

Expanding Horizons

In the first half of 2021, Team Arc continued to do what they do best – provide stellar services for our children and adults, while safeguarding their health and well-being. Potentials' students closed out a successful year of hybrid in-person and distance learning, the Early Intervention programs assisted more infants than ever before, the Adult Services' team coordinated testing, vaccinations, and safe community engagement, and our mentors connected with their peers in creative ways.

This fall, watch out for some incredibly exciting news about the future of The Arc and our work in the community. We are embracing every opportunity to grow, innovate, and provide more choices and greater independence for those we serve. The Arc will be at the forefront of diversity, inclusion, and acceptance, working to advance the rights of all people in our community. We are looking forward to embarking on this journey with you.



POTENTIALS SCHOOL

Our school year ended with fun in the sun and celebrations! In April, we learned about our planet for Earth Day. Students made an "E is for Earth" craft and painted their own worlds in blue, white, and green puffy paint. Teachers assisted using art therapy techniques to help students work on fine motor movements and color identification. Students, teachers, and one of our AmeriCorps members then worked together to plant beans and create a classroom greenhouse on our windowsill. Our classroom bean plant is lovingly named "Bruno."

In May, we closed out the school year with themed education to help our students learn and prepare for the summer. We celebrated Star Wars Day on May 4, studying the mysterious ways of the Jedi and practicing skills through "Y is for Yoda" and "Chewbacca" crafts.



The next day, we threw a fiesta for Cinco de Mayo. Students took turns swinging at the giant taco piñata and enjoyed the candy within when it finally burst. Next, students had a blast learning about the ocean, cooking up beach-themed snacks, and creating ocean animal artwork with our AmeriCorps friends. For our English, language, and arts lessons, we participated in a shared research project about dinosaurs. T-Rex was our favorite one!

We wish our students a fantastic summer and cannot wait to see the fun the next school year brings.

EARLY INTERVENTION

El families and our team are enjoying a much-deserved summer break.

Last quarter, our home visiting programs, ForwardLeaps and First Step to Success (FSTS), provided **1,891 virtual sessions** to children and families to aid in their development.

In HealthySteps, our Developmental Specialists (DSs) joined families for **594 well-baby visits**. Currently, all EI programs are at capacity, and there is a waitlist for the FSTS program. Our team is helping several FSTS graduates transition into kindergarten.

The EI team is always looking for ways to partner with other community organizations to help our families succeed. So far this year, we have:

- Installed 101 donated car seats for families to ensure safe transportation for their children
- Helped 65 families secure access to affordable child care through the Children's Services Council's child care scholarships
- Supported 31 families in their transition to Child Find to aid in their development



COMMUNITY INCLUSION

FORWARDLEAPS

Ricardo was having some trouble with his communication skills. His mother was concerned that he was not repeating words like other children his age. Our Developmental Specialist worked with Ricardo and his mother, providing resources and guidance to identify ways to help Ricardo learn and grow. Our DS modeled developmental activities with Ricardo's mother and provided her with educational toys and intervention items. These lessons have helped Ricardo improve his communication skills. His vocabulary has expanded, he is repeating words regularly, and his mother is delighted and encouraged.

"Estoy muy agradecida con el programa de ForwardLeaps como madre de Ricardo Ramos. Muy buena asistente como maestra. Gracias y bendiciones."

– Ricardo's mother

"I am Ricardo Ramos' mother, and I am very grateful for the ForwardLeaps program. [Karen] has provided me with very good assistance as a teacher. Thank you and blessings."

– Ricardo's mother

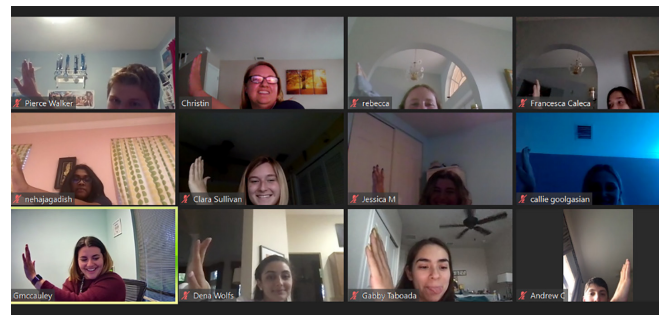


AMERICORPS

The Arc has welcomed five new members to our AmeriCorps team for our Summer Institute program. As of July, 15 current members are on track to successfully meet their service hours goals. Our AmeriCorps members are leading virtual education sessions and providing in-person mentoring for our Adult Day program, group homes, and Potentials School clients. Members led service projects for Memorial Day and wrote letters of appreciation and encouragement to veterans, first responders, and essential workers.

