as board and committee members who remain committed to perpetuating The Arc of Somerset County's goals of supporting, advising, and advocating for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This active family involvement is unique to The Arc movement and is critical to maintaining The Arc of Somerset County's unique value in providing supports.

The Arc of Somerset County has a strong and growing legacy of staff and volunteers helping individuals and families in all aspects of their lives. The Arc of Somerset is proud of its outstanding staff, history of advocacy, and for continuous delivering quality, professional services, and supports.

The Arc of Somerset County Services

The Arc of Somerset County currently offers services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families throughout their lives. These services include:

Camp Jotoni

Sounds of joy and laughter fill the campgrounds. Warm summer showers, cool splashes in the pool, songs sung around a campfire are some of the shared memories created at Camp Jotoni, located in rural Warren, New Jersey. Sponsored by The Arc of Somerset County, Camp Jotoni is a day and residential camp for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Campers are ages five to adult. Camp Jotoni is located on seventeen acres in Somerset County, and the camp features a junior Olympic size pool, cabins, dining hall, playgrounds, open-air pavilions, unspoiled woods, and a nature trail.

Camp Jotoni is accredited by the American Camp Association.

Clinical Services

The Clinical Services Department is staffed by professionals trained in social work, counseling, nursing, ministry, and residential and vocational support. This team includes Support Specialists, RNs, LPNs, and a consulting chaplain.

Support Specialists are available to address the needs of all individuals of residential and employment services. Support Specialists provide the following assistance to individual participants:

- Assistance in transitioning to a new home or job
- Behavioral support to enable individuals to fully participate in their homes, jobs and communities
- Advocacy
- Assistance in finding and accessing community resources, such as physical and mental health care providers, social groups and recreation
- Assistance in making choices regarding their individual habilitative plans
- Emotional support in the form of individual home visits and group meetings

Support Specialists also provide training and assistance to staff. Training offerings include Gentle Teaching, Critical Crossroads, Non-violent Crisis Intervention, and specific instruction in the implementation of individuals' support plans.

Further, the Clinical Support Services Department supplies nursing support to each of The Arc of Somerset County's residential and vocational programs. The nursing team supplies:

- Physical assessments
- Medical treatments
- Monitoring of health conditions
- Medication administration monitoring

- Training of individuals and staff
- Medical advisement twenty-four hours day via telephone.

Our consulting chaplain is available to assist individuals in connecting to faith communities of their choice. Other services offered include assistance with issues of grief and loss and Bible studies. Our chaplain has also provided staff and individuals with training on the grieving process.

Employment Services

The Arc of Somerset County offers a variety of options for adults and families seeking services and programs that foster continued development and growth beyond the school years. We provide center-based and community-based services as well as support for the transition from school to vocational life.

Center-based Adult Services

The Arc of Somerset County provides center-based adult programs at four facilities in Somerset County to over 200 individuals. Activities are intended to fit the cognitive and physical skill levels as well as the interests of the individuals enrolled in the various programs. The goal is to foster positive work attitudes and behaviors while increasing social skill development for individuals who have little or no exposure to a work environment.

Fulfillment and production tasks are offered as a means of developing work skills and earning money. The Arc of Somerset provides business solutions to customers from a variety of industries such as manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, professional services, and county organizations. Individuals receive payment for their work in accordance with Department of Labor, Wage and Hour standards.

Participation in community activities and job sampling are encouraged as possible. For some, community-based employment may become a goal. Somerset County Division of Transportation provides transportation. The Arc of Somerset County works closely with the N.J. Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The programs provide a variety of services to meet the needs of the business community in New Jersey. These services include the following:

- Assembly
- Packaging
- Mailing
- Labeling
- Collating
- Heat sealing
- Shrink wrapping
- Shredding Services including:
 - Destruction of confidential files, paper, CDs, credit cards, and more
 - Secured transport, staging, and shredding environments
 - Material pick- up at your site available
 - Certificate of destruction upon completion of the job

Our production environment includes:

- Short term warehouse space
- Two box trucks
- Three loading docks
- A full complement of equipment including:

- L- sealers
- Heat sealers
- Forklifts
- Shrink tunnels
- Commercial shredding machine

Community-based Employment

Supported Employment services are provided to individuals whose vocational aspirations lead them to employment in the community. In schools, warehouses, hospitals, supermarkets and retail stores, this program currently supports approximately fifty men and women who are making community connections through work, and learning to navigate the vocational landscape in our large and multi-faceted county.

Supported Employment offers career counseling, evaluation, and assessment, when possible internships or on-the-job training, and assistance with any job accommodations, which may be needed. A Job Coach is assigned to each individual to provide the prospective employee personalized strategies to improve their general employability as well as specific job-related trainings.

Supported Employment is an excellent choice for someone looking to pursue the most independent employment option possible through staffing opportunities with local organizations.

Many employers recognize that hiring persons with disabilities can have a positive impact on their bottom line. People with disabilities perform a wide variety of jobs successfully and profitably while earning a fair wage.

Our Supported Employment program recommends strategies tailored to accommodate the needs of both the employer and the employee. A Job Coach is assigned to the employee to ensure compatibility and productivity for the tasks at hand. The Job Coach can provide assistance at any time for any reason.

The Arc has placed, trained, and supported individuals in many industries in the Somerset County area including supermarkets, hospitals, restaurants/fast food outlets, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, retail stores, and libraries.

Transition Services

Transition Services can provide a bridge between school life and working life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc of Somerset County will attend Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings and support the family and the Child Study team in efforts to implement transition plans, visit center-based programs and tour work sites. Time limited job sampling and assessments are available throughout the transition year and provide exposure to community work and culture. Skills can also be developed to support an individual's efforts to express personal interest. Once complete, job development services continue to foster resume creation, interview practice, and general employability. After hire, job-coaching services assist in acclimating individuals to the work environment and to monitor progress and personal preferences.

Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families

The Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families, established in 1976, has been providing quality services to children and their families for over thirty years. Our New Jersey licensed childcare facility is located in Manville and easily accessible from most major Somerset County roadways.

The mission of the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families (JDCCF) is to ensure every individual's optimal growth and development. JDCCF's comprehensive, interdisciplinary programs are designed to meet the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional needs of individuals who have a diverse range of abilities. These programs are staffed by dedicated professionals including teachers who may be licensed and certified in both early childhood and special education. We challenge, nurture, respect, support, and inspire all participants and staff to excel and achieve their personal best.

