

Advocacy Spotlight

Annie Goldwyn, along with several others, recently completed the Leadership Development Program presented by the Arc of Snohomish County. The program gave her the tools to improve upon her already successful outreach programs.

Why did you decide to enroll in the Leadership Development Course (LDP)?

For the past 2 ½ years, I have taught an adaptive karate class for the Monroe YMCA. The class is specialized for those with diverse and assorted abilities. I first heard about the Leadership program via the Arc newsletter. The newsletter was recommended to me by a mother of one of my students. Attending the Leadership program has helped me to better understand the challenges my students face on a day to day basis. I was also able to improve my communication skills making me feel much more comfortable in conversations with my students, with a heightened sense of awareness of their worlds. Just as important as learning to communicate better with my students was the education in how to initiate important discussions with our elected Representatives about the topics that matter to me.

What project did you decide to do after completing the LDP?

Students in the Leadership program are provided the opportunity to complete projects that they feel a calling for. These can be a one-time event or a long term project. I chose to complete one of each. Why? Because every time I teach an adaptive karate class, I feel 100% better about my world.

What one time project are you planning to complete?

Both of my projects are going to incorporate the Adaptive Karate program. The one-time event will be a Legislative Coffee in January, which will be held right after one of our adaptive karate classes. (We hope to have early visitors to show off our karate skills)



Sensei Annie Goldwyn's adaptive karate class

What about the long term project?

The long-term project will be to expand the adaptive karate program to other local YMCA's. The Monroe YMCA Adaptive Karate students are enthusiastic and dedicated (most have attended every class since we began 2 ½ years ago), and more than willing to soak up whatever they are being taught. We learn how to work as a team, and understand that being respectful to each other is a sign of karate honor, and we have lots of fun! We are currently in discussion with the new Everett YMCA to offer sessions there. (If you are interested in having classes there, please let them know!) Recently, we have joined the Adaptive Martial Arts Association, a nation-wide organization aiming to provide resources for students and instructors to share ideas, curriculum and training information to expand opportunities while promoting health and physical fitness through the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the martial arts.

Anything else you want to add?

I want to thank the Arc of Snohomish, and especially Autumn Chancellor for all of her hard work in making the program a success!

INSIDE

Page 1 - Advocacy Spotlight

Page 2 - Advocacy in Action:
Wrap-up: Leadership Development Program

Page 3 - Advocacy in Action:
Wrap-up: Leadership Development Program

Page 4 - Arc News: New Staff!

Page 5 - Advocacy Days 2020

Page 6 - Tools & Resources

Page 7 - Boards & Commissions
- Public Policy & Legal Advocacy

Page 8 - Get Involved
- Presidential Forum on Disability Issues
Watch Party
- Monthly Self-Advocacy Groups

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Advocacy in Action

Leadership Development Program Wrap Up

On November 8th, half a dozen participants celebrated graduating from the Arc of Snohomish County's Leadership Development Program (LDP) for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The event took place at a local restaurant in Everett.

The LDP is a one-year project in collaboration with and funded by the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council (www.ddc.wa.gov). A team was created to facilitate a hybrid leadership development program. Online courses were created using a Learning Management System (LMS). Users could log on to the LMS and access the material during their free time and complete the coursework at their own pace. A monthly call time was scheduled for participants to call in with questions and an online discussion board was also available to promote online conversations amongst participants. An alternative hybrid option available included a semi-monthly packet of materials mailed to participants.



LDP graduate celebration

Interested parties had to apply to participate in the program. This year's selected participants were a mix of self-advocates, professionals, and family members related to individuals with I/DD.

The LDP course covered eight topics.

- Legislative Advocacy
- History of Developmental Disabilities and the Civil Rights Movement
- Understanding other Cultures and Communication
- Special Education
- Government Resources
- Family Resiliency/Siblings
- Self-Advocacy
- Community Resources

All graduates are expected to complete a project that will test their new leadership skills and benefit the community. Projects varied in scale, but most focused on legislative advocacy, inclusion, and I/DD awareness.

Final Project Summary

Program participants were expected to get involved in advocacy and complete a project at the end of the Leadership Development Program. Here is a summary from some of the program participants' ongoing advocacy activities and projects...

Project: Raise Awareness and Advocate for the "Ability in Disability." LDP graduate Ramu Iyer took their love of writing and used it to prompt discussions on employment in the I/DD community on the national stage. Ramu has started multiple discussion on ideascale about employment, and even joined the National Arc's Diversity and Equity Email group discussion. Ramu even submitted a proposal to present at the 6th Annual Pacific Northwest Employment Forum in Bremerton.

