



Monthly Memo  
July, 2013

[www.arcnm.org](http://www.arcnm.org)

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**The mission of The Arc of New Mexico is to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages by advocating for equal opportunities and choices in where and how they learn, live, work, play and socialize. The Arc of New Mexico will promote self-determination, healthy families, effective community support systems and partnerships.**

### **New Mexico Initiative Hosts Public Forums**

The “New Mexico Initiative” is a collaboration of seven key agencies and organizations that provide services to people with disabilities. The seven key agencies are; Disability Rights New Mexico, The Arc of New Mexico, Parents Reaching Out (PRO), The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC), Educating Parents of Indian Children (EPICS), The Disability Coalition, and Family Voices.

The Initiative recently held three public forums in southern New Mexico - July 9 in Silver City, July 10 in Anthony and July 11 in Las Cruces. Each forum included a meet and greet, information booths and brief presentations by each of the seven agencies and organizations. The greater part of each forum was dedicated to listening to community members’ concerns, issues and input on disability services. Major concerns included:

- Special Education Issues
- DD Waiver Waiting List
- Transition at all levels (early intervention > elementary > mid-school > high school > adult
- SIS, new DD Waiver services and budget approval process taking too long
- Families and individuals need more information, need to be creative on how to give them information, many do not have access to technology.

Future forums will be held in Taos on August 15, Farmington on August 29 and in Roswell on September 12.

## Arc Program for Individuals with Down syndrome

The 2013 – 2014 Arc of New Mexico Self-Determination Program for Individuals with Down syndrome is funded to provide travel stipends for 10 individuals (and travel companion) to the 2013 and 2014 National Arc Conventions, the 2013 and 2014 National Down syndrome Congress Conventions, and stipends for 25 individuals to The Arc Summit on Social Equality/Conference in 2014.

Carmen Garcia, the Program Coordinator, will also meet with interested individuals and family members to help create person-centered plans that will include a vision for the future, goals and strategies on how to achieve the goals. The Arc has also created a Public Policy Mentorship component where one individual will be selected to participate in several local events and the national Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C.

For more information about the program contact Carmen Garcia at [cgarcia@arcnm.org](mailto:cgarcia@arcnm.org) or call 505-883-4630.

*The Arc of New Mexico Self-Determination Program is funded through a grant from The Arc National Office in Washington, D.C.*



New Mexicans enjoying The 2013 National Down syndrome Congress Convention held last week in Denver, Colorado

## The Arc's End the DD Waiver Waiting List Campaign

I am waiting!

Amanda

Las Cruces, New Mexico

Dona Ana County

Amanda is 21 years old. She is getting ready for her High School graduation. She lives in Las Cruces, New Mexico and lives with her mom, a younger sister and grandma and grandpa. Amanda also has Cerebral Palsy. She uses a walker and a wheelchair to get around and is non-verbal. She knows some sign language and can sometimes communicate her needs.



Amanda "Mandi" was placed on the DD waiver waiting list in 2007. Her mom learned of the waiver through the school and she filled out the application. In 2008 she checked on the status of application and found that there was no record of it being placed on any list. She filled it all out again and now she checks on the status regularly. Being a single parent has been difficult for Amanda's mom. She must work to provide for her family. Amanda is very lucky to have such a strong support system around her and she is the main focus of attention. Mandy likes to go out and she loves to listen to music and dance. Mom wishes that Mandi would be able to communicate more. Her ultimate dream to be able to hear Mandy express her own wants and desires to them. She fears about the future of Amanda now that she will finish school. She does not know what the next step will be. Mom is frustrated because there is no help for continued therapy of any kind and she fears Amanda will regress. She has to continue working and doesn't know yet how she will work that out with Amanda being home now.

The DD waiver could help Amanda with therapy and could ease the burden on her mom by providing respite. She would be able to be part of her community and participate in social activities. For now Mandi will remain active in family functions. All of the family will work together to make Amanda as comfortable as possible.



Laurel  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Bernalillo County



We are Joan and Charlie and we are writing this to tell you our story about why it is so important to do something about the DD waiver waiting list. Our daughter, Laurel, is 29 years old. She has a learning disability, although we even struggle to pin a label on it. She tends to collect more than she needs and has severe anxiety about getting rid of that stuff, which makes it hard for her to live on her own. We live in Santa Fe, but she lives in Albuquerque in a small apartment. Laurel would like a bigger apartment, but first we want to help her take care of her stuff and overcome her anxiety.