The center offers three instrumental programs: Early Intervention, Developmental Daycare, and Family Support

Early Intervention

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a system of supports and services provided to children birth to three years of age who have developmental delays and/or some specific medically diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay. The goal of Early Intervention is to help a family meet the developmental and health-related needs of their child. A child's Early Intervention services are based on the individual needs of the child, the primary concerns expressed by the family, and the family's resources. Services and supports are provided in settings that are natural and convenient for the family, such as home, local library, or Childcare including Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families.

The following EIP services are available at no cost to the family:

- Evaluation and Assessment
- Writing of an Individual Service Plan (included recommendations for services)
- Service Coordination (Case Management)
- Procedural Safeguards

To be eligible for Early Intervention Services a child must meet the following criteria:

- Developmental Delay of 25% in two or more areas of development
- Developmental Delay of 33% in one area of development
- Medically diagnosed physical or mental condition that typically results in developmental delay (Down Syndrome, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, etc.)

If a child is eligible for EIP services, an individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is then written. The IFSP includes developmental goals and service recommendations. If you choose to receive the recommended services through EIP, your child will then be referred to a comprehensive service provider. Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families is an EIP comprehensive service provider in Somerset County.

EIP Services available (Co-pay for services may be required):

- Developmental Intervention
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Family Therapy

Methods that may be utilized by therapists and teachers:

- The Listening Program
- PROMPT
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

Other Specialty Services that may be utilized by therapists and teachers:

- Feeding
- Augmentative Communication
- Orthotics
- Sensory Integration
- Adaptive Equipment
- Seating
- Ambulation
- Fabrication of hand & foot splints

EIP families may also be interested in utilizing other agency resources such as:

- Family Support
- Parents and Children Together (PACT)
- Developmental Daycare

Developmental Daycare

Ages: 18 months - 3 years

Hours: 7:30 am - 6:00 pm

Schedules: Full and Part time available

The Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families has been providing outstanding services for over thirty years. Our facility is clean and cheerful with a fenced-in outdoor playground and an indoor play area that are available for daily structure and free play. Teachers and Teacher Assistants are CPR and First Aid certified. We meet NJ Division of Children and Families required teacher/child ratios and all staff have DYFS background checks. A keypad at the entrance provides added security. Our tuition includes daily art materials, morning, lunch, and afternoon snacks.

Our curriculum-based program helps children grow socially, emotionally and physically in an environment that is professional, positive, and nurturing. We focus on the individual needs of the child and believe each child has individual strengths and challenges that provide opportunities for growth. Our classroom management techniques promote positive behaviors appropriate to the developmental abilities of each child. The classroom environment is designed to meet the individual needs of the children to ensure a smooth transition from one activity to another. High interest activities are provided to motivate and challenge each child to learn new skills.

Childcare services are available to children with developmental delays and typically developing children. Early intervention therapists are welcome! The center offers inclusion opportunities for our children with developmental disabilities with their typically developing peers and community integration activities in our local neighborhoods.

Given that a child's life revolves around the home, we believe it is essential that the parents and teachers communicate on a regular basis. Daily notes are given to parents and a monthly newsletter is distributed. Families are invited to participate in classroom activities.

The center offers Daycare from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm with Before and After care available. Flexible schedules are available to accommodate parent's busy schedules.

Family Support

The Arc of Somerset County's Family Support Program assists individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in their efforts to remain together in their homes and communities. The home is typically the best environment for the individual so Family Support is often defined as "whatever it takes" to help an individual stay in his/her natural home. Family involvement and empowerment are key in determining the needs of the individual or family. The Family Support staff works with the family to determine needs and assist with obtaining quality supports necessary to enhance the quality of life for the families and the individual with a disability.

Raising a child with an intellectual and developmental disability can challenge a family's ability to cope, and parents, siblings, caregivers, and friends often feel overwhelmed. Individuals with disabilities have the best opportunity to grow and develop within a loving family environment. The Family Support Program is designed to keep families together.

We serve children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families with and without disabilities.

Information and Referral Services assist individuals and their families in obtaining additional services in or beyond the local community. Service includes specific information and direction for the individual and family to follow and encouragement. Family Support can help with information and referral for medical needs, early intervention services, transition services, recreation, guidance, advocacy, and assistance with DDD applications.

Kids' Night Out Program offers fun and entertainment to children with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their siblings. Children participate in recreation and craft activities while their parents enjoy an evening out. This is a Fee for Service activity and is offered on the third Friday of the month on a first come first serve basis with registration starting thirty days prior to the scheduled event.

My Time Program is a free event for all brothers and sisters, ages 8 - 12, of siblings with special needs. This event is for siblings and parents to meet make new friends and build a network of support. This group meets at the Hillsborough YMCA. My Time events are held in January, April, July, and October on the 3rd Sunday of the month from 3 pm - 6 pm. The agenda includes free swimming from 3 pm - 4 pm, self-esteem activities (Get To Know Me games) from 4 pm - 5 pm, and crafts and refreshments from 5 pm - 6 pm.

Ask The Advocate Day is offered annually to families to discuss their child's Individualized Educational Program with The Arc of NJ's Educational Advocate. This event is offered free to parents of children in the special education system. Parents are encouraged to attend and learn about their rights under the special education laws and how to become an effective educational advocate for their child.

Caregivers Day is offered annually to acknowledge and honor all family members, neighbors, friends and paid caregivers; through their compassion and love, they make such a positive difference in the quality of life for others. This even is a free fun filled day of pampering, guest speakers, respite, and lunch. Dates are announced in our quarterly newsletter, The Herald.

To qualify for the following services, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be found eligible by the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities and must be referred by their Case Manager:

The In-Home Respite Voucher Program is a DDD (Department of Developmental Disabilities) funded reimbursement program supporting forty-four families in Somerset County.

The family member with a disability must be 6 years or older, registered with the Department of Developmental Disabilities and referred to us by their Case Manager. In-Home Respite offers parents and care givers an opportunity to take time off from caring for their family member with a disability providing about twenty hours a month of support. The families have the flexibility to hire a provider of their choice. Families are then reimbursed for the provider's services.

After School/Work Program is designed to assist families with care needs after school or after an individual's day program. After school/work program provides individuals with a safe, fun place to go after school, while allowing parents to continue to work full time hours. Programs are available Monday through Friday from 3 pm until 6 pm. The After School Program is held at the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families in Manville and supports children ages 5 to 21 years old. The After Work Program is available at our employment centers for adults 21 years or older.

Saturday Respite Program offers five hours of social and recreational activities for children ages 5 - 21 years. Families with children can often use a break on Saturdays. We offer an out of home respite service from 10 am - 3 pm where children with special needs have the opportunity to participate in activities that are structured and designed to improve social skills.

