



## Removing the Boxes of Ableism

MAUREEN WESTCOTT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In our last newsletter, I spoke of why **words** matter. This time I want to share why **actions** matter. Our actions may be influenced by our upbringing, age, culture, or experiences, and can be unintentional. Nearly everyone knows about the various types of discrimination or stereotyping: racism (based on a person's race or ethnicity), ageism (based on a person's age), sexism (based on gender, typically against women). But do you know about **ableism**? Dictionary.com defines ableism as, "the tendency to regard people with a disability as incomplete, diminished, or damaged, and to measure the quality of life with a disability against a nondisabled standard and reinforces the idea that disability is a personal tragedy."

Examples of ableism include: inspirational stories about people with disabilities engaged in typical activities; using a tone of voice commonly used for addressing young children, when speaking to adults with disabilities; and believing that people with disabilities need to be fixed or changed. Ableism is rooted in society's tendency to use nondisabled as the measurement standard, the determinant for what is "normal," typical, and even acceptable. Ableism furthers the stereotype that people with disabilities cannot live an everyday life, have meaningful relationships and employment, or be in leadership positions because they are less capable.

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"The Diverse Abilities Training (DAT) classroom presentation gave me an idea of ways to talk about people that have disabilities with my students. It also gave me ideas for helping my students see the perspective of others. The trainers did a great job providing the information in an engaging and kid-friendly format."

Thank you to our

**Arc Angels**

With your donations, we were able to provide holiday gifts to over 500 individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism!



# Save the Dates!



THE ARC LANCASTER LEBANON'S ANNUAL SPRING

## Gala & Auction

Saturday, May 6, 2023

BENT CREEK COUNTRY CLUB

### AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED

We have begun collecting auction items for our Hybrid Online and In-Person Auction. Please contact us to ensure appropriateness before dropping items off at our office. We appreciate your donations!



*More event details coming soon!*

## OUR MISSION

Empowering people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and Autism and their families to lead full, satisfying, independent lives of their choice.



## Getting Antsy Already to Get Out Your Clubs?

Think warm thoughts, and mark your calendars now to join us at Bent Creek Country Club this coming October. The event will include lunch, dinner, raffles, contests, and prizes...oh and of course beer and golf! While golfer registration begins in February, sponsorship opportunities are available now! Please consider supporting us!



## 2023 GOLF TOURNAMENT

**Monday, October 2, 2023**

Bent Creek Country Club  
Lititz, Pennsylvania



*An Opportunity to Play on a Private Course!*



Thank You to Our  
Tournament Sponsor!



### Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsorship Levels Available from \$100 - \$3,000

**Visit the Tournament Website  
for Details and to Register**

**[bidpal.net/thearcgolf](https://bidpal.net/thearcgolf)**

**Sponsorship Deadline:** June 30, 2023



# Member Highlight



One of our main program offerings here at The Arc is Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q). We conduct surveys with individuals in the community to ensure their programming and service needs are being met. This program wouldn't be possible without wonderful monitors to conduct the surveys, and **Marian Jones and Sarah Bravo** (left to right in the photos) are two of those wonderful monitors.

Marian and Sarah have served as monitors with The Arc for over 3 years. Sarah's favorite part about conducting surveys is the opportunity to meet new people and hear about their daily lives and what they like to do. Marian enjoys seeing familiar faces; as a retired IU13 teacher, it's not unusual for her to recognize former students and also staff with whom she used to work. With her background in working with people with disabilities for many years, Marian appreciates the continued increase of inclusive opportunities in our communities.

When talking over the surveys afterward, Sarah and Marian find that they pick up on different things during each survey about what is working really well and in what areas the individual or family could use some assistance. Sarah and Marian have both been involved with The Arc for many years in other capacities, too. They have helped wrap and sort holiday gifts for our Arc Angel program, and Sarah won The Arc's Program Participation Award in 2019.

Marian enjoys spending time with friends, exercising at the Y, and taking day trips. Sarah works as a dishwasher at Willow Valley, volunteers weekly with Meals on Wheels, and regularly attends Kathy's Circle of Friends. Marian and Sarah enjoy time together at Pine View Dairy. Sarah treated Marion to ice cream during their last visit there...yum!

## Removing the Boxes of Ableism

Maureen Westcott, Executive Director

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Ableism allows for experiences such as: holding events at venues that are not accessible to everyone; using videos in a church service or presentation that have words on the screen but no voice-over reading the words, thereby not supporting those with literacy needs; and not allowing an individual to make decisions for themselves or offering help that is not wanted or needed. Ableism can be seen in the medical community, which sometimes underestimates the quality of life of a person with a disability, belittles their experiences, or ignores complaints by wrongly assigning them to the disability. Can you think of other examples?

At our most recent board meeting we viewed a video expressing the opinion of the speaker that having a disability did not make her special.

She talked about inspiration porn (stories of things people with disabilities do that “inspire” us like getting a job or brushing their teeth in the morning). This is not to say we cannot admire people for their accomplishments – I often brag about the abilities of my team. *It is thinking the activity is not commonplace for the doer. Let's remove the boxes* we place around those with disabilities and allow them to try and do whatever they wish with the supports needed. **Let's examine our policies and practices** to see if ableism is a part of what we do. **Let's talk about ableism** so we can learn from each other and make changes in our society to become more inclusive and welcoming to all abilities.

The Arc Lancaster Lebanon is a civil rights agency, in conjunction with the work done on a state and national level, and we align with The Arc US's mission of “Promoting and protecting the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and **actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.**”



## Lancaster Lebanon

116 W. Airport Road, Suite A  
Lititz, PA 17543

Return Receipt Requested

## Ways to Support The Arc

### Become a Member

Your membership supports our programs for Lancaster and Lebanon residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Autism and their families.

Learn more at

[www.thearclancleb.org/membership](http://www.thearclancleb.org/membership).

### Make a Donation

Donate online at

[www.thearclancleb.org/support](http://www.thearclancleb.org/support),

or mail a check made payable to

"The Arc Lancaster Lebanon."

## Your Team at The Arc

Maureen Westcott  
Executive Director

Amy Austin  
Program Manager

Amy Fisher  
Advocacy & Family Support

Marilyn Vizcaino  
Community Outreach

Michelle Meck  
Administrative Assistant

It is with much regret that we say goodbye to Michelle Meck as she leaves our team. She kept us all on the straight and narrow and her expertise and warm and welcoming personality will be missed.

SE HABLA  
ESPAÑOL!

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## WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!

"Our adult daughter recently moved to the Lancaster area. The Arc was a great help, assisting her to get the supports she needed to work and live independently in the community."

## Our Board

Lorita Valente\*, Chair, Luthercare for Kids  
Michelle Butler\*, Vice Chair, Magnolias of Lancaster  
Josh Stoudt, Treasurer, Assured Partners  
Ina Hosszu\*, Secretary, Family Representation  
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Brittany Beals, New Story Schools  
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Amanda Katchur\*, Community Services Group  
Bill Mahan\*, Family Representation  
Yvonne Tejada\*, ERM  
Maureen Westcott\*, Executive Director

\*Has a family member or is a person with a disability