STAND UP

Our high school Stand Up members have been honing their leadership skills by participating in volunteer activities. In the spring, members attended our Direct Support Professional Drive-Thru event to celebrate the amazing team members at The Arc. They also created appreciation cards for first responders through Operation Gratitude. On April 21, Christin, our Community Inclusion Specialist, held a training session for our Stand Up members. Sessions focused on interactive, team-building exercises, including Name Your Dream Vacation, Picasso drawing, Zoom bingo, and an interactive high-five to wrap up the training.



Members participated in the Stand Up Leadership retreat, June 20-23, at the Wyndham Grand Jupiter at Harbourside Place. They worked on their leadership skills, college readiness, mental health, and disability awareness to prepare for volunteering at The Arc's summer camps. To advance members' volunteer efforts and help them to work on the skills they learned at the retreat, students participated in "Project Impact." They organized and presented their plans for a community event that they will lead during the next school year. Stand Up members embraced the challenge, carefully planning their activities for inclusive events, including a science night for kids, a youth artisan program, and a fashion show.



CAREER CAMP

The Career Building Youth Program is holding two, three-weeklong sessions this summer, with more than 90 hours of fun and interactive learning. The camp program is funded through Vocational Rehabilitation and helps youth and young adults, ages 14 to 21, develop self-advocacy, job-readiness, and self-determination skills. Campers participate in group discussions, role-play job interviews, learn from guest speakers, play games, and socialize. The variety of activities keeps participants engaged and focused on skills that can help them achieve their dreams after high school.



AGENCY IMPROVEMENTS

MANNING RESIDENCE

Preconstruction planning for the Manning Residence in the Northend RISE neighborhood of West Palm Beach is well underway. The City of West Palm Beach has officially closed on the land deed, and we are moving forward with architectural drawings. The new, two-story home will feature six bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths, with a Key West-style aesthetic complete with front porches on both floors.

Privacy fencing will surround the residence, and an electronic privacy gate will be installed for the driveway, adding a high level of safety and security for residents and their families, and providing them with peace of mind.

COURIM CENTER

Our Courim Center renovation and expansion effort is well into the site planning stages with the City of Riviera Beach. A full team of architects, engineers, surveyors, traffic analyzers, and general contractors are working together to prepare for the addition of two classrooms, a storage facility, a playground, and an updated façade. These plans open so many doors for inclusive and innovative programming, and we expect the project to be fully embraced by the city and the community at large.

FLEET

The Arc's 11-vehicle fleet ensures that program participants can safely get to Arc events and activities, and provides essential transportation for our residents to attend medical appointments, take care of their personal needs, and socialize in the community. Our fleet is in great condition, and on July 9, all vehicles passed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) annual inspection with flying colors.

HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE

The Hurricane Preparedness team is ready for this year's hurricane season, and all seasonal tasks are well underway. Our team stocked our group homes with additional food and water, prepared and refueled the generators, and revisited emergency procedures with the team. The Poney Martin Residence is now our official residential hurricane shelter, and its 60kW generator is tested weekly to assure its readiness for power outages.

THE ARC IS ALWAYS IN NEED OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS AFTER HURRICANES, INCLUDING BATTERIES, NONPERISHABLE FOOD, AND WATER. **DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS AT THE ARC WHEN YOU STOCK UP ON YOUR OWN SUPPLIES.** WE WILL REACH OUT AFTER A HURRICANE FOR SUPPLIES TO AID OUR CLIENTS AND FAMILIES IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE.



Packing emergency hurricane kits for families in the community.