Parents & Children Together

PACT (Parents and Children Together) is a parenting-education program for Somerset County area families headed by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. PACT helps families locate, navigate and participate in services they need to keep their children socially and emotionally healthy and educationally on track. PACT's goal is to assist families in using community services so they are able to live, work and parent independently in the community.

PACT Home Interventionists use the following methods to support families:

- We teach parenting skills, independent living skills and social skills through home visits and by accompanying families into the community.
- We assist parents in finding and using community services.
- We educate parents in special education rights and guide them in advocating for their children and obtaining appropriate education.
- We help families to understand day-to-day challenges of parenting and how to address them.

In this way, families are able to:

- Develop the means to support their families basic needs
- Obtain counseling, medical and dental care, legal and financial assistance, educational placements, child care and recreation services
- Participate fully in the education of their children
- Understand their rights as parents and citizens
- Feel supported and accepted
- Live, work and parent independently in the community

Residential Services

The goal of the Residential Services Department is to provide a safe and healthy place to live, to provide a learning environment, to integrate individuals into their community, to offer varied recreational opportunities, and to provide the supports required for individuals to achieve their goals and realize their dreams.

The Arc of Somerset County's Residential Services Department provides services to 115 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in twenty-five different locations throughout Somerset County. Over 200 staff provide support in one of four types of programs based on the level of support and supervision that the individual requires. These include Group Homes, Supervised Apartments, Supported Living Programs, and Respite Care Services.

- **Group Homes:** The department operates fourteen group homes. In these programs, which range in size from three to ten individuals, there is 24 hours support provided. Although intellectual and physical functioning varies greatly from home to home, individuals in this setting require more on-going support than other residential facilities.
- **Supervised Apartments:** The department operates two large and two small-supervised apartment program settings. In these programs, individuals live in either a one or a two-bedroom apartment. There are periods allotted of unsupervised time alone based on their individual plans. Staff is on-site in the building 24-hours a day in the case of an emergency.
- **Supported Living Programs:** The department oversees seven Supported Living Programs. These individuals live independently in the community and could receive a limited number of support from five to twenty-five hours each week, based on their individual needs.
- **Respite Care Services:** The department operates one Respite group home with a maximum capacity for seven individuals. Respite provides care, intended to be on a short-term basis for individuals due to the absence or need for relief of the natural caregiver. Respite also provides care for emergency placements.

The Direct Support Professionals, Program Management, and Administration for the Residential Department provide a great number of services and supports that include:

- Medical Oversight- Many of the individuals in the department have varied and complex medical histories for which nursing staff provide on going support. Staff administer medications and provide other medical oversight as directed by the doctor.
- Accessibility - The continual reassessment process to ensure that all programs are accessible to ensure independence to the greatest level while ensuing safety.
- Recreation- There is a variety of recreational opportunities for adults served. On a weekly basis the Come and Dance hosts over 200 individuals coming from Somerset County. Each Friday evening the department runs an activity, which may include ventures club, live music, yoga, Sisters of The Arc and bingo. The department also runs the excursion club. Organized activities include Medieval Times, Miniature golf, bowling, and pizza, meals at local restaurants, Philadelphia Zoo, laser tag, fashion show, and talent shows.

S.E.E.D.S. - Student Education & Experience for Disability Sensitivity

S.E.E.D.S is a free student community outreach educational initiative that increases disability awareness and sensitivity in the community. S.E.E.D.S. provides students with unique opportunities to learn about the people with disabilities through an informative in-class lecture, dynamic student activities, and group discussion. S.E.E.D.S reaches fifth and sixth grade students throughout New Jersey, introducing disabilities and touching on topics such as the challenges and opportunities facing the individuals. Students learn the impact harassment has on people with disabilities and increases their acceptance of diversity and social responsibility. Through education and interactive learning, S.E.E.D.S hopes to plant an idea and grow understanding.

Quality Improvement and Training

At The Arc of Somerset County, quality management is the responsibility of all employees. The Quality Department has the role of providing our programs and staff with the information, resources, and training to continually assess quality and to provide opportunities and the tools needed for improvement.

The Arc of Somerset County strives to find new ways to achieve continuous quality improvement by offering programs and services that promote best practices in service delivery, staff training, IHP development, and risk management. Varieties of tools are used to assess, analyze, and evaluate program quality. Among these tools are satisfaction surveys, Unusual Incident Report data, audit results, licensing inspections, and external accreditations (CARF, ACA).

Specific activities of the Quality Department are geared toward the promotion of best practices in our service departments. Recognizing the need to update the delivery of service based on the changing needs of the individuals served, the Quality Department engages in researching and promoting current best practices and new initiative in the area of supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Quality Department is currently engaged in the following activities:

- Supporting the Self-Advocacy Group that is run by individuals
- Providing program departments with a monthly analysis and quality trend report of Unusual Incident Reports
- Promoting staff development through the promotion of the College of Direct Support - Career Ladder project
- Development, deployment and analysis of various program and stakeholder satisfaction surveys
- Increasing communication through the use of a web-based communication system that is available to all staff members (THERAP)
- Participating in various program audits to ensure compliance with all local, state and federal requirements
- Providing continuous staff training

The agency strategic plan places great emphasis on quality and outcomes management that will lead to enhanced quality in all departments. This plan reflects the agency's commitment to the individuals served and the need to continue to work to enhance the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Planning Process

The 2010 - 2015 strategic planning process began with a request from The Arc of Somerset County's Board of Directors for an updated strategic plan. The Board and agency's leadership determined that the plan would help The Arc of Somerset County to:

- Provide clarity of the agency mission and direction to attract, develop and retain the best employee population
- Address financial opportunities and threats
- Respond to the increasing number of individuals who require support in the county
- Present a clearer articulation of what differentiates The Arc of Somerset County from other organizations in Somerset County
- Expand the understanding of developmental disabilities through education of governmental agencies, the community and potential donors about individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Address the changing needs due to extended life expectancy of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Using an on-line Needs Assessment Survey the committee gathered information from other service providers, regulatory bodies, and funding sources. The Needs Assessment questions were then designed to address three key areas, which were; where is the agency today; what do we want, as an agency, to accomplish and what gaps, if any, exist. Individual served, family and employee survey data from the last two years were also reviewed and considered to inform the current plan.

The Executive Staff, Program Directors, Direct Support Professionals, Individuals Served, and volunteers from the community spent many hours reviewing and analyzing the data we received and together formulated the top issues that were most compelling. The issues were then developed into six Strategic Priorities with a defining position statement for each. The next step was to create defining goals and objectives for each of the priorities that would best improve processes, enhance services and increase individual, stakeholder as well as employee satisfaction.

