

Upcoming Events



Wednesday, October 16th
Clinton Twp Inclusive
Playground Chili Cookoff



Tuesday, November 5th
Election Day!
Register to Vote ASAP.



Friday, Dec. 6th
Art, Advocacy, and Appetizers
3rd Annual Fundraiser

Updates from our Executive Director Lisa Lepine

Our days have been busy at The Arc of Macomb, Inc.!

In June, we hosted our annual golf outing. As always, it was so exciting to see new attendees and returning players! The weather maintained and we were able to enjoy good friends, a beautiful day and a nice meal. As always, the support of our sponsors and golfers is very much appreciated. Without donations from the community, this agency cannot exist. We are so thankful for our community and all that they do to support us!

We are looking forward to our winter events – Art and Advocacy at the Anton Center and gift wrap at Macomb Mall. The Art and Advocacy event is December 6 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. It is an opportunity to stroll through the Anton Center and shop local artists while enjoying refreshments and a basket raffle. Dress this year is festive and casual – wear your best ugly Christmas sweater!

As we have for the past twenty-two years of my time at The Arc, we will be wrapping gifts at Macomb Mall. If you're shopping at the mall, or if you simply want to bring your gifts to be wrapped, we are happy to help! We expect to be at the mall and available mid-December. Our hours will be posted on our website. If you cannot make it to the mall – do not fear! Bring your gifts to our office conveniently located on Gratiot. You can drop them off and arrange a time for pick up. Just give us a call and leave a message at (586) 469-1600 ext. 120 and we will make arrangements for you!

The Arc spends a lot of time fundraising throughout the year. Our fundraising efforts are made to assure that there is sufficient funding for our support and services. Fundraising supports our advocacy efforts, helps with the purchase of supplies for activities in our day program, defrays the cost of repairs on vehicles needed for transportation and so many other uncovered expenses. Your support and donations are invaluable to us and are very much appreciated.

I would be remiss if I did not take the opportunity to recognize and applaud two very special employees who have made the decision to retire. This year, Carol Bommarito from our administrative staff and Thomas Samolej from our direct support professional team, have made the decision to explore life after work.

Carol embodies the spirit of The Arc. She never misses an opportunity to promote our work throughout the community and to remind everyone she meets that people with disabilities have value and should be included in all activities. An amazing advocate, her willingness to support The Arc has always been appreciated. We know she will continue her zealous advocacy, squeezing it between time with her family and pickleball!

Tom has been a dedicated support professional throughout my tenure at The Arc. He is diligent, conscientious and has spent his time here improving the lives of the people he serves. Never afraid to advocate for the individuals with whom he worked, he has been zealous in providing opportunities and support to allow folks to be as independent as possible. Tom, you will be missed.

We wish you all the best!

Yours in advocacy,

Lisa Lepine B.A., J.D.



What is Down Syndrome Awareness Month?

Originally established in the 1980s, the month of October is dedicated to advocating for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome still face stereotypes and myths, but they've shown time and again that the condition is just one part of who they are and doesn't define them or limit their abilities. That's why it's so important that during National Down Syndrome Awareness Month and all year long, we help spread the message of love, acceptance, inclusion, and respect.

In honor of the month, here are 6 facts about Down syndrome you may not know:

1. Down syndrome is a condition in which a person is born with an extra chromosome, the packets of genes that determine how our bodies form and function. A baby is typically born with 46 chromosomes, but a baby with Down syndrome has an extra copy or part of a copy of one of those chromosomes, chromosome 21.
2. More than 400,000 people are living with Down syndrome in the United States.
3. While incidences of Down syndrome correlate with the mother's age, around 80% of Down syndrome babies are born to mothers under the age of 35.
4. Down Syndrome occurs randomly. Nothing a parent does or does not do is known to cause Down syndrome during pregnancy.
5. With the great strides made in understanding this disorder, individuals with Down syndrome are living long, happy lives. The life expectancy has increased from 25 years in 1980 to over 60 years today.
6. While individuals with Down syndrome experience cognitive delays, they are often mild to moderate. Most people with Down syndrome lead fulfilling and productive lives.



How Can you Raise Awareness?

Join A 21 Day Inclusion Challenge

With A Personal 21 Day Inclusion Challenge, it's all about completing tasks related to a personal goal of your choice for a total of 21 days out of the month. **Why 21?** Because Down Syndrome occurs when an individual has a full or partial additional copy of chromosome 21.

Or **join a community challenge** and aim to complete an act that benefits the community for 21 days out of the month. These acts can include raising awareness for Down Syndrome by posting on your social media sites, performing acts of service or kindness, or reading inclusive books to your kids.

