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New Leadership at Connecticut's Oldest Advocacy Organization for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

Arc Connecticut Board Hires Respected Parent Activist to Lead Organization's Advocacy Efforts

The Arc Connecticut, the leading advocacy organization in the state for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and the state chapter of The Arc USA, announced that Win Evarts has assumed the role of Executive Director effective May 1, 2017. Mr. Evarts is a parent of a 26 year-old with I/DD, a former financial services executive, and past and current board leader of nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Evarts said that concerns for his son's future in a state that has no plan to meet the needs of thousands of people stranded on waiting lists, prompted him to leave a successful career in investment banking to commit his time and energy to solving the problem. "I relate to the fears of every parent who stays up at night worrying about their son or daughter's future, because those are my fears as well. I am committed to working with a wide variety of stakeholders to increase the breadth, accessibility and quality of supports and opportunities for individuals with I/DD in Connecticut."

Arc Connecticut Board president Tom Fiorentino, also a parent of a 26 year-old man with I/DD said, "I am delighted that Win has become our executive director at a critical time for people with disabilities in Connecticut. He has the background and dynamism to lead the Arc as we drive and demand the kind of systems change that will result in expanded, truly integrated, services. Win is also keenly aware that hard fought rights in the area of public education, are now under attack in Connecticut, and must be zealously defended. I look forward to the work we will do together to make CT a better place to live for our kids."

Parent leadership is not new at The Arc. The organization, which has a rich history of accomplishment spanning more than 60 years, was founded in 1950 by a small group of parents and other concerned individuals to act as voices for change. At that time, little was known about the condition of intellectual disability (then referred to as 'mental retardation') or its causes. There were virtually no programs and activities in communities to assist in the development and care of children and adults with intellectual disability or to support families. Today, The Arc USA has chapters in every state and the District of Columbia. The Arc of Connecticut has 14 chapters that provide a wide range of high quality services and supports to individuals with I/DD of all ages in community settings.

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