ADULT SERVICES

The Adult Services' team recently completed their Spring Training Series; an annual, in-service training that helps keep team members informed of the best practices in the field. This year, the team completed training in:

- Racial Equity
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Motivational Interviewing
- Cultural Competency
- LGBTQ Cultural Competency

These trainings help us to develop new techniques to ask about our residents' present and past lived experiences, so we can properly address their needs. When our team can better understand our residents' histories, experiences, and the sources of their trauma, we can make the appropriate referrals to support services and adjust our care to ensure it is received positively by residents. It is also important for our team members to understand that our clients are adults with needs like any other person, and they have their own identities, which are important to them.

COLLECTIVE EMPLOYMENT

Our Collective Employment team continues to provide essential work services for our community partners. A small team visits White Trail Social & Garden Club whenever they need a few extra hands. They have helped with various tasks, but especially enjoyed potting more than 300 small lavender seedlings into large pots to aid their growth. The team had fun working together and getting messy in the soil, and is looking forward to future employment opportunities at the garden club.

The Collective Employment team has also expanded their role at Otis Elevators, increasing the volume of job tasks to include sorting and organizing all of Otis' returned mail. Due to the pandemic, Otis employees were working remotely and no one was available to sort the mail. The Collective Employment team initially sorted 13 bins of returned mail, and as a result of their outstanding performance, Otis transferred this task to our team. These new duties allow team members to work additional days each month and increase their personal incomes.

ADULT CAREER & EDUCATION

Our Adult Education participants spent the spring and early summer months exploring different cultures, celebrating various holidays, and unleashing their creativity to aid in their learning. In April, we learned about the spring holidays of Easter and Purim. Participants dyed eggs for Easter, made traditional masks worn during Purim parades, and decorated the classroom with spring-themed crafts. They created bees from construction paper, birds from feathers and clothespins, stained-glass kites using tissue paper, and flowers using watercolor paint on coffee filters.

Fun and interactive skill-building activities are essential for our participants' growth. In May, they led a candle-making activity for Mother's Day to help them practice self-advocacy and motor skills. Each participant chose their own crayon colors to decorate their jar and candle bag, helping to encourage self-expression and choice. For Memorial Day, they worked with their AmeriCorps mentors to handcraft thank you cards that were sent to the VA hospital for military service members.



Our team also helped participants by rubber banding shirts to tie-dye jerseys. Participants chose their tie-dye design and dipped their shirts into their favorite colors. Each jersey was printed on the back with the participant's last name and "21" for the year 2021.



Participants created plant arrangements for Father's Day in June. They painted their pots white and used Mod Podge glue to adhere different design themes onto the surface, including fish, sports items, musical instruments, and more. They then filled their pots with soil, rocks, and a succulent, and decorated bags for the plants, creating a perfect gift for their loved ones. We also celebrated "National Donut Day" and "National Eat Your Vegetables Day," with delicious donuts and an assortment of vegetables to enjoy together.

ARTISAN PROGRAM

Our Artisans have been busy creating new artwork together for the community to enjoy. Their Sun 'N Surf mosaic surfboards (at right) have been making the rounds at local hot spots, including Sailfish Marina Resort and Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar & Taphouse. The Artisans recently completed their second surfboard, which will be displayed at Palm Beach Marriott Singer Island Beach Resort & Spa through August 1. They also finished a commissioned, 8-foot, custom-made mosaic sign (top right) for LaBovick Law Group that reads: "We Who Labor Here Seek Only Truth." The piece was installed in the mock trial room at LaBovick Law Group's corporate offices.



Evan, one of our incredibly talented Artisans, treated his friends, Arc team members, and supporters to a live art session at a recent board member event. He created a tropical-themed painting, and everyone enjoyed watching the piece come to life.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

After more than a year at home, some of our vaccinated residents have rejoined their in-person day programs. Our team continues to help other residents return to their daytime activities, while providing personal home care and keeping residents engaged virtually and with their housemates. The team also completed the annual Agency for Persons with Disabilities relicensing for the Sippotta Residence in May. This included a comprehensive review of all client files, human resources documents, medication practices, policies, procedures, and a safety assessment.