A major focus of the committee was the restatement of The Arc of Somerset County's Mission Statement. The goal was to produce a comprehensive statement that would serve to motivate the Individuals Served, Board of Directors, employees, and all stakeholders, while supporting and promoting the agency's purpose while remaining measurable and person/agency centered. Advocacy, support, and development were key components in its creation.

The committee targeted the creation of objectives and strategies that were specific and provide measurable levels of achievement. The process that was used is circular, enables continuous improvement, and will position the agency well to continue the plan for both today and guide the agency over the next five years.

The Arc of Somerset County

Mission Statement

The Arc of Somerset County provides quality services and advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families to support development and achievement at every stage of life. *Approved by The Board of Directors on March 22, 2010*

Vision Statement

We will provide the leadership to create an inclusive community of caring so outstanding its echo will reverberate through human services of all kinds for years to come.

Participants in our community include people with disabilities, their families, staff, volunteers and all our friends and supporters in the larger community of Somerset County.

The hallmarks of our community will be:

- **Education** - lifelong learning for all participants
- **Caring** - respect and compassion among all of us: always leading from the heart
- **Hope** - advocacy and encouragement: to affect the quality of someone's day is no small accomplishment
- **Opportunity** - transcending disability by recognizing and developing the capabilities of each and every participant

Value Statement

The Arc of Somerset County believes that every individual should have the opportunity to live and participate in the community regardless of the level of their abilities. We further believe that:

- Every individual is inherently valuable
- Every individual can dream, grow and learn
- Every individual deserves the right to make meaningful choices about how and where they live, work and play
- A dedicated, highly qualified staff is essential to The Arc's ability to best support people with developmental and intellectual disabilities
- Every individual deserves the opportunity for meaningful family* relationships
- Family* involvement; at all levels, is essential to our mission

*(*Families include family members as well as friends, caregivers, guardians, advocates, etc.)*

Strategic Plan:

ADVOCACY AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

The Arc of Somerset County will monitor the trends in needs of individuals with an intellectual/developmental disability and adapt advocacy efforts and service delivery models to match these trends.

Objectives:

The Arc of Somerset County will monitor trends to adapt advocacy efforts and develop models to match trends.

Strategies:

What: Will actively participate in Somerset County Human Services Advisory Council.

Due Date: On-going

Person Responsible: Director of Children and Family Services

What: Will actively participate in Somerset County CIACC and Mental Health Professional Advisory Committee and Co-Occurring Disorders Task Force.

Due Date: On-going

Person Responsible: Director of PACT

What: Family Support will sponsor at least six workshops a year on topics of interest to The Arc of Somerset County families.

Due Date: February 2011 and On-going

Person Responsible: Director of Children and Family Services, Assistant Director of Family Support

What: Will expand the Employment Services Personal Interests Initiative Program at all day programs incorporating intentional activities that address the needs of the individuals served while leveraging the resources of the particular program.

Due Date: June 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Employment Services

What: Will develop the Residential Services personal accessibility plans for identified individuals to meet the challenging needs of the individuals served in each residential program.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Residential Services

Strategic Plan:

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

The Arc of Somerset County believes that a well-trained and dedicated workforce is a primary factor in the agencies ability to deliver compassionate and comprehensive services to the community. The Arc of Somerset County will provide employees with the resources, training, and motivation to foster continued employment and advancement.

Objective:

The Arc of Somerset County will provide employees with opportunities for advancement and Career Path/ladder.

Strategies:

What: Tuition Reimbursement program will be fully utilized.
Due Date: September 2011
Person Responsible: Director of Human Resources

Objective:

The Arc of Somerset County will develop and execute a defined and regular system of Recognition for all employees.

Strategies:

What: Employee Recognition Events will be held quarterly (at various locations).
Due Date: June 2010 and ongoing
Persons Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Executive Staff

What: Will develop a “peer to peer” recognition program.
Due date: June 2010
Person responsible: Director of Human Resources and Department Directors

What: Will develop Cultural Competence/Diversity (thoughts; learning; ideas) training.

Due date: February 2011

Person responsible: Director of Human Resources and Director of Quality

What: 40% of all employees will be provided with (documented) recognition for outstanding performance.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Department Directors

Objective:

The Arc of Somerset will review and revise the compensation/benefit plan to remain a competitive employer.

Strategies:

What: Will maintain comparative analysis of Compensation/ Benefits against the current market.

Due Date: February and annually

Person Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Human Resources Compensation Committee

What: Will determine/address inequities in salaries/ benefits.

Due Date: February and annually

Person Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Human Resources Compensation Committee

What: An employee Wellness Program will be developed and executed.

Due Date: May 2010

Person Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Wellness Committee

Objective:

The Arc of Somerset County will develop initiatives to enhance management skill development.

Strategies:

What: Will develop comprehensive skill based management training for all levels of supervisors/ managers.

Due Date: September 2010

Persons Responsible: Director of Human Resources, Department Directors, and Executive Staff

What: Will ensure all relevant staff are trained on above program.

Due Date: September 2011

Persons Responsible: Director of Human Resources and Executive Staff

What: 95% of all employees will receive all trainings within 3 months of employment.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Quality

Objective:

The Arc of Somerset County will increase the communication and visibility of agency leadership.

Strategies:

What: The Executive Director will send out the Quarterly "Message from the Executive Director" to all employees/website.

Due Date: June 2010 and ongoing

Person Responsible: Executive Director

What: Will develop an Employee Enhancement Committee that meets quarterly.

Due date: June 2010

Persons Responsible: Executive Director

What: Will post the Director biographies on the agency website.

Due Date: April 2010

Persons Responsible: Development Department and Department Directors

What: Will develop the opportunity for all employees to meet with Executive Director.

Due Date: January 2011

Person responsible: Executive Director

What: 70% of employee respondents will rate their overall satisfaction with their employment experience as VERY satisfied (on the annual employee satisfaction survey).

Due Date: January 2015

Person Responsible: Director of Quality, Director of Human Resources and Department Directors

Strategic Plan:

GOVERNANCE

The Arc of Somerset County's Board of Directors will provide consistent oversight, cohesive policies, processes, and decision-making based on best practices, compliance, and their fiduciary responsibility.

Objectives:

What: Each board member will attend 80% of Board meetings (Committee meetings inclusive) per year.

Due Date: On-going

Person Responsible: Board of Directors

What: Each board member will participate in at least one Agency Fundraiser per year.