She has only been living on her own for one and a half years. She has been on the DD waiver waitlist for 11 years. She has been on the waiting list since she was in high school. We originally moved to Questa, New Mexico from Tucson, Arizona when Laurel was about 14 years old. In her graduation year of 2002-2003, we were told by a special education teacher at Questa High School that Laurel should be on the waiver. She had a son with Down syndrome, so we took her advice. We signed her up for it without really knowing what it was, but people said we should sign her up for it. As we have seen, when you are in the disability community, it seems you learn as you go.

The DD waiver would allow us to get a case manager that would actually allow us to be able to navigate through this system. We might also get help in finding a specialist that could satisfy both our daughter and ourselves, instead of simply trying different combinations of people and hoping that it works out. Furthermore, we feel like getting on the waiver will help in the sense that we need to have an idea of how it will help us. It's just been described as "everything will come together." We're just addressing the things that parents worry about. We feel like there is this pressure but there is nowhere to go to talk about it. Laurel's goals are to get a job to support herself, live on her own with her bird and maybe a cat in the future. She also wants to visit Hawaii. She wants to drive her car. She wants help for her anxiety so that she can successfully live on her own. These are dreams that most people in their twenties aspire to and she deserves to have a chance to achieve these dreams just like any other person in their twenties.

*Achieve with us.*

## *A Small Town Celebration of our Independence Day*

By: Priscilla Salinas, Director, The Arc Southern New Mexico Office

This past 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the Town of Anthony, like many communities across America held a parade to celebrate Independence Day. Staff at The Southern New Mexico office of The Arc heard about and spread the word to the individuals and family members who meet on a regular basis at the office about the opportunity to create and participate. Twenty five persons showed up promptly at the office that morning decorated the float and got ready to line up. Ms. Tanya Provencio was the Statue of Liberty on the float. Sometime during the middle of the parade, most individuals got off the float and joined up to walk with the people holding The Arc Banner. The Guzman family continued to pull the trailer and were captured on the KFox Channel 14 evening news. The float with the American flag looked awesome! Thank you to all who came together to make it happen.



## *Award Winning Israeli Documentary Coming to NM*

*Special Interview*, a new Israeli documentary about two young adults with special needs, is making its New Mexico premiere on Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 4 pm at the Jewish Community Center, 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE.

Winner of the Silver Remi Award at the Houston International FilmFest, *Special Interview* is a charming and poignant documentary that has played film festivals from Italy to Russia. A Skype interview from Israel with the film's "stars" and reception with light refreshments follows the one hour screening.



*Special Interview* is a co-presentation of the Santa Fe Jewish Film Festival and the JCC. It is being shown in conjunction with the JCC's month long exhibit of "How I See the World", the art of VSA artist, Smith Weber Sandager. The Sandager exhibit opened on July 10<sup>th</sup> and runs through August 14<sup>th</sup> with an artist's reception on July 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 6:30 pm.

For tickets and more information about the film, visit [www.santafejff.org/special-interview](http://www.santafejff.org/special-interview). Advance purchase tickets are \$5, otherwise \$8 at the door.

## Join The Arc – It is Easy and Free

Join The Arc in the movement for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Show the world you support the basic human right of everyone to live, learn, work and play as valued, contributing members of their communities.

For 60 years, The Arc has promoted and protected the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and served more than 1.4 million individuals and their families through a strong national network of 700+ chapters. We advocate for the right of people with I/DD to live in homes of their choosing, have opportunities for meaningful and competitive education and employment, and have the supports and services they need to achieve their full potential.

**Go to [www.arcnm.org](http://www.arcnm.org) and click on Member Registration icon. As a member you will be able to register and pay on-line for future Arc events including The Summit on Social Equality and State Conference. In addition, you will be given the opportunity to vote for board candidates from your region.**

## Be an Arc Ally - Donate to The Arc

The Arc of New Mexico depends on public donations to sustain our work. You can make a one-time gift or a recurring gift. [Make a donation now](#) to support our mission to benefit all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in New Mexico.

A memorial gift is a beautiful and lasting tribute for a loved one or to a family as an expression of sympathy.

Family and friends can be recognized with a gift in their honor. This might be for a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, holiday, wedding, retirement, etc.

Visit [www.arcnm.org](http://www.arcnm.org) to make an on-line donation. Your support is greatly appreciated.

## **Thank you to our 2013 Arc Allies**

### **Platinum – United Healthcare**

### **Gold – Bank of the West**

Loretta Silva  
Phillip Grant  
Jean and Tom Payne  
Community Health Charities of New Mexico  
United Way of Central New Mexico  
Carmen Garcia  
Dolores Harden  
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Dinah Padilla-Harvey  
Roger Weinreich  
Priscilla Salinas  
Cindy and Bart Faris  
Caitlin Kiennen-Breen  
Cecilia and Reyes Gurule  
Judith Greenfeld

New Mexico State Employees Charities  
Albuquerque Ruff Ryders  
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