Project: 44th District Legislative Coffee. On October 29th, LDP graduates Nicki Solie and Leigh Spruce co-hosted a 44th District Legislative Coffee at Nicki's home in Mill Creek. 17 people attended including State Representative John Lovick; Misha Jackson, Legislative Assistant to State Senator Steve Hobbs, and Gary Gill, Legislative Assistant to State Representative Jared Mead. The discussion focused on several topics, ranging from educational, transportation, and care issues for people with disabilities. Also mentioned were Everett and Edmonds college accommodations and student services, and biased student supports when students with disabilities are chronically absent due to health. Also discussed was bus safety and safety in the community for vulnerable adults, bus system accessibility in rural areas and the payment system. Other topics included possible incentives to encourage employers to hire individuals with disability, Care provider wages (DDA), and lack of respite and daycare options for higher needs individuals.

*"Disability only becomes
a tragedy for me when
society fails to provide
the things we need to
lead our lives. It is not a
tragedy to me that I'm
living in a wheelchair"*
- Judy Heumann

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Advocacy in Action

Leadership Development Program Wrap Up

Project: Raise awareness of ID and DD in the Lake Stevens School District. LDP graduate Melinie Weaver is working on becoming an IEP parent partner through the Arc. Melinie has also contacted her local legislators about the needs of special education. She is currently working on seeing if there is an interest in forming a special needs PTA in the Lake Stevens school district.

Project: Increase inclusion and accessibility in Edmonds public and school playgrounds. LDP participant Julie Kuehn served on a committee to build an inclusive park in Edmonds. Her work has included moving away from wood chips to poured in rubber on the playgrounds on Edmonds schools, a surface more amenable to children requiring ambulatory assistance. A major project she helped accomplish was the renovation of Seaview park in Edmonds. Seaview was a park slated for renovation, and thanks to input from Kuehn and the community, it was renovated as an accessible park to all, reopening in July. A wide variety of accommodations have been taken into account at Seaview, making it possible for all children to happily, and safely, play with one another.



Seaview Park in Edmonds

Project: Increase personal advocacy skills. LDP graduate Jeanette Ivy was able to utilize her skills and successfully be nominated and then elected to the office of President of the Snohomish County chapter of People First. She also attended her district's legislative coffee on December 4th.

Project: 1st District Legislative Coffee. On October 20th, LDP participant Teresa Tshakara co-hosted the 1st District Legislative Coffee at the Bothell Public Library. Attendees included Senator Derek Stanford, Representative Davina Duerr, and Representative Shelley Kloba. Topics of discussion included DDA Case Load forecasting, the high turnover rate for supported living providers, the need for living wages, and supported employment for individuals with disabilities.

Project: Promote Inclusion and Raise Awareness for the I/DD Community LDP graduate Jennifer Martin is planning on participating in the 38th District Legislative Coffee and working to raise disability awareness in her church, Bethany Christian Assembly in Everett. Jennifer has also made numerous kindness cards with inspirational quotes to hand out to anonymous people.

Project: Promote inclusion and accessibility in schools and in the community. LDP graduate Liz Meisner has recently joined a board of fellow retired teachers to utilize her teaching experience to increase inclusion in the community for I/DD. She is currently working on creating and teaching an inclusive swimming group for children ages four to seven with I/DD. The group meets on Sunday mornings from 10 AM–11:15 AM. Currently working out of the Mukilteo YMCA, she hopes to expand the program to additional locations.

Project: Raising Autism Awareness. LDP graduate Doug Wennerberg showed an immediate enthusiasm even prior to finishing the course, reaching out to his community and contacting local law enforcement and elected officials, looking to raise awareness for autism. Doug has since attended both the Community Summit in Wenatchee and the People First Convention in Yakima. His enthusiasm and work had him recognized as a community leader by the Arc at their annual membership meeting. He is currently in the interview process to sit on the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council as a self advocate.

Project: Legislative Advocacy. LDP graduate Leigh Spruce in addition to co-hosting the 44th district's Legislative Coffee also began to assume leadership roles within their community. Leigh has become the vice president of the Snohomish County chapter of People First, and also become secretary of the Washington State People First board.

*“Your limitation, it’s
only your
imagination.” - Tony
Robbins*

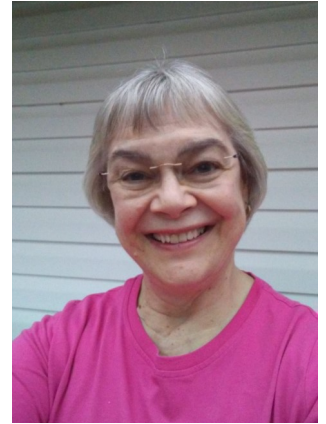
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Arc News: New Staff!