Advocate for Employment Opportunities

October is also National Disability Employment Month. Obtaining meaningful employment is essential to the independence and self-esteem of all people with disabilities, including those with Down Syndrome.

In your workplace, advocate for more inclusive hiring practices by encouraging your employers to consider the talents and abilities of people with Down Syndrome. If you are in a position of hiring influence, create internships or entry-level positions that would accommodate people with disabilities.

“Down syndrome does not define us as people. It is a condition that makes it harder for us to learn, but with patience and persistence, we are able to contribute to our society.”
David Egan, Former Special Olympics Sargent Shriver International Global Messenger

Congratulations Lisa!

Congratulations to our Executive Director Lisa Lepine for winning the Advocate Champion Award at the 2024 Mental Health Matters Awards.

"Lisa Lepine embodies the spirit of advocacy and service," said Christy Jane Courtney, Director of Operations for The Arc. "Her unwavering commitment to our mission has transformed countless lives and strengthened our community. We are incredibly proud to see her recognized with the Advocate Champion Award, and we look forward to celebrating this well-deserved honor."

Thank you Macomb County Community Mental Health for a great night and thank you to everyone who joined in support!



Upcoming Ask The Advocate: Join us for our FREE Educational Training Sessions.

All sessions are 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
At The Arc of Macomb Office
44050 N. Gratiot, Clinton Twp 48036

RSVP Here:
[arcservices.org/
asktheadvocate](https://arcservices.org/asktheadvocate)



Ask The Advocate is a training series to help families and caregivers to prepare for the future of their loved ones who have disabilities. The topics covered will help you better navigate through the information you'll need to plan for your loved one's future goals.

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Ask The Advocate Creative Housing Options

Join us for the upcoming session of Ask the Advocate to learn more about Creative Housing Options. Executive Director Lisa Lepine will discuss a variety of options for people with I/DD to have the support needed to live happy and healthy lives in homes of their choosing. Information will be provided about housing Community Mental Health and DHHS as well as Self Determined arrangements.

October 8th, 2024
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Please register by October 6th
Registration required. Sessions
with less than five registrants will
be cancelled.

Save The Dates for Upcoming Topics:

Nov 12th, 2024:
Special Education Services
Jan 7th, 2025:
Navigating Medicaid Supports

As a community service organization, donations from supporters like you are what allow us to continue to offer free events!
A donation is welcomed, but never required.

Ask The Advocate Special Education Services

Special Education Mediation Services (SEMS), provides mediation, facilitation and training services for working through disagreements so that children with disabilities promptly receive the services they need to develop and succeed in school. These services often help to avoid disputes or help resolve them early and provide another resource to assist the parent whose children are in Special Education.

November 12th, 2024
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Please register by November 10th
Registration required. Sessions with
less than five registrants will be
cancelled.

Save The Dates For Upcoming Topics:

Jan 7th, 2025:
Navigating Medicaid Supports
Feb 11th, 2025:
Social Security Benefits

As a community service organization, donations from supporters like you are what allow us to continue to offer free events!
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For More Information
info@arcservices.org
586-469-1600



44050 North Gratiot Ave
Clinton Township MI, 48036

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16TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING:

Thank you to everyone that joined us for our annual golf outing. This would not have been possible without all of our amazing sponsors and donors. We look forward to another wonderful event next year. Sponsorship Recognition:



Eagle Sponsorship:

- **DC Byers**
- **Hy-Vac**
- **Chalgian Tripp Law Offices PLLC**
- **Randazzo Heating and Cooling**



Par Sponsorship:

- **Community Housing Network**
- **Allied Insurance**
- **Incident Clear**
- **Clinton Township Police**
- **Forest/Stubb Law**
- **Lovati Outdoor Services**
- **Harold Vick Funeral Home**
- **Resolution Center**

Hole in One Sponsorship:

- **Shelby Lions Club**

Double Eagle Sponsorship:

- **Rx Specialties**



Birdie Sponsorship:

- **Cashen and Strehl PC**
- **Kiwanis Club of Clinton Township**
- **Macomb Mall**
- **STEP**





ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 5, 2024!

After the November, 2022 Midterm elections, The Election Assistance Commission (EAC) estimated that if voters with disabilities had voted at the same rates as voters without disabilities, there would be around 2 million additional votes cast. Historically, individuals with disabilities have voted at a much lower rate than the general population.

Know your rights!

Under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), jurisdictions must select polling sites that are or can be made accessible, so that voters with disabilities can participate in elections on the same terms and with the same level of privacy as other voters. Disability Rights Michigan works with nonpartisan organizations, election officials, and other Protection & Advocacy (P&A) agencies to ensure that everyone has the ability to vote privately and independently. They support the right of individuals with disabilities to vote and provide resources to help voters feel more engaged and confident. For more information go to <https://www.drmmich.org>.