Due Date: On-going

Person Responsible: Board of Directors

What: Board of Directors will set and meet targets for participation in development events (non-fundraisers).

Due Date: On-going

Person Responsible: Board President and Board of Directors

What: The Board President will send a Bi-Annual Message on behalf of the Board of Directors to agency employees two times a year.

Due Date: July, December and On-going

Person Responsible: Board President

What: The Board of Directors will regularly review and evaluate the performance of the Executive Director.

Due Date: January and On-going

Person Responsible: Board of Directors

Strategic Plan:

INCLUSION / INTEGRATION

The Arc of Somerset County believes that all individuals regardless of ability or disability can be valuable and contributing members of their community. The Arc of Somerset County will develop and implement programs to increase the participation of individuals with a disability in their communities and encourage increased community participation in agency activities.

Objectives:

The Arc of Somerset County will define new programs to promote inclusion for our service recipients/families in the community.

Strategies:

What: Develop and sustain at least three networks of community-based entities that will provide a source/means for regularly scheduled “field” and volunteer activities for the Personal Interest initiatives to be implemented in each Day Program. See Matrix

Due Date: June 2014

Person Responsible: Director of Employment Services

What: Employment Services will partner with area schools to provide additional Service Learning Days for our centers.

Due Date: June 2013

Person Responsible: Director of Employment Services

What: The Family Support Center will develop at least one new service in conjunction with outside interested parties, e.g. Somerset County Special Child Health Services, Self-advocates, Parents, Jerry Davis Children and Family Center alumni, Parent/Child Intervention Therapy Program etc.

Due Date: January 2013

Person Responsible: Director of Children and Family Services and Assistant Director of Family Support

What: The Residential Department will increase the number of volunteers working directly with our service recipients by at least five each year.

Due Date: January 2011

Person Responsible: Director of Residential Services

What: The Arc of Somerset County will provide the opportunities that are unique person-served initiated community inclusive experiences with at least 30 individuals per year.

Due Date: 2011 and on-going

Person Responsible: All Departments

Strategic Plan:

PARTNERSHIPS / SHARED SERVICES

To ensure the most comprehensive services and broadest network of resources are available to the agency and those we serve, The Arc of Somerset County will cultivate and sustain partnerships and collaborations in the community that will assist in the achievement of mission/vision and strategic plan outcomes.

Objectives

- 1. The Arc of Somerset County will increase the number of community partnerships for expanded service provision/operations.**

Strategies

What: Will develop an “Adopt a Home” program working directly with local community churches, civic and other volunteer organizations with a goal of at least 3 residential programs being adopted per year.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Residential Services

What: Will develop and sustain at least 2 partnerships with private and/or government entities to explore a continuum of services such as childcare, parenting skill classes, etc.

Due Date: June 30, 2013

Person Responsible: Director of PACT, Director of Children and Family Services

What: Will enter into at least one service contract with private and/or government entities.

Due Date: June 30, 2014

Person Responsible: Director of PACT, Director of Children and Family Services

What: Will develop and sustain at least 2 working relationship with community partners in the areas of behavioral and physical health, elder services, and dementia.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Clinical Services

What: Will create an on-going list of community partners in the areas of behavioral and physical health, elder services, and dementia.

Due Date: January 2013

Person Responsible: Director of Clinical Services

What: Will establish and sustain at least three strategic partnerships in the document destruction industry to support expansion of the agency's shredding endeavor that provides increased employment and training opportunities.

Due Date: June 2011

Person Responsible: Director of Employment Services

2. Use strategic partnerships to achieve full agency CARF accreditation by August 2013.

Strategies

What: The Arc of Somerset County will work closely with local architects to develop accessibility plans for each residential program based on ADA specifications.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Residential Services

What: The Arc of Somerset County will become CARF accredited agency wide.

Due Date: August 2013

Person Responsible: Director of Quality

3. The Arc of Somerset County will partner with families, members, and stakeholders to develop and strengthen relationships.

Strategies

What: Will offer educational presentations to families on health related topics in order to develop stronger connections with families and increase opportunities for soliciting volunteers at least twice a year.

Due Date: June 2011

Person Responsible: Director of Clinical Services

What: Will increase the number of Family Group Meetings in the Residential Department by at least three per year.

Due Date: January 2012

Person Responsible: Director of Residential Services

What: At least 100 unduplicated families will visit the Family Support Center each year.

Due Date: On-going; measured annually

Person Responsible: Director of Children and Family Services

What: Will facilitate annual Focus Group Forums for guardians and family members to increase communication and provide an avenue for feedback to improve services.

Due Date: January 2011 and on-going

Person Responsible: Director of Quality

Strategic Plan:

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

To sustain programs and services that serve persons with disabilities and their families, The Arc of Somerset County will execute fundraising and development strategies that promote the agency and maximize its financial resources

Objectives:

- 1. The Arc of Somerset County will refine and broaden marketing efforts.**

Strategies:

What: Will update and review Mission/Vision/Values statement.

Due Date: February 2010 and On-going

Person Responsible: Quality Management Committee

What: Will ensure updated statements are put on all agency materials/ media (including Mission statement, tagline, website, and planned giving statement).

Due Date: July 2010 and On-going

Person Responsible: Director of Quality

What: Will develop a catalog of testimonials, compelling stories, and pictures.

Due Date: May 2010 and On-going

Person Responsible: Quality Management Committee and Department Directors

What: Will explore and utilize at least three additional media opportunities in the community.

Due Date: June 2010

Person Responsible: Development Department

What: Will develop and execute a Top Donor Event.
Due Date: July 2010 and annually
Person Responsible: Development Department and Executive Director

2. The Arc of Somerset County will develop and execute a planned giving program.

Strategies:

What: Will define Strategies.
Due Date: April 2010
Person Responsible: Development Committee and Development Department

What: Will create a Case Statement.
Due Date: Fall 2010
Person Responsible: Development Committee, Development Department and Executive Director

What: Will hold a planned giving event for potential donors.
Due Date: Fall 2010 and annually
Person Responsible: Development Department and Executive Director

What: Will create and review planned giving page on website.
Due Date: October 2010 and On-going
Person Responsible: Development Department

What: Will create and review Donor profiles.
Due Date: November 2010 and On-going
Person Responsible: Development Department and Development Committee

3. The Arc of Somerset County will research, develop and execute a Capital Campaign.

Strategies:

What: Will research the focus for a Capital Campaign.