The Arc is thrilled to welcome two new staff members to the Arc of Snohomish County team: Teri McKeehan, Community Connections, and Jake Murray, Parent/ Family Coalition

Teri McKeehan

I am from Arlington, and my husband Jack and I have raised three children. Now that we have an empty nest I am finally able to work again. I've received guidance and resources from The Arc over many years. Now I am honored to work at the Arc of Snohomish County and give back to the community. Our daughter, Havalah, has autism and has led us on the journey many families embark on with a child who may have a disability. I deeply understand the challenges of isolation and negotiating life for families and individuals with a member with disabilities. I bring many years of experience with the DDA system and advocating for my child with schools, systems, and community access and hope that I can pass on some of that experience to make a positive difference in the lives of families or individuals who reach out for help or information from The Arc of Snohomish County.



Teri McKeehan

Jake Murray

I'm so happy to begin working here at the Arc, and look forward to doing the good work that needs to be done to progress the community. I've been an army wife, err, spouse, for the past six years, during which I've been a stay at home parent for my two kids, Nathan (6), and Charlotte (4). Both of my kids are diagnosed with autism, and with Nathan starting kindergarten this year, buying a house, and moving back to Washington, life has been pretty hectic. The good news is that, unlike his parents, Nathan is able to handle all of this massive change great, even with us having to move schools just a few weeks ago. Charlotte is starting preschool this year, and she absolutely loves it. She already runs the school and proudly shouts out who her friends are. The good news is everyone is her friend, so no one gets left out.



Jake Murray and his family

Now that my wife Aimee is out of the Army, she works for the Snohomish County prosecuting attorneys office, so she's just down the road if you have a complicated legal question. She probably doesn't know the answer, but ask anyways. She can at least point you in the right direction.

As for me, well, this is my first work in six years. I'm super excited to work in a field that is both new to me and yet important to both myself and my family. I'm loud, boisterous, and host to a plethora of dad jokes. I look forward to working here and can't wait to begin.

Introducing our newest Arc member
Linnea Jolie

Congratulations to her proud parents
Mely and Jose Cervantes!



"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

- Lao Tzu

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Advocacy Days 2020

Advocacy Days offer a way for you to learn about the legislative process in person. It's a tool kit for learning how to make a difference! Join us as we educate legislators to champion bills/budget items that are important to people with developmental disabilities.

What to Expect

Advocacy Day begins at **10:00am on Wednesdays** during the legislative session. We start the day with an hour and a half briefing on current issues and end with an afternoon of advocacy (about 3:00 pm). While we feature a highlighted topic each week, the morning briefing will also cover late breaking news on budget items and bills of interest relating to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Dates and Highlighted Topics

*Jan 22, 2020 I/DD Briefing & Statewide Legislative Reception	Jan 29, 2020 Community Residential	Feb 5, 2020 Self-Advocates & Employment	Feb 12, 2020 Families in Crisis
Feb 19, 2020 Caseload Forecast DD Services	Feb 26, 2020 Budget Overview	March 4, 2020 Workforce Shortage	

* 39th Annual Statewide Legislative Reception January 22, 2020

Advocacy Day Briefing 2:00-4:00

The United Churches
110 Eleventh Avenue SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Reception 5:30-7:30

Columbia Room
Legislative Building
Capitol Campus, Olympia

Meetings are typically held within walking distance of the Capitol. If this is your first Advocacy Day and you need a guide and/or help planning your day, please let us know in advance so we can help you make the most of your time in Olympia. Just choose the date you'd like to attend then contact either:

Autumn Chancellor, Coordinator
Autumn@arcsno.org 425-258-2459 x107

Jake Murray, Coordinator
jake@arcsno.org 425-258-2459 x105

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"A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles."
- Christopher Reeve

**We're here to help
you have a voice**

You are the expert in telling your story and how it relates to decisions being made by lawmakers.

Although impacting government may feel overwhelming, we're here to help you have a voice.

It only takes a few steps:

Be informed

- Sign up for Action Alerts

Get Connected

- Join The Arc
- Join a parent coalition
- Join a self-advocacy group

Take Action

- Visit The Arc of Washington State's Online Action Center
- Send emails
- Make phone calls
- Attend town hall meetings
- Participate in Advocacy Days
- Visit your legislators in person.

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Tools & Resources

Sign up

Legislative Alerts & Updates

Arc of Washington State | <https://arcwa.org/action-center/>

Sign up for legislative action alerts related to developmental disability. Receive the information you need, to voice your opinions on bills during the legislative session. Alerts provide you with messages for your legislators that you can use as is, or edit using your own words. Enter your name and address and click! Your message will automatically be sent to all of your legislators. Toll free Legislative Hotline 1-800-562-6000. Email or call, action takes less than 5 minutes!