Need to Know If You're Registered to Vote?

The Michigan Secretary of State's Office has voter registration information, sample ballots, and more. Voters with disabilities can request an accessible absentee ballot online. For more information go to michiganvoting.org. For assistance with problems on election day- Call 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)

DSP Campaign

The Michigan House and Senate Health and Human Services budgets were released late April, and neither includes wage increases for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) in FY 2025. We all know DSPs are the backbone of the behavioral health system and deserve wages that reflect their skilled work and value! The DSP Wage Coalition has consistently advocated to increase DSP wages. Although there has been some success with increases in previous budgets, DSPs are still shy of earning \$16/hour as a starting wage. The governor's Executive Budget recommendations for FY 2025 did not prioritize a DSP wage increase, and this shows in what lawmakers have introduced. Continuing last year's trend of growing the DHHS budget, the \$37.6 billion spending plan approved by Legislators includes a \$28.7 million investment to provide a 20-cent-an-hour raise for DSPs. But the state's DSP and disability rights groups were hopeful for more. However, the DSP wage increase was called a pleasant surprise by a source close to the DSP coalition, as a \$0 increase was initially expected. Prior to this, DSPs had received \$3.20 more an hour since the start of COVID, according to the Senate Fiscal Agency.

Annual Art, Advocacy, and Appetizers Fundraiser:

Tickets and Sponsorship opportunities are available now for our upcoming Anton Art Center event. for more information contact info@arcservices.org



3rd Annual Art, Advocacy, & Appetizers Fundraiser

Join The Arc of Macomb County in your favorite fun and festive attire* for food, drinks, raffles, & shopping.

Friday, Dec. 6th from 6-9 P.M.

Anton Art Center

125 Macomb Pl, Mt Clemens, MI 48043

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

\$60 Admission Includes:
Entrance to The Anton Art Center,
2 drink tickets, an array of festive
food, and exclusive access to
holiday market shopping.



Purchase
Tickets
arcservices.org

This Inclusive Event is sure to be a delight for all!



Casual attire and Ugly Christmas Sweaters Encouraged



2024 Art, Advocacy, and Appetizers

"The Arc is dedicated to securing for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to choose where and how they learn, live, and work throughout their lifetimes in the community we share."

At The Arc of Macomb County we assist and provide services to approximately 600 individuals each month. This is made possible by our many supporters and fellow Advocates.

Why your support matters:

As a community service organization, your charitable donations and attendance at events allows us to further our Advocacy efforts to ensure all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities lead a full and inclusive life of their own choosing.

Please consider partnering with us in Advocacy by sponsoring this event.

Sponsorship Opportunity Packages:

Winter Wonderland Package (\$2,500)

- *5 Tickets to Event, 5 Additional Drink Tickets, and \$20 in Raffle Tickets at Event.
- *Company Name and logo on website.
- *Four social media posts.
- *Email recognition to our entire subscriber base.
- *Event signage and recognition during event.
- *Recognition in our newsletter and annual report.

Silver Bells Package (\$1,500)

- *4 Tickets to Event and 4 additional drink tickets.
- *Company Name and logo on website.
- *Event signage and recognition during event.
- *Two Social Media Posts.

Holly Jolly Package (\$500)

- *2 Tickets to Event.
- *Company Name and logo on website.
- *Event signage and recognition during event.

Snowman Package (\$250)

- *\$20 in Raffle Tickets at event.
- *Company Name and logo on website.
- *Event signage and recognition during event.

For More Information Please Contact Krysta at info@arcservices.org or call 586-469-1600 x120





Over the Summer, participants in the day program at The Arc's Skill Center enjoyed weekly visits to a local baseball field. This was a great way to get outside and improve their baseball skills, as well as have an opportunity to work on skills like teamwork and cooperation. "Everyone participates and it helps build character," says our Direct Support Professional Amy Gantt.

More about The Skills Center at The Arc of Macomb

At The Arc, we have an incredible Skills Center which includes several interactive areas that allow individuals to practice many valuable life skills. Our independent living skills classes help participants achieve their mental and physical potential to live safely and independently. The classes offered include: money management, nutrition, time management, communication and interpersonal skills, technology, and self-advocacy. Part of the program includes outings which revolve around the current teachings. In September, individuals visited grocery stores to obtain prices for the twice weekly cooking activities. With many individuals on fixed incomes, the importance of understanding budgets is essential. The Skills Center Supervisor, Daniel Shirkey, plans all off-site activities to ensure that they provide both social and educational opportunities for all participants. Approximately 72 individuals utilize the center each week, with over half venturing out into the community daily.