Due Date: December 2011

Person Responsible: Board of Directors and Development Committee

What: Will use a Capital Campaign pre-planning tool to determine feasibility and structure for the campaign.

Due Date: June 2012

Person Responsible: Development Committee, Development Department and Executive Director

What: Will create a task force to implement the Capital Campaign.

Due Date: Based on results of the pre-planning tool

Person Responsible: Development Committee and Board of Directors

What: Will develop Case statement and financial goal.

Due Date: Based on results of the pre-planning tool

Person Responsible: Development Committee, Board of Directors and Executive Director

Glossary of Key Terms and Phrases

Aging in place: Describes the condition of remaining in one's own home as one ages, for as long as safely possible.

ATC: Adult Training Center - A DDD funding program providing training for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Training activities range from basic self-help skills to employment training.

ID/DD: Intellectual Disability / Developmental Disability - A severe chronic set of functional limitations, which resulted from any physical and/or mental impairment, which manifests itself before the age of 22.

DDD: Division of Developmental Disabilities - Division of the State Department of Human Services (DHS) responsible for providing services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Dually Diagnosed: Describes those individuals who have both an intellectual disability and a mental health disorder.

DVR: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation - Division of the State Department of Labor (DOL) responsible for providing vocational training to persons with any type of disability.

DYFS: Division of Youth and Family Services - New Jersey's child protection and child welfare agency within the Department of Children and Families. DYFS's mission is to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and to support families.

DCF: Department of Children and Families - SCF is New Jersey's state child welfare agency. DCF encompasses:

- Youth and Families
- Child Behavior Health
- Prevention and Community Partnerships
- Specialized Education Services
- Child Welfare Training Academy
- Centralized Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline

EIP: Early Intervention Program - A system of services and supports designed to give children, aged birth up to three years old, with disabilities assistance in meeting developmental milestones.

Habilitation: Is the nature of our service delivery system, which includes the care, skills training and supervision provided to individuals. The degree and type of care, supervision, skills training and support of an individual is based on the individual's plan and the individual's needs.

IPP: Individualized Program Plan - Specific plan of service listing goals and objectives for a particular individual. All the following are different names for IPPS:

- IHP:** Individualized Habilitation Plan (21 yrs old and above)
- IEP:** Individualized Educational Plan (3 years to 21 years)
- IRP:** Individualized Rehabilitation Plan
- ISP:** Individualized Service Plan
- IFSP:** Individualized Family Service Plan (Birth to 3 years)

Interdisciplinary Team or IDT: A group of individuals that work together to provide information from different professional positions and from different aspects of an individual's life in order to provide quality services that are individualized.

Intellectual Disability: Intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18.

OTC: Occupational Training Center - A DDD funded center-based program for individuals with intellectual and development disabilities that provides training in employment skills.

Person Centered Organization: An entity, which assists people in having the lives that they want and in making individual choices.

Positive Behavior Support: The application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change.

SA: A supervised apartment program is living arrangement where staff provide supervision, guidance and training as needed in activities of daily living as defined by the individual's needs and targeted future goals.

SLP: A supported living program is a living arrangement in which a highly flexible array of services and supports are provided in a variety of settings defined by the number of hours of support a person receives

Self-advocacy: The practice of individuals promoting their own rights, choices, and wishes.

SSI: Supplemental Security Income - Makes cash assistance payments to people who are elderly, blind or who have disabilities who also have limited income and resources.

SSDI: Social Security Disability Insurance - Provides benefits to individuals with disabilities who are "insured" by workers contributed to the Social Security trust fund.

Supported Employment: A program that provides services and support for individuals desiring to work in the community. These services include assessment, job search, resume development, interviewing skills, job coaching, and training.

Chronological History

1950's

- 1950** Pockets of parents meet throughout the region, state, and nation. A movement begins. The Arc is founded in Minnesota.
- 1959** Research in intellectual and developmental disabilities is presented by Elizabeth Boggs, Ph.D., a brochure produced by the Research Fund, is distributed to all chapters of The Arc. The Arc intensifies its advocacy for research and asks Congress for full support for an International Research Plan.

1960's

- 1960** The Arc opens a Governmental Affairs Office in Washington, DC.
- 1962** The Arc helps expose the link between lead poisoning and brain damage in infants and children. The first article about the dangers of lead poisoning upon child development is published in Children Limited.
- 1966** The Arc's advocacy with other national organizations results in the enactment of Medicare and Medicaid.

1970's

- 1972** The Arc of Somerset County incorporates and receives its own nonprofit recognition. It began with 16 individuals, and is recognized as the foremost provider of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Somerset County. There were two programs offered, a preschool program, and an adult center.
- 1976** In January, The Arc of Somerset County purchases a seventeen-acre tract in Warren Township, Somerset County that was a former YMCA Day Camp. By spring, Camp Jotoni opens for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center in Bound Brook is named in remembrance of a child diagnosed with Down Syndrome who dies at 18 months of age.
- 1977** FIFTH ANNIVERSARY: The Arc of Somerset County has grown to include two adult activity centers, one adult workshop, an early childhood center, a summer camp, a citizen advocacy program, a job placement program, a police training program, a "Come and Dance" program and an adult canteen program.
- 1979** Opening of the first community residence for The Arc of Somerset County with the help of One to One Foundation and the Paterniti Family. It is located in Branchburg. More group homes will be opened soon.

1980's

- 1982** TENTH ANNIVERSARY: There are 829 individuals making use of a five group homes, five adult centers, a summer camp, a pre-school, an infant program and year-round recreation. Staff grows to 100 employees. The Far Hills Country Day School matches fifth graders with children at the Jerry Davis Center to learn about children with developmental delays.
- 1984** The Arc of Somerset County receives its first HUD grant of \$536,200 to construct ten housing units in Somerset County. Construction is set to begin in January 1985.
- The Arc of Somerset County opened its first sheltered workshop in Bridgewater and will employ fifty people in food service, subcontract work, and light manufacturing. The Respite Care facility opens in Branchburg.
- 1985** The Occupational Training Center (OTC) in Branchburg opens in February to begin with forty-five adults, previously receiving services out-of-county. The facility is barrier free. The OTC launches the Somerset County Recycling Program.
- 1986** Claremont Group Home opens in Franklin Township. The Arc begins a national partnership with Johnson & Johnson, promoting public awareness and fundraising. The Arc of Somerset announces its goal of \$500,000 in its second capital campaign, themed: Helping Children Grow. Opening of the agency's eighth group home for The Arc of Somerset County located in Griggstown.
- 1987** The Arc of Somerset County moves to Manville and combines The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center with the administrative offices at 141 South Main Street. Ground is broken for the Old Stirling Group Home. Twenty towns are involved in the recycling program. The Arc of Somerset County appears on CBS National news for its award winning recycling program.
- Old Stirling Group Home opens and brings the total to nine residential programs.
- The Arc of Somerset County receives the 1987 Presidential Award from the Somerville Rotary.
- Joan Sapienza retires as Executive Director, a position she held for fifteen years, since the inception of The Arc of Somerset County.
- Parents and Children Together (PACT) Program begins. It is an innovative parenting program for families headed by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- 1988** Louis M Baldino is the new Executive Director.
- Dedication ceremonies of the Manville building, designating classrooms, therapy rooms, indoor gym and adaptive playground in honor of donors, was held in January. National Starch and Chemical Company, Johnson & Johnson

Somerset County Family of Companies, Mr. John Nooney, the Barker Bus Company and Mr. & Mrs. Fred Patterson donated generously towards the goal of \$500,000.

In December, the “Safe Kids Prevention Program” involves over 1000 elementary students begins in Somerset Hills.

Residential Camping is first offered at Camp Jotoni. Four weeks were designated for this new initiative.

Employment Services OTC receives a one-year CARF accreditation. (CARF - Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) and begins working for the three year certification.

The Alternative Supportive Employment (ASE) program, formerly the Work Activities Trainings Center (WATC) program begins its conversion to an enclave program based in businesses in the community.

Construction begins on the first supervised apartments program located in Bridgewater.

1989 The Somerset County Freeholders give PACT a \$10,000 grant. Bridgewater Township offers land adjacent to the Bridgewater Commons Mall to build a second supervised apartment.

Thanks to the volunteer effort by the NJ Building Contractors and NJ Subcontractors Associations, Camp Jotoni builds a new bathhouse at no cost to The Arc.

1990's

1991 President Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act, and our own Fred Patterson who fought so long and hard for it, was there. Fred also wins the coveted NJ Governor's Award, “Pride of New Jersey,” the highest award the state can bestow on one of its citizens, for his advocacy in the field of developmental disabilities.

1992 TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY: The Arc of Somerset County receives a \$40,000 prevention grant from the Office for Prevention, NJ Department of Human Services for bike helmet distribution and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Campaign.

The statewide waiting list for residential placement grows to over 3000 people. Families are urged to explore a variety of private housing opportunities.

Employment Services receives their first three year accreditation from CARF

1993 Family Support Program initiated.

The Arc of Somerset County purchases three industrial condominiums in Branchburg. The Somerville Adult Training Centers and Occupational Training Center move to the new location.

The Jerry Davis Center opens a class for children of typical development to interact with children with developmental delays and disabilities for an inclusive education program.

1994 The operating budget exceeds \$10 million and fixed assets are worth \$4.5 million. A Future Search Conference is conducted to map a strategy to prepare The Arc for 2010. Key concepts are: To Promote housing and employment, Support choice of inclusion, Increase community awareness, Improve communications with like agencies, and expand funding resources.

1995 The “Key of Our Own” Campaign promotes residential issues for people with developmental disabilities. Over 100 people living in residences, across seven townships and twenty-two locations.

Email comes to The Arc of Somerset County employees for interoffice communication.

A video is filmed with The Arc of Somerset County individuals who are paid royalties for every one sold “Addressing Mental Health Problems in People with Developmental Disabilities”

Information Technology Department is created.

1999 Tea with Honey fund raising event is held for the first time. This annual event, benefiting the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, is 100% volunteer driven.

2000's

2001 Record NJ State budget deficits and tragedy of 9-11 significantly affect The Arc of Somerset County and all nonprofits. Volunteerism increases as people partner with the individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to increase their quality of life. The legislature adds one dollar per hour increase for direct care staff.

Nearly 1000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive services and/or supports through The Arc of Somerset County. There are twenty-two residential locations, and six employment services program throughout Somerset County. Childhood Services includes the Early Intervention Program, Day Care, Preschool Disabled, Private Preschool, After School, Saturday Recreational, Camp Jotoni and PACT. Family Support Services continue to help people in their homes.

2002 Respite Group Home relocates to an accessible facility in Hillsborough. The prior Respite program now becomes the Branchburg Group Home.

The township of Rocky Hill donates land to The Arc of Somerset County and ground is broken to build a new residential facility.

The Arc of Somerset County restated their bylaws, affirming the commitment to remain a membership-based, family-directed organization. The State of New Jersey issues “New Directions.”

Adult Training Center at Kirby Avenue moves into a new facility located in Hillsborough and renamed Valley Park Adult Training Center.

2003 The first annual “Step Up For The Arc” walk-a-thon for Somerset County is held in conjunction with Arcs throughout the state and with the help from the Free and Accepted Masons.

The Arc of Somerset County Foundation is launched to ensure long-term financial visibility.

Rocky Hill Group Home opens with two first floor barrier free apartments.

The Representative Payeeship Program is developed and begins with fifteen individuals.

The agency creates a Quality Department.

2004 The Arc of Somerset County develops their first Strategic Plan that the agency will follow for the next five years.

The Arc of Somerset’s newsletter, The Challenge, is renamed The Herald.

Website launched for the agency.

2005 After more than twenty-eight years of service to the agency, Executive Director Louis Baldino takes an early retirement to spend more time with his family. The Lou Baldino Legacy Recreation Fund is established to enhance the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities through recreational and fitness-related activities.

Newly appointed Executive Director Judy Miao makes a concerted effort in the development of a Vision Statement for the agency.

Therap Services comes to The Arc of Somerset County. Therap is a state of the art secure internet application that provides integrated on-line reporting, documentation and communication technology for organizations working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

A new program, called Education Advocacy is launched to help parents and guardians of children with special needs develop and maintain an Individualized Education Plan.

Governor Codey reappoints Fred Patterson as Chair of the Governor’s Council on the Prevention and Developmental Disabilities.

The first Service Learning Day begins at Branchburg OTC. High School students from Bernard’s High School are provided with an opportunity to enhance their awareness, sensitivity, and on-going support of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

2006 Ask The Advocate workshop is initiated for the first time. This workshop is to address quality of life issues for parents and guardians who have questions about their rights within the special education system.

A recreation club is formed, named the Excursion Club and becomes an instant sensation.

Increase in volunteerism with participants in Community Day events.

Three therapy rooms are added to the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center, which include the gym, sensory and quiet rooms.

Principals of the Vision Statement are completed.

2007

THIRTYFIFTH ANNIVERSARY as The Arc of Somerset County provides services and supports to more than 1000 children, adults, and families in Somerset County.