Find Your

Legislative District and Elected Officials

Washington Legislature | <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Find your legislative district and elected officials.

Hot Tips

Legislative Advocates on Developmental Disabilities

Arc of Washington State |

<https://arcwa.org/content/uploads/sites/35/2019/12/Hot-Tips-2020.pdf>

Some of the topics included:

- Tips for meeting with elected officials.
- How to create a short, clear message.
- The bill process—how a bill becomes a law.
- The state budget process.

Did you know?

You can contact your legislators at any time?

We have put together a list of Snohomish County 2020 Legislators and their contact information. Legislators are organized by district and even include their photo.

You can download that document here: <https://tinyurl.com/2020legcontact>

Federal Bills of Interest

S 2067 Affordable Healthcare for Children with Disabilities Act

To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to encourage States to disregard parental income and assets when determining Medicaid eligibility for disabled children. Introduced July 10, it has since been referred to the committee on finance.

H.R.4280 - Supplemental Security Income Restoration Act of 2019

To amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to update eligibility for the supplemental security income program, and for other purposes.

Find an open board or commission, get involved and have your voice heard!

The Arc can provide support, resources and tools to help you be an effective and successful disability advocate on local Boards and Commissions.

For information contact: Autumn Chancellor at Autumn@arcsno.org 425-258-2459 x107.

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Boards & Commissions

Advocate for Disabilities on Boards and Commissions

Boards and Commissions serve as a bridge between the community and government, ensuring oversight and raising awareness on important community issues. They provide a setting for citizens to volunteer their time and energy in government and on behalf of the community to advocate for issues.

You can be a voice and a leader for developmental disabilities as decisions are made in your community. *The Arc of Snohomish County encourages individuals and family members to participate on boards and committees.*

Vacancies on Boards and Commissions in Snohomish County

Please click on the following Arc of Snohomish County link:

<https://tinyurl.com/boardvacancies> for current openings on Boards and Commission at the city/town level in Snohomish County. *This list is current as of December 2019.*

When navigating city websites searching for boards and commissions' vacancies, please note that this information may be found either: on one webpage; and/or require additional enquiry from individual Boards and Commission.

If all else fails, one can always call or visit the relevant city office for guidance. A general application may be required for consideration. Vacancies may be open until filled or open until a deadline.

Public Policy & Legal Advocacy

Public Policy and Legal Advocacy at The Arc

<https://www.thearc.org/what-we-do/public-policy>

Take a look at the National Arc and sign up for their Action Alerts.



The Arc keeps up on many issues that are important to individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and their families.

Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security, Medicare and civil rights laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are critical for people with I/DD and their families, providing benefits, supports, and civil rights protections that help make community living possible.

In 2017, The Arc called on all advocates to join us in reaching out to the President, Congress, Governors, and state legislators to educate them and to urge them to preserve - not cut - these essential programs and civil rights laws.

These federal programs provide the key to community living and inclusion for people with I/DD across the nation. We are stronger together when we join together as a collective movement to ensure that these programs and civil rights are protected.

Stay Involved



JOIN The Arc of Snohomish County for a watch party to view

Elected for Inclusion: A Presidential Forum on Disability Issues

DATE: January 13, 2020 **TIME:** 8:00am

LOCATION: The Arc of Snohomish County office
2500 Hewitt Ave. Suite 300 Everett, WA 98201

Coffee, pastries, and games.
RSVP appreciated

Questions? Contact Autumn Chancellor
Autumn@arcsno.org | 425.258.2459 x 107

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I.CAN Women's Self-Advocacy Group

2nd Tuesday of each month | 10:30am–12pm

***The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201**

*Occasional offsite activities and events. We are a group of self-advocates open to all women ages 16 and up. A casual environment that combines learning with fun experiences. We share resources and skills, and hold the belief that everyone has something to contribute to our group.

Please contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)

2nd Tuesday of each month | 1pm–4pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

Group of self-advocates focused on legislative change. Open to all. SAIL is a statewide coalition of people with developmental disabilities that strives to shape public policies that affect people with developmental disabilities.

Please contact Corinna Fale at Corinna@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x103.

People First of Snohomish County

4th Tuesday of each month | 11am–1pm

The Arc Office - 2500 Hewitt Ave, Suite 300, Everett, 98201

A self-Advocacy organization by and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are focused on educating ourselves and others, advocating for our rights, having fun! We believe we are PEOPLE FIRST and our disabilities are secondary. Please contact Kylie Walsh at Kylie@arcsno.org or 425-258-2459 x121.