Inclusive Events

Looking for sensory friendly events and inclusive sports to get you or your family involved in? Check out our webpage to learn more-arcservices.org/community-inclusive-events/ See some of the events that are coming up in the Community that everyone can enjoy and feel comfortable at.

- **Sensory Friendly Evenings at The Detroit Zoo**
- **RARE Yoga**
- **Sensory Friendly Film Showings**



Membership and Donation Opportunities

Are you curious about becoming a member of The Arc of Macomb? We are always welcoming new members! Applications are available on our website as well as at our facility.



If you wish to support The Arc of Macomb through financial means, donations are always appreciated and help us further our mission. As a community service organization, donations from supporters like you are what allow us to continue to provide critical advocacy supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our donation form is available on our website. Checks can be mailed to our facility as well. Thank you!

In the News!

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Macomb County LEGAL NEWS

Posted September 16, 2024

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Looking at alternatives to incarceration



(Photo by John Meiu)

From LegalNews.com:

The Macomb County Bar Association recently held a seminar that examined available sentencing options to avoid incarceration. Among the featured speakers at the event, entitled 'Treatment Rather Than Incarceration' Impactful Sentencing, was Macomb County Public Defender Thomas Tomko (center), who is pictured with (from left): Holly Gruzowski with Macomb Community Mental Health; Barbara Caskey with Macomb Community Corrections; Sue Lind, Quality Director at the Arc of Macomb County who leads the organization's SpArc Services program; and Lisa Lepine, Executive Director of the Arc of Macomb County. Presentations focused on programs for individuals with primary mental health needs, adult outpatient treatment, residential services along with forensic and jail diversion programs as well as services for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Forever in our hearts...



Harold Clarence Siebert

May 1, 1931- July 9th, 2024

It is with sadness that we share the news of the passing of our long-time member, Harold Clarence Siebert. Dr. Siebert was a staunch supporter of The Arc since 1955. He was a proud educator, committed to serving the needs of people with disabilities. He will be remembered for his extraordinary kindness and unwavering dedication. Without his support The Arc would not be where it is today. Dr. Siebert will forever be remembered fondly for the impact he had on the lives of so many. Thank you, Dr. Siebert and the Siebert family for the years of support.

Carol Bommarito and Thomas Samolej Retire

Everyone at The Arc would like to wish Carol Bommarito and Thomas Samolej happy retirement.

Carol leaves with a heartfelt departure message for all; "It's with gratitude that I am now about to retire from the Arc of Macomb. It's been tremendously rewarding to get to know and help so many individuals. I could not have been successful with the programs that I have been a part of without the help of great and compassionate coworkers and directors at The Arc. I will treasure memories of the smiles of participants, sharing meals and milestones together, as well as memories of The Arc's kitties entertaining us and darting past us in the hallways. Thank you everyone, and especially thank you Lisa Lepine!"- Carol Bommarito. Carol retired after 34 years of service.

Thomas Samolej served at The Arc for 23 years as a Direct Support Professional. He is a staunch advocate for those he supported. A dedicated employee, he will be missed.



Thank You to Our New & Renewing Members

- Lawrence Ferrara
- Don & Kim McCloskey
- Bradley Byrne
- Dennis Spends
- David Schultz
- Alexander Silva
- Cathy Martlock
- Robert Auten
- Mary Vick-Spaulding
- E. Agata Powalka
- Richard Deering
- Mark Allen
- Mary O'Halloran
- Diane Krycia
- James Hughes
- Nikki & Ken Charrette
- Jen Dera
- Gwen Ahearn
- Richard Johnson
- Richard Hughes
- Carrie Contrera
- Nancy Walker
- Lisa Decker
- Patti Haver
- Lisa Joseph
- Rachel Babbitt
- Brenda Kotsis
- Rebecca Verschaeve
- Janet Boatman
- Romy Patterson
- David Schultz
- Barbara Dodd
- JoAnn Niell
- Christine Frank
- Andrea Downey
- Donice Breza
- Ronald Buck
- Vincent Grainer
- Ronald and Louise Kimball
- Edwin O'Donnell
- Linda Paeth
- James Walsh
- Jordan Nowak
- Dorine Vanderzyppe
- Justin Crosby
- Laurie Dawes-Collins
- Nancy Paja
- Mary Mendez
- Jody Woodley
- Beth Carleton
- Nancy Kaye
- Cheryl Dau
- Ryan Dau

A Special Thank You to **Carol Bommarito, Elicia Winsten, Hal and June Siebert** and **Richard Asunto** for their generous donations and support of our mission!



Website



Instagram



Youtube



Facebook

Follow The Arc!



The Arc of Macomb County
44050 N. Gratiot Ave.
Clinton Township, MI 48036