Volunteerism and Community support has soared to an all time high. United Way provided seventeen Days of Caring, twenty-one Corporations, four Civic Organizations and 635 volunteers provided more than \$200,000.00 in time and materials in improvements in the agencies programs.

Tenth anniversary of individuals delivering newspapers to patients in Somerset Medical Center

Judy Miao separates from the agency.

Action Adventure Week at Camp Jotoni takes off for the first time. This successful program takes campers on a new trip for five consecutive days.

The Somerset County Commission on the Status of Women honors Fran Maher, a parent advocate for twenty-five years, The Arc of Somerset County Board Member from 1981 - 1990 including two terms as Board President, for her decades of volunteerism.

Ethicon awards the agency a \$20,000 grant to purchase an industrial sized shredder to begin a shredding business for Supportive Employment.

The Family Support Department holds its first Kid's Night Out program. This monthly program provides parents with a safe and caring place to bring their children so they can go out on their own for an evening.

The Arc of Somerset County separates from the workforce one stop, Tanif (Cap) from Somerset County Board of Social Services.

Ministry Consultant from Rutgers Bogg Center provides assistance in connecting to faith communities and provides grief consulting.

2008

With more than eighteen years of service to The Arc of Somerset County, Lauren Panarella is appointed as Executive Director.

The Arc of Somerset County joins a statewide initiative to build a career path for direct support professionals (DSP's). The initiative is a pilot project of the NJ Direct Support Professionals Workforce Development Coalition to increase the skills, capabilities, and rewards of being a DSP in NJ.

First annual Business Partnership Award Ceremony takes place at Branchburg Adult Training Center to recognize our appreciation to the companies that contract with the adult training centers. Executives from 36 business partners attended the event.

The Family Support Department held its first Caring for Mothers and Others Day.

S.E.E.D.S. program debuts for the first time.

The trend in the education system was/is to keep children with disabilities included in their own districts educational programs and therefore, out of district placements were decreasing across the state. The trend-impacted enrollment in preschool programs and due to low enrollment the Preschool Disabled Program at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center closed.

Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities from The Arc of Somerset County form a Self-Advocate Group. Their mission is to encourage more people with disabilities to lead independent and productive lives.

After more than a year of planning, the Greenbrook ATC moves to a new bright accessible facility in Hillsborough and the name changes to Jill Court Adult Training Center.

The Supportive Employment shredding business, named The Arc of Somerset County Shredding, opens for customers.

NJDVR approved The Arc of Somerset County to be an authorized vendor of Supported Employment Services.

An additional staff, specifically designed for Prevention is added to the Maintenance, Safety, and Security Department. As a result, Preventative Maintenance plan and activities are initiated.

2009

The Self Advocate Group changes its name to Advocates for Change.

Initiation of quarterly Walk-In Days for potential applicants begins.

Master Gardeners Program formed at Camp Jotoni for enhancing new outdoor curriculum.

Beloved and founding Executive Director Joan Sapienza passes away. A memorial service takes place at Camp Jotoni where a red oak planted in her honor. A memorial fund in Joan's name is established.

The Family Support Department holds its first 'My Time' Sibling Support Group at the Hillsborough YMCA. This event is for siblings and parents to meet make new friends and build a network of support.

All time highs in productivity in record numbers are reached in the adult training centers.

The Arc of Somerset County embraces social media outlets You-Tube, Twitter and Facebook as a vehicle for communication, fundraising, and development.

The trend in the education system was/is to keep children with disabilities included in their own districts educational programs and therefore, out of district placements were decreasing across the state. The trend-impacted enrollment in preschool programs and due to low enrollment the Private Preschool Program at the Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center closes due to low enrollment.

The Jerry Davis Early Childhood Center changes its name to the Jerry Davis Center for Children and Families. (JDCCF) The Arc of Somerset County's Family Support Department is now part of JDCCF.

The Elizabeth M. Bogg Center on Developmental Disabilities, of The Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, provides more than 50 employees from The Arc of Somerset County with two-day training on "Person Centered Thinking."

The Arc of Somerset County received the 2008 Communications Award from The Arc of New Jersey for generating enthusiasm and achievement in outreach efforts that set a standard of quality for the entire Arc community.

Cablevision produced five public service announcements promoting The Arc of Somerset County's pivotal programs and events.

The Buddy Program, a program that matches up volunteers age 17 and older with an individual by location, skill, and mutual interests is created. The result is to create friendships that are thriving.

The NJ Direct Support Professional Workforce Development Coalition awarded eight DSP's with Certificates of Achievement for completing special DSP training programs in the College of Direct Support Pilot program.

The Arc of Somerset County is invited to participate in a year long project with The Elizabeth M. Bogg Center and The Division of Developmental Disabilities titled Building a Person - Centered System that will take the concepts from the Person Centered Thinking training and begin to apply them to our organization as a whole and the entire system of service delivery for individuals with a disability.

Completion of the Disaster Recovery Plan for Management and Disaster Recovery Administrative Computer Application Restore Plan.

2010

The Arc of Somerset County conducts a series of Focus Groups for Parents, Families and Guardians designed to improve the quality of services for The Arc of Somerset County. Participation spanned all service departments.

Mission Statement is updated and revised.

With an annual budget of \$15.6 million and a net worth of \$1.58 million, the agency provides services and supports to over 1000 people countywide. Over 115 individuals reside in our fourteen residential group homes; two HUD supervised apartment buildings; seven supportive living programs and two supervised apartment programs. Employment Services provides center-based adult programs at four facilities in Somerset County to over 260 individuals. In 2010, the JDCCF grew to include family Support Services and open the center providing a long needed home program for educational and advocacy efforts. The economic recession has an overwhelming affect on the agency. The Arc of

Somerset County looks within itself to rely on increased volunteerism and expand partnerships with other providing agencies and vendors to consolidate resources.

Funding cuts from major funders including DHS, DVR, United Way, and County DHS occur due to country's economic decline. The cuts are unprecedented in the agency's history.

Enrollment in Early Intervention Program reaches a record high of 160 children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Human Resource Department hosts their first annual Health & Wellness Fair for all employees to participate in free health screenings and exposure to health and wellness vendors.

The Arc of Somerset County's Family Support Center officially opened its doors. The center provides families with resources, information, and advocacy to assist in their commitment to provide supports and services for their loved ones.

A new five-year strategic plan is developed in a direct response to our agency's understanding of what its stakeholders value most concerning the organization while at the same time taking on the challenges for continuing to provide high